

Developing pedagogy for responsible leadership:
Towards a dialogic theory of democratic education

Volume 1 of 2

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Abstract

This thesis explores the connections between dialogue, education and democracy. It begins by asking: 'what are the implications of dialogic theory for democratic education'? In doing so it draws on concepts from the work of Arendt, Biesta, Dewey and Wegerif: dialogic space as a productive metaphor for education; an ontology of difference in which meaning emerges through dialogue; and authentic democratic action as 'coming into being' in negotiation with others.

It then asks, 'Can we teach for democracy?' by looking at recent practices of citizenship education in Britain. It argues that genuine democratic education must consider students as already being citizens rather than as citizens-in-training, and must offer them opportunities to express their values in action.

A theory of 'responsible leadership', based on a 'pedagogy of challenge', is proposed as a means to enable students to develop the skills and dispositions needed for democratic participation. Short courses in leadership education for teenagers are identified as sites to test this theory.

Two empirical studies are detailed, which use a longitudinal case-study approach primarily based on student interviews. The first was a two-day school-based course for academically able 13-18 year olds; the second was a five-day outdoor residential course for 16-18 year olds.

Both studies found significant development in students' skills and dispositions for learning, including: openness to others' ideas, confidence, greater self-knowledge and better communication skills. In both cases, students' personal dispositions and insights endured. However, lack of opportunities for democratic action after the courses meant that learned collaborative skills were not strongly embedded; this also meant that 'responsible leadership' was not often demonstrated subsequently. Nonetheless, the studies present strong evidence for the transformative power of a pedagogy of challenge, which demands further research.

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To Claire, who made it possible;

To Isaac and Zia, who made it harder;

To Rupert Wegerif, who made it a pleasure.

1 Introduction

1.1 The shape of this study

The path of this PhD study has been far from linear. It started with my successful application for an ESRC-funded scholarship to: study the current nature and meaning of 'democratic education' in the UK; investigate the extent to which it could be linked to students' participation in meaningful practical action; and examine the possibility for Virtual Learning Environments (online 'worlds') as appropriate locations for democratic action. By the end of the four-year process my focus had shifted towards the effect of short courses on leadership skills on teenagers' dispositions for learning and their capacity for 'responsible leadership'. The purpose of this short narrative is to explain the context and contingencies that led to this change and – it is hoped – to show the coherent logical strands that led through the project. This in turn will lay the foundation for the methodology section, which will focus on the two detailed studies that form the empirical base for this thesis.

1.1.1 *Personal Background*

I left my career as a high school English teacher to study for a PhD. While I enjoyed teaching on many levels, after three years I perceived too great a gap between what I was being asked to do, and what I felt was the most valuable and ethical approach to preparing teenagers for later life. This in turn was shaped by three prior events. The first was a school career which was successful in terms of grades achieved but left me feeling underprepared in my sense of confidence, values and direction. The second was a year spent teaching English in rural Nepal, which gave me an insight into the inappropriateness of their school system, which is based on an English model, in preparing them for the rigours of limited resources and opportunities afterwards; it also made me question the English approach at home. Finally, in the final year of my undergraduate degree in Anthropology I specialised in Education, and wrote a dissertation on teachers' understandings of young people's 'potential'; they felt a dissonance between the scope they wanted to offer their students to develop individually and the extrinsic systemic pressures pushing them to work towards narrow curricular, study and career objectives. The legacy of these experiences has been

scepticism of educational models built principally around achievement in summative assessments, a belief in the need to integrate education into the community, and a desire to enable children – especially teenagers – to explore their values and to put them into practice.

1.1.2 A cumbersome construct

My three years of teaching led me to believe that teenagers are not inherently rebellious, self-centred or uncaring about societal issues, but that much of such behaviour results from their being directed too narrowly towards academic goals, and given too little opportunity and responsibility to act in the wider community. I came to see this as a failure to enrol young people as democratic citizens. Thus, the initial question with which I approached my PhD study was: ‘How do we enable teenagers to act positively and with confidence, both individually and collectively, in accordance with their values?’

In seeking a theoretical model for exploring and testing these ideas, I settled on the concept of dispositions – yet ‘dispositions for learning’, a phrase commonly used in educational literature, did not adequately cover the breadth of my interest in teenagers’ development. I finally devised the term ‘dispositions for social responsibility’ as a working concept – aware that it had two key failings: its cumbersome nature, and the fact that dispositions are usually described as inclinations towards less complex and more immediate concepts than ‘social responsibility’. Nonetheless I started to devise ways in which I might work with it.

In attempting to fulfil the brief of my initial PhD outline I explored different possible candidates for democratic education models, both virtual and real-world. In the case of the former, two promising projects which I hoped I might study came to an end soon after starting my studies, and my attempts to find others were unsuccessful. This jeopardised my original research design; it also brought home the necessity, when investigating the experimental margins of education, to develop research around the available opportunities for study as much as around preconceived ideas. Given the rarity of genuine and developed models of democratic education practice in the UK, this realisation led to a more flexible, eclectic approach to my choice of research

opportunities and design. In particular, I turned towards extra-curricular models given that I could not find models of democratic, subject-based classroom practice.

1.1.3 A flawed pilot study

Soon after my settling on the concept of 'dispositions for social responsibility' an opportunity arose through my participation in an established research project at Exeter University, the *Aspire* Programme, to devise and run a sub-project in the area of creativity and learning skills. In an effort to compromise between the differing perspectives and interests of *Aspire*, the school and my own research, I secured agreement to undertake an action research project on the topic of 'becoming a creative innovator' with a group of twelve Year 8 students.

While participants declared it to have been valuable to them, the project failed to fulfil its research objectives. It was over-ambitious in its attempt to devise a quantifiable indicator for group progress in 'dispositions for social responsibility' over time using Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955); it was also insufficiently theorised – partly due to the complexities of fulfilling the needs of three different parties, and partly due to the short time window in which the project had to be planned and delivered. It cast doubt on my belief in finding a way to explore and measure the concept of 'dispositions for social responsibility'. In response, I decided to focus on evaluating the dispositional change brought about by courses designed and run by others – rather than try to design, run and evaluate a course myself. This represented a considerable shift in the focus of the study, requiring the development of a set of criteria for courses eligible for my study, which are detailed in *Appendix A*.

1.1.4 Following an opportunity: leadership education

Through further reading after the initial pilot I had come to believe that 'student leadership', if defined appropriately, could be relevantly similar to the concept of 'dispositions for social responsibility' but without the drawbacks outlined above; instead, it could link together 'dispositions for learning' with 'leadership education' in a way that covered the same ground. I saw a further advantage in working with a concept – leadership – which people recognised and which was broadly perceived to have value, both within the school context and outside. The key issue was defining

leadership in a way that met both the societal and collaborative meanings of my original term, and also recognised leadership as a normative concept – not just an executive one. My new construct, ‘responsible leadership’ (see p.74), seemed to achieve this.

Soon after, early in the first year of my PhD study following my Master’s, another funded research opportunity arose – this time to study the effectiveness of a short course in leadership education for teenagers run by the University of the First Age an independent company providing a two-day extra-curricular course for around sixty 13-18-year-olds in an inner-city secondary school (see *Section 5.10* for full details).. Limitations of time and funding meant that the scale of the project was small; I focused on five participants in detail, following them over a three-month period to examine the nature and extent of their attitudinal and behavioural change following the leadership course.

At the same time, the completion of my Master’s thesis had significantly altered my ontological and epistemological perspectives. I was strongly influenced by Wegerif’s dialogic theory (Wegerif, 2007) and Biesta’s theories of democratic education and of a ‘pedagogy of interruption’ (Biesta, 2006, p.147). I coined the concept of ‘a pedagogy of challenge’ to fit with what I valued in both approaches (see *Section 4.5*). It was in preparing for this research study, then, that a model for education for responsible leadership through a pedagogy of challenge emerged; this has become the theoretical core of this PhD study and its key contribution to knowledge.

1.1.5 Looking at what’s there: outdoor education

I had originally intended to complete at least two studies so as to compare the affordances and limitations of democratic education initiatives in both the virtual and ‘real’ worlds; although this model changed I wanted, after completing a successful initial study, to do another study in a different context with teenagers from a different demographic. This time, my intention was also to study more of the participants on the course – preferably all of them so as to gain a more complete picture of the dynamics between the whole group.

The aim was not to do a comparative study as before, but to give breadth of insight into leadership education in different contexts. Given that the context of the first study – classroom-based and focused on high-achievers – was somewhat untypical, I wanted to study a leadership education course that represented a more common format: a longer, outdoor-activity-based course. There were many logistical difficulties involved in finding suitable courses; I managed to arrange to study two.

The first, based on a three-day outdoor education course for Year 8s in the Lake District, seemed in my initial explorations and contacts to meet the criteria I had devised for inclusion in the study: it was focused on challenging the students by exposing them to new environments and tasks, and on getting them to address problems as a group, in order to build leadership skills. I thus recorded initial interviews and attended the course in full. However, it soon became apparent that the course did not in this case fulfil the criteria as required. The activities were of insufficient duration and rigour to challenge students, and their failure to participate fully was not sanctioned. I thus made a decision to abandon this study before the final round of interviews and analysis, and to lose no further time in trying to find another, more appropriate course to study. This will be discussed further in *Section 5.11*. The second, based on a five-day residential course on Dartmoor for 16-18 year-olds run by the Prince's Trust, and which is detailed in *Section 5.11*, proved to be far closer than the first to the kind of intervention I was looking for – that is, a pedagogy of challenge – and produced a far higher quality of evidence. These studies were based on largely the same theoretical model for responsible leadership as the initial study, and were analysed both in their own right and as a test of that model.

1.2 Aims and objectives

As detailed in the previous section, the aims and objectives of this PhD study changed substantially during its first two years; by the time of the initial and main studies, however, they had become clear. The first research question, arising from my initial reading, was:

1. *How might dialogic theory help us define democratic education?*

This raised challenging questions about whether and how democratic education might be possible; given the relevance of this for studying sites of democratic education practice, the next theoretical research question arose:

2. *Can we teach for democracy?*

The responses from these two questions were synthesised to propose a tentative dialogic theory for democratic action, which proposed that:

- a. *Dialogue is central to ethical education*
- b. *Ethical education is necessarily democratic*
- c. *Democratic education requires opportunities for practical action*

Leadership education was then proposed as a way of exploring these propositions; short courses in student leadership were identified as relevant sites for exploring this theory in practice. This led to the development of a theoretical model for developing responsible leadership among students; as a result, the following theory-refining proposition arose:

3. *Leadership education can promote democratic action by applying the following principles:*
- a. *Implementing a pedagogy of challenge*
 - b. *Developing dispositions for learning*
 - c. *Encouraging responsible leadership*

This model was applied to, and refined between, two subsequent empirical studies. The main research question relevant to both was:

4. What influence does a short course in leadership education that implements a pedagogy of challenge have on teenage students' dispositions for learning?

In synthesising and evaluating the studies, the findings from both were used to address proposition 3, and consequently to evaluate and refine the theoretical framework that arose from questions 1 and 2.

1.3 Methodology summary

This PhD study consisted of two discrete studies, between which there was significant development of research methods, which is explored in *Chapter 5*. Both adopted a case study approach, where the case was *the impact of the short course in leadership education on the participants' dispositions for learning*. They did so by:

- Evaluating the extent to which each delivered a 'pedagogy of challenge', thus fulfilling the criteria for inclusion in the study
- Describing changes in participants' dispositions for learning during and after the courses, as revealed through a series of three interviews with the participants and, secondarily, related staff
- Looking for examples of 'responsible leadership', and the habits and skills that underpin it, as suggested by the theoretical model (see p.265)

In both case studies, the principal source of data was a set of three semi-structured longitudinal interviews with participants: one just before the intervention, one in the following week, and one around three months later. In both cases this was supported by observation notes taken by the researcher, who participated as a teacher participant/observer on both courses. In addition to this, during the second study, two interviews were recorded with the course leader: one just after the intervention and one three months later.

In both cases interviews were transcribed, thematically coded using NVivo software, and analysed dialogically to generate themes that reflected both the theoretical constructs developed before the studies, and the unexpected findings that emerged during analysis. The coding and analysis for the main study was considerably more elaborate than the first, reflecting the perceived need for increased rigour.

1.4 My contribution to co-authored papers

To date, one co-authored paper has been published on the basis of this PhD study (Higham, Wegerif, & Freathy, 2010). Rupert Wegerif and Rob Freathy were co-supervisors of my PhD. The paper emerged from the preparations and findings for my initial study. The text of the paper was almost entirely my own, incorporating only

small rewording suggestions from the other authors. The concepts behind the article emerged from the dialogue principally between me and Rupert Wegerif – heavily influenced by the readings detailed in *Chapters 2 to 4*. Rob Freathy took the lead on questioning and editing the early drafts.

2 Towards a dialogic theory of action in education

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to construct a theoretical platform for this PhD study by asking: *How might dialogic theory help us define democratic education?* Answering this philosophical question is essential to the construction of this framework, which in turn underpins the subsequent empirical investigations. The study as a whole thus seeks to develop existing theory through critical review and test it through empirical study.

It will investigate the theories behind the empowering and disempowering factors affecting secondary-school-aged UK students involved in democratic education initiatives, focussing especially on the relationship between creative thinking and practical action. To do this, I will undertake a comparison of four writers in this field: John Dewey, Hannah Arendt, Gert Biesta and Rupert Wegerif. The aim is to reconcile Wegerif's dialogic ontology with Dewey and Biesta's theories of democratic education, and with Arendt's theory of action, to create a dialogic theory of action for democratic education.

Section 2.2 discusses the nature of "dialogic space" (Wegerif, 2007, p.4) and its challenge to our conception of physical space, revealing a modernist understanding of knowledge that is no longer appropriate to education. This critique is supported by Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism.

Section 2.3 discusses the possibility of a dialogic ontology arising from Derrida's assertion that meaning is rooted in difference, not identity. It traces some of the roots of this position in the works of Bishop Berkeley and Dewey, linking them to Wegerif's assertion that creativity in dialogue emerges from "dialogic space" and that dialogue in education is therefore "an end in itself" (Wegerif, 2007, p.8).

Section 2.4 investigates the source of creativity, attempting to reconcile Dewey's belief in scientific methodology with Wegerif's non-rational "space of reflection" (Wegerif, 2005, p.233), and with Biesta's and Arendt's conception of "action" (Arendt, 2006, p.145) as "coming into the world" (Biesta, 2006, p.27). It then examines the possibility and the difficulty of action in the context of education.

Section 2.5 concentrates on Arendt and Dewey's analyses of the history of tradition in Western thought – especially the intellectual heritage of Greek and Roman thought – within education; it then looks at the difficulties and opportunities arising from Arendt's analysis of the crisis of modernism.

Section 2.6 explores both Arendt's and Dewey's definitions of freedom and will within the context of social action. In response to Arendt's claim that action is "miraculous" (Arendt, 2006, p.168), it examines the role of faith in enabling change.

Section 2.7 highlights contradictions in Arendt's and Dewey's writings with regard to education, arguing that these reflect a fundamental paradox in education between freedom and intervention. The political nature of participation in education is demonstrated through Biesta and Wegerif's work.

2.2 Dialogic space

My contention in this section is that physical space is not an objective reality but one of a possible range of perspectives – and that dialogic space may serve us better in the field of education. Wegerif proposes that "dialogic space opens up when two or more perspectives are held together in tension" (2007, p.148). To differentiate this from physical space by way of a metaphor, he describes an incident that occurred when wearing a virtual reality headset and interacting with virtual chess pieces. First, he stepped right into a red chess knight; then he got lost, leaving the chess grid behind:

I found myself in a dark space without apparent dimensions or forms. Turning back I saw the world I had left behind glowing in the distance... It was like leaving normal space behind and looking at it from outside. A sort of 'out of body' experience in a way. In virtual space Aristotle's principle of identity did not appear to apply. (Wegerif, 2007, p.5)

Using the notion of physical space to interpret this experience is problematic. From the perspective of his colleagues in the room, Wegerif was "staggering drunkenly around the room" (*ibid.*, p.5); his experience, however, was of purposefully acting in a different space. In addition, he transgressed at least two of Aristotle's laws of identity, which are based on the understanding that our experience of the physical equates to the real world: he both shared the same space as the red chess knight, and was

simultaneously in the “real world”, in a “virtual space” and outside that space looking in. One could attempt a reductionist analysis based on the externally observable, physical facts of this experience – but only at the cost of its content and meaning.

Wegerif argues that the availability of new technology has changed what Bakhtin calls our “chronotope” (Wegerif, 2007, p.3): our experience of space and time. Transport and communications technologies mean that we no longer experience space-time as a constant, and cannot therefore assume that it reflects an unchanging true reality. Arendt describes mankind’s similar epiphany in conceiving of the Earth from space for the first time: the result of scientists’ drive to find an “Archimedean point” from which the planet, and life upon it, becomes intelligible as a neutral, behavioural phenomenon (Arendt, 2006, p.273). Stepping out of our known physical environment enables a gestalt-switch: from understanding meaning in terms of physical reality to understanding physical reality in terms of meaning – it becomes just one perspective among others in the attempt to describe and interpret human experience.

This disjunction between meaning and the physical realm fundamentally alters our conception of what knowledge is, implying that it cannot exist in objects themselves. Biesta and Osberg argue that the “binary representational model” of knowledge (Biesta & Osberg, 2007, p.28), where knowledge exists in the world and is accessed through observation of signs (in Saussure’s terms, the representation of the *signifier* by the *signified*), did not exist before the 17th century, and is no longer the most useful – especially in the context of education, as it privileges simplistic representations of the world for learners over their experiences of it. Wegerif argues that this model, “the over-identification of learning with knowing” (Holzman, 1997, p.48), remains central to educational policy and practice. The adoption of the metaphor of dialogic space, by contrast, would open up new opportunities for education, including enabling creativity – which is greatly more intelligible as a relational concept than as a “knowledge object” to be “constructed” (Wegerif, 2007, p.7).

Biesta’s position draws heavily on the pragmatist philosophy of Dewey, and his application of it to educational theory. Biesta ultimately criticises Dewey for advocating an instrumentalist approach to education by seeking to develop a pre-conceived ideal of “social intelligence” (Biesta, 2006, p.132); I will question this

criticism in *Section 6*, but will focus on their common ground for now. Dewey traces the change in our understanding of knowledge through history from a “primitive” equation of knowledge with everyday “know-how” (Dewey, 1966, p.7) towards a complex modern society in which the tasks of the mature and the immature are increasingly separated: ideas become important, and specialist institutions emerge to impart them. This formal education, however, being separated from the practices that demand their teaching, is in danger of being “remote and dead – abstract and bookish” (*ibid.*, p.8) – separated from the contexts in which the knowledge derives its use and meaning. Equally the students, who do not experience the social utility of their learning in practice, are not encouraged to develop “a social disposition”, and may therefore become “sharps... egoistic specialists” (*ibid.*, p.9). Dewey explicitly distinguishes knowledge from information: knowledge is the ability to employ objects or ideas with a purpose in the social world; information is second-hand knowledge, discovered by others and handed down in symbolic form, requiring practical application to derive social meaning. Knowledge is “intimate... not abstract” (*ibid.*, p.185); it is intractably connected to experience which in turn is, without thought and knowledge, mere sensation.

Dewey is setting out an epistemological position which seeks to bridge the gap between the “real” world and human experience, between theory and practice. It also locates the meaning of knowledge firmly within the social realm, rather than being inherent in the world, and as emerging from and existing in the transaction between people’s changing understandings (Dewey, 1966, p.9). Dewey’s theory circumvents the need for an Archimedean point. By suggesting that knowledge and meaning (and indeed all social life) emerge from the process of communication, that they are always mutable and open to new interpretation in the light of experience, Dewey is implicitly rejecting the metaphor of physical space in the educational context in favour of something like dialogic space. In the next section, I will explore Wegerif’s move from a dialogic epistemology to a dialogic ontology – in which only our perceptions of “difference” between things allow us to access a form of reality (Wegerif, 2007, p.22).

2.3 Dialogic and difference

While Dewey's pragmatism is satisfying as an epistemology, its short-circuiting of the gap between experience and reality leaves it ambiguous as an ontological stance: it avoids making an explicit claim as to the nature of being, and as to whether there is an external real world. Within the field of dialogic, Wegerif argues that academics have been happy to argue for a new conception of identity, rooting the nature of being within dialogue itself – but only in the social realm (Wegerif, 2007, p.21). Bakhtin, for example, argues that “man is never coincident with himself” (Bakhtin, 1973, p.48), implying that human identity is not a fixed property, but that it emerges from and exists *as* the difference in perspectives arising within it. On the other hand, Wegerif notes that Bakhtin also limits his claim:

Meaning cannot (and does not wish to) change physical, material and other phenomena; it cannot act as a material force (Bakhtin *in* Wegerif 2007, p.21).

The implication is a dualism of the social and physical realms: the social realm exists as and within dialogue, while the nature of the physical realm, which is not acted upon by dialogue, must be, to paraphrase Wittgenstein, passed over in silence. Yet Wegerif also notes that in other writings Bakhtin makes references to Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and to Einstein's relativity – both of which suggest that the observer impacts on material reality (Wegerif, 2007, p.21). He suspects that Bakhtin's instinct is to collapse this dualism in favour of a universal ontology of dialogic; this is what Wegerif attempts to do through the writings of Derrida. He uses Derrida's substitution of “différance” for “différence” to illustrate the argument that the meaning of language is not inherent in the identity of words or concepts (*ibid.*, p.22). The substitution of the ‘a’ in “différance” changes the meaning of the word – but not through any fixed meaning of the letter itself; rather, it is the difference between the ‘a’ and the ‘e’ in the context of the word that changes the meaning. It is only because the ‘a’ is in contrast, because it is ‘not-e’, that the new word has “an almost infinite but indefinite meaning” (*ibid.*, p.23). The implication is that meanings have no origin or fixed point, neither do they reach a conclusion; they occur within chains of dialogue without beginning or end, existing in the dialogic space that opens up between different perspectives. Drawing together the work of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Bakhtin, Wegerif then advances a subtle existential point: that we understand and appropriate

the world through the adoption of new perspectives on it; ultimately, this is to say that the world (as we know it) comes into being through the act of making meanings – in relation not to a physical reality but to ‘original difference’ (*ibid.*, p.26).

This position, I suggest, is similar to the philosophy of idealism proposed by Bishop Berkeley in the 18th Century in response to Descartes’ radical doubt of the physical realm. He argued that the only reality we can experience is that of our sense experiences, our thoughts, and our imaginations – and that the subjects of all of these are ideas in the mind of their perceiver. It is just as nonsensical, he argues, to suggest an object without a perceiver as it is to imagine a thought without a thinker, since an object cannot meaningfully be abstracted from the set of qualities which the perceiver experiences (Berkeley, 1988, p.34). To attempt to do so leaves one with a picture of the object, derived from the memory of previous sense-experience, within one’s imagination – while fooling oneself that there was and is no perceiver. For Berkeley, then, “*esse est percipi*: to be is to be perceived” (*ibid.*). There are no grounds for positing the existence of another reality underlying that which we experience – indeed, we would have no means of access to it. Instead, we theorise underlying structures that explain what we experience in more general terms, and miscategorise these as reality. I suggest that *esse est percipi* is the logical implication of Dewey’s pragmatism (albeit one he would have resisted), in which all knowledge is derived from experience and is inseparable from it; similarly for Dewey, knowledge itself is not fixed, but the constantly remade outcome of ever-changing perceptions and understandings. Both, I suggest, proposed essentially postmodern tenets but were limited in their expression of them by the cultural and theoretical constraints of their time: Berkeley was doctrinally compelled to substitute God in lieu of a permanent physical realm, acting as the guarantor of continued existence in the absence of a perceiver; Dewey accorded a similar role to the laws of science, which provided the rational foundation for a modernist understanding of experience. It is this inability to escape from tradition that Arendt identifies as ultimately limiting other revolutionary thinkers such as Marx and Nietzsche to remaining within pre-existing boundaries. A genuine break in tradition, she argues, is now possible given the “break in history” in the 20th Century (Arendt, 2006, p.26) – a position that will I will explore further in *Section 4*.

While Berkeley sought a source of continuity and causality for this world of ideas in the mind of God, Wegerif's dialogic theory locates the roots of even such concepts as continuity and causality in the realm of meaning – and therefore not in a personal God, but in 'difference'. While this raises further profound philosophical and religious questions, this is not the place to discuss them (although I will touch on some briefly in *Section 5*) as they are not central to the argument of this thesis. The key point of relevance here is that the understanding of reality prefigured in some respects by Berkeley, and later developed by Heidegger, Derrida and others – which we can term 'postmodern' inasmuch as it rejects the idea of fixed, objective, discoverable meanings – makes possible a new ontological position based on dialogue across difference, and which in turn fills the gap left by Dewey's epistemological pragmatism and counters any dualist conception of the social and physical realms.

As another metaphor for understanding this new conception of non-physical space, Wegerif offers the Internet. It is constantly expanding, and is indeed unbounded; it contains a multiplicity of perspectives – but where is it? It doesn't exist physically within fibre-optic cabling or computer hard-drives, but in something like "dialogic space" (2007, p.9). Biesta provides a parallel argument for what he calls "intersubjective space", citing the potential answer to the perennial question, "where am I?" as posited by GPS technology. While it is now possible to give the location of any point on the Earth in the form of a coordinate, to argue that this equates to an objective, physical definition of space would be to translate the whole Earth's surface into a virtual system existing within a network of satellites – thereby placing us all within a virtual reality (Biesta, 2006, p.29). Such technologies, even more than the railways of Marx's time, have radically changed our chronotope; they have given us a new insight into the theory of being by revealing the contingency of the physical, which demands the development of an ontology of difference.

In the context of education, while it is practical for now to avoid exploring the religious implications of an ontology of difference, Biesta argues that we must explore its ethical implications. Drawing on Levinas, he argues that we do not exist individually prior to coming into contact with others, but that each of us is "a-being-with-others" before we are self-aware. We are always already in relation to others; we come into the world relating, not thinking and knowing; the self is therefore "a point already identified

from the outside” (Biesta, 2006, p.52). Our sense of self therefore arises through relationship with the other. This relationship, then, is neither a choice nor an act, it is a foundational fact; since it cannot be based on knowledge, it must be an *ethical* relationship. Since it is prior to the possibility of commonly agreed rules of conduct, it must be “a relationship of infinite responsibility for the other” (*ibid.*, p.51), where one cannot know in advance the effect one will have. In addition, it is our uniqueness that makes interaction with other beings inherently unpredictable: we are not “endlessly reproducible repetitions of the same model” (Arendt 1977, p.9). This uncertain contingent relationship is not one of tolerance, where one categorises the other as wholly separate from oneself, but of “solidarity” (Bauman, 1993, p.13). Dewey recognises this when he argues that to communicate one must formulate one’s ideas in accordance with another’s understanding – not acting on the presumption of understanding them beforehand. Failure to do so is an act of domination. Therefore, for Dewey, “Not only is social life identical with communication, but all communication... is educative” (Dewey, 1966, p.5): to truly communicate with the other, as opposed to acting under orders or in accordance with pre-defined rules, is to attempt to see things from their perspective and to agree common goals – and this is the foundation of the educational process. Education founded on ontological difference, therefore, takes place in the dynamic tension between different perspectives, leading to the creation of new ones. Wegerif similarly argues that self-development is not the creation of a fixed identity shored up by knowledge, nor a progression towards a pre-defined point. It is a stepping out of the fixed preconceptions of the self and a movement towards the other in an attempt to better know both the other and oneself; he uses the apparently oxymoronic phrase “identifying with non-identity” to describe this (Wegerif, 2007, p.27). He argues that this capacity is akin to creativity, insight and compassion, and that in educational terms dialogue is not a means to an end but “as an end in itself”:

...the slogan ‘dialogue as an end in itself’ does not mean just talk for talk’s sake but indicates a challenging direction of development for individuals and society towards a greater capacity for creative thinking and a greater capacity for learning to learn, intimately linked to an ethics of openness to the other. (*ibid.*, p.28)

In this section I have argued that Dewey’s pragmatism inferred, even if it did not fully articulate, an ontology of difference prefigured by Bishop Berkeley’s prior

identification of knowledge with experience. The fuller, more recent expressions of this position have explicitly rejected the need for an underlying fixed principle – positing instead the concept of difference itself, which is synonymous with dialogue. The next section explores in more detail the ideas of emergence, creativity and action implied by this ontology, and its implications for a dialogic theory of education.

2.4 Creativity, beginnings, action

A dialogic ontology places at its centre the *continual recreation* of oneself in response to the challenge of the other. This raises the question of how and from where these creative acts arise in education. In this section I will outline Dewey's useful but incomplete response, limited by his dependence on the scientific metaphor, and explore alternatives: Wegerif's non-rational "thinking by resonance" (Wegerif, 2007, p.90), and Biesta's "coming into the world". I will then examine their implications for pedagogy in the light of the current policy drive towards promoting creativity.

Creativity in education has never been given so much attention, nor seen to be as urgent as it is at present; however, the context in which this interest has emerged is the perceived need by governments worldwide to innovate and compete in the global marketplace (W. Carr & Hartnett, 1996; Craft, 2005). This motivation is, Craft argues, instrumentalist rather than humane, placing the needs of the economy above those of the individual, and linking individual fulfilment to economic growth. This derives from an essentially industrial approach to policy, which focuses on the product and not the process: how do we build the skill of creativity in learners so that they can produce innovative items that can be sold at a profit? Formed in response to a competitive environment, this view is passionately opposed by Dewey, who believed that the value of creativity lay in its promotion of real shared interests; for him, such "atomistic individualism" is "a mortal threat to our most deeply held commitments to liberty and equality of opportunity" (Dewey in Kadlec, 2006, p.538):

...one cannot imagine a bitterer comment on any professed individualism than that it subordinated the only creative individuality – that of mind – to the perpetuation of an unjust and morally impoverished regime of pecuniary gain (*ibid.*, 2006, p.538).

Ironically, it is precisely this position which some of Dewey's fiercest critics such as Gramsci and Horkheimer have attributed to him; they perceived pragmatism as a shallow philosophy complicit with modern capitalism by refusing to critically distance ideas and action (Kadlec, 2006, p.527). Their evidence was drawn from Dewey's professed passion for science, through which they saw him as substituting social critique for acceptance of extant social facts. But Dewey's admiration was not for scientific facts as such, but for scientific method – the logic of which was to doubt all facts as falsifiable, and to seek new interpretations and solutions in our relation to the world through constant critical practice; science is therefore “the organ of general social progress” (Dewey, 1966, p.230).

The economic instrumentalist understanding of creativity also presents philosophical difficulties. How can there be a set of definite, teachable skills that generate creativity? The production model implies a fixed process and fixed result; by definition, however, the result of creativity is not known beforehand. The process of creativity, by this understanding, remains a ‘black box’ – a mysterious entity into which known things are put in and unknown things come out. The only model for understanding it affords is behaviourist: we have observed others be creative under these circumstances; we will attempt to recreate them so that others might be creative too. The implication is that there exists a unitary, generic quality of creativeness within humans that can be triggered.

While Dewey's description of scientific innovation opposes this idea of a fixed method or pedagogy for creativity in favour of a rigorous, open-ended exploration of one's environment, it casts little light onto the process of creativity itself; after all, Archimedes' apocryphal eureka moment came not while studiously measuring objects in water, but while relaxing in the bath. Semetsky defends Dewey on this point, arguing that his writings can be linked with Deleuze's “rhizomatic method” of enquiry, which entails the “immanent and heterogeneous production of meanings” within one's environment, from which new ideas can emerge (Semetsky, 2003, p.27). If Dewey did harbour such views, however, I suggest they are not detailed in his work with sufficient clarity to describe a source for creativity.

What is needed is a move away from strict rationality, in which outcomes are causally predictable, into another realm of thought. In positing “thinking by resonance” (Wegerif, 2007, p.90), Wegerif describes in detail a primary classroom in which children were encouraged to talk about imagining other worlds. He argues that through the creation of an environment in which they were allowed to experiment freely and cooperatively with ideas without having to justify them rationally, new ideas arose that resonated powerfully with each other and with Wegerif himself – in turn promoting new perspectives and understandings. In that space, he argues, challenging or rational questions would have been unhelpful; it is the freedom to explore analogy and experience without such criticism that enables the emergence of creative ideas (Wegerif, 2007, p.94). This process, then, interplays between structured intentionality and free association:

This suggests that actual creativity involves weaving between a structured level of reality, with goals and criteria of success in reaching those goals, with an unstructured dialogic space in which everything resonates with everything else and in which anything is possible. (*ibid.*, p.112)

Wegerif attempts to locate in dialogic space the source of creativity; similarly, Biesta argues that in attempting to understand and adjust to the other’s different ideas, one’s identity and beliefs are challenged – and that one’s responses to the ‘disturbance’ of these ideas are a “coming into the world” (Biesta 2006, p.28). He further argues that it is in these acts of response – and in these alone – that we demonstrate our uniqueness as individuals. The source of creativity, then, is our uniqueness – which emerges not as a property of identity or as a latent skill, but only in and through our interactions with other acting, responding beings (*ibid.*, p.48). In his use of action Biesta is building on Arendt’s tripartite definition of activity in *The Human Condition*: “labour” is that which is repetitive, tedious and merely sustains physical life; “work” is activity with a start and finish that leaves enduring and useful results; “action” is the manifestation of individuals’ uniqueness through their interaction with others in a way which is inspired and unpredictable (Arendt, 1958, p.188). It is this distinct sense of action as a powerful, unlikely and creative act which is referred to herein.

Biesta recognises the difficulty of achieving such freedom of interaction in education. He argues that post-Enlightenment thought led to a belief in the “rational community”

in which members are bounded together by a strict common discourse, which is “...formulated in universal categories, such that they are detached from the here-now index of the one who first formulated them” (Lingis in Biesta 2006, p.56). Within such a discourse, all statements reinforce each other in reflecting a common understanding of the world, and the identity of the speaker is thus irrelevant to the meaning of the statement. He argues that the traditional role of the school has been to induct the young into the rational discourse shared by adults, thereby negating students’ individual voices (*ibid.*, p.57). Even in our pluralistic society, genuine differences between perspectives such as those of different faiths can be captured within an educational curriculum and reduced to descriptions of variety of beliefs and practices – and in the process portrayed as lifestyle choices rather than as potentially radical challenges to one’s understanding of the world. Biesta argues for a “pedagogy of interruption” in which learners are challenged, sometimes to the point of discomfort, by being put by their teachers in situations in which they are faced with the other’s position directly, requiring them to respond – a process which he calls “transcendental violence” (*ibid.*, p.27-28). This can only be done in the context of plurality, rather than in a homogenised environment in which the other’s views are captured and represented within a curriculum – and thereby encountered as information rather than as alternative voices. If this reductionism is to be avoided, education must remain inherently open, unpredictable and risky, requiring that students demonstrate “trust without ground”, since educators cannot give track records for going into uncharted territory; and educators must conversely take “responsibility without knowledge”, since they cannot know in advance how students will react to the perspectives presented (*ibid.*, p. 27). Such an approach demands flexibility, subsidiarity, spontaneity, strong relationships based on trust and equality, and freedom from central control and target-setting; it would be exploratory, challenging and action-oriented. In a time of increasing centralisation of authority in education, and also of risk avoidance, such freedoms are unlikely to be granted to schools without a struggle (Apple & Beane, 2000, p.105; Goodman, 1971, p.127).

Dialogic ontology, then, provides us with a source for creativity – whether we call it dialogic space, uniqueness, or even ‘the Other’ itself – which is manifested through acts of responding intelligently, imaginatively and sensitively to the unknown. Crucially

for Dewey and Biesta, creativity is a process; it cannot be taught, since there are no particular objects of knowledge that enable it. It is something we do with others – even if some expressions of it can subsequently occur alone. Because it requires a stepping out of one’s own borders in order to reconcile oneself with the other, it is inherently difficult; yet creativity often arises where perceived existing strategies are perceived as inadequate.

By contrast, Biesta is scathing towards a new learning culture which is designed to be easy and predictable in its outcome: an educational transaction in which pre-packaged information is seamlessly downloaded into learners, upgrading them for the latest requirements of the marketplace (Biesta, 2006, p.21). Craft similarly warns that creativity is in danger of being reified as a skill, transferrable through generic means with the aim of producing marketable commodities – and that such an approach would smother what it means to be genuinely creative (Craft, 2005). The roots of this instrumentalist learning culture are explored in the next section, as are the opportunities Arendt sees as a result of the breakdown of the modernist project.

2.5 Tradition, authority, democracy

This section draws a parallel between the analyses of Arendt and Dewey of the impact of the traditions of Greek and Roman thought on our education system and on our conception of democracy. It then explores Biesta’s and others’ analyses of the failure of the modernist, humanistic perspective within education, and the attempts to assert it in place of traditional authority. These arguments will demonstrate further practical difficulties with the idea of implementing democratic education in a contemporary context, as distinct from the intrinsic difficulty discussed in the previous section.

For Arendt, the force of the past in determining the future cannot easily be overstated: it is only against the odds that we can marginally alter the course of the present away from the inevitable future. In Western history and thought about democracy, the most influential model has been that of the ancient Greeks. In “Tradition and the Modern Age”, Arendt argues that Plato’s exclusion of women and slaves from citizenship is no mere bigotry but a founding principle of their conception of democracy. In ancient Athens, to be a citizen was by definition to be free from the burdens of labour and

political control – a condition they achieved by being “sovereign” over their households (2006, p.19). They came together, then, not as equals under a state but as sovereigns in their own right – not out of economic necessity but as men of independent means, free to pursue “higher” aims. This was the ideal life of the *σχολη* – which in its modern translation as ‘scholar’ still reflects a privileging of the intellectual over the practical, a separation of the academic from the directly political, and (perhaps now only dimly) the valuing of those with independent means over those who have a paid interest. The only recently antiquated phrase ‘he is a scholar and a gentleman’ (still perhaps a viable epithet in the House of Lords) hints as to the pervasiveness into the present of this model in our social history. This system both formalises the stratification of society into labourers and free men, and imposes a hierarchy of value which separates the intellectual and the practical, privileging the former as morally superior.

One problem with such a system – where the citizen has tyrannical control over the household and is independent of other citizens – is that it provides no recognition of, nor guidance for, social conduct in cases where their wishes collide; in other words, there is no authority. Arendt details Plato’s attempts in the *Laws* and in *The Republic* to attempt to generate an authority which would underpin and guarantee a social system in which philosophers were the ultimate rulers – a position that seemed necessary to him in the wake of Socrates’ execution (2006, p.107). Through his analogy of the cave, Plato suggested that philosophers had access to a separate, unchanging, higher realm as distinct from the mutable and corrupt world of everyday experience; his was an error theory of consciousness which argued that all we think we know from experience is ultimately no more than shadow – and that we must therefore accept philosophers (who by definition are removed from their concern with everyday experience in favour of the world of abstract ideas) as our authority in guiding our society. Even in the radical intellectual upheaval of the enlightenment, Arendt argues, this dualistic hierarchy of mind and body was maintained through Cartesian thought (*ibid.*, p.29).

Yet both Plato and Aristotle were dogged by the internal inconsistency of a system that demanded a relationship of unquestioning authority among supposedly equal citizens (Arendt, 2006, p.109). It was the Romans who eventually created a lasting authority through the glorification of the foundation of Rome; rather than on distant Olympus,

Rome was the home and embodiment of the gods themselves (*ibid.*, p.121). The continuation and upholding of the traditions of Rome's foundation (including a reverence of Greek thought) became the guiding principle of the Empire – an unchanging authority on which temporal power rested. Arendt recognises the Christian Church as having inherited this authority after the collapse of the empire, by adopting as its founding, authoritative moment the redemptive death of Christ – it was subsequently happy to cede temporal power to Prince's and politicians while retaining its transcendent authority over society. (*ibid.*, p.125). The corollary of this foundation myth, Arendt argues, is the notion of punishment after death, developed by Plato as a deliberate fabrication to promote obedience, and developed into a core tenet by the Christian Church for similar ends. For nearly two millennia this Christian authority was the True North of the Western moral compass – a fact still made visible in education by the deep involvement of Christian churches in schools, and in the UK the statutory requirement, now honoured more in the breach than the observance, of the need for a daily collective act of worship.

Dewey's analysis is remarkably similar in that it locates in Greek thought a foundation for the privilege of abstract thought over experience. He argues, however, that it was out of the Greek sense of the contingency and unpredictability of everyday experience that they felt it necessary to seek an unchanging authority – that of reason (Dewey, 1966, p.263). This was privileged on the basis that it was of all qualities that which is uniquely human, and therefore our highest function (*ibid.*, p.252). He also recognises the continuing influence today of an ideal society in which worldly experience was demeaned as inferior to the unchanging light of truth:

There is something morally dangerous about experience, as such words as sensual, carnal, material, worldly, interests suggest; while pure reason and spirit connote something morally praiseworthy.... Only the single, the uniform, assures coherence and harmony (*ibid.*, p.265).

Above all, for Dewey, the social legacy of Greek thought was a stratification of society in which the young are categorised into a few exclusive classes based on their perceived aptitude – a legacy he sees as flourishing in contemporary society through the hierarchical distinction between vocational and academic professions (*ibid.*, p.119), and through the subsequent development of an exclusive elite culture that excludes

the former, trivialises the latter, and divides both to the detriment of society as a whole.

Despite differences in interpretation, Both Dewey and Arendt identify core trends in Greek thought which persisted into the modern industrial era and which, by stratifying society and by locating authority in fixed, non-negotiable, but opaque concepts, remain today as barriers to democratic education based on a dialogic ontology. Arendt, however, writing after the Second World War, argued that this long-lived tradition is collapsing: under the radical critiques of thinkers such as Marx, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche on one hand; and in the wake of the previously unimaginable atrocities committed by totalitarian Fascist regimes on the other – defying all moral limits intelligible to the churchⁱ (Arendt, 2006, p.93). This accords with Bauman's account of the decline of the modernist paradigm: this, he argues, states that the universe, including the social realm, is ultimately explicable through rational, objective principles – and that this constitutes a universal truth which falsifies all other beliefs (Bauman, 1993, pp.9-12). In academic circles, postmodern critiques of the inconsistencies that arise from this paradigm have become commonplace and generally accepted (for example, see Pring, 2000; Winch, 1973); however, such is the draw for governments of the authority granted by the concept of measurable and definitive social truths that these academic criticisms have yet to substantially change the direction of policy in many areas – including education. Arendt identifies in this moment of ontological uncertainty both opportunities for new actions free from the burdens of tradition in a way that was not possible in previous centuries, and the threat of responses from those who would seek to impose new forms of control to fill the void. A brief educational example of an attempt to reinstate authority in a new guise should help to illustrate this.

British educational policy since the 1980s has aimed towards the increasing quantification of educational achievement, reliant on the epistemological claim that

ⁱ It is here that I think Arendt's argument is at its weakest, since comparable acts of genocide were arguably committed in the Americas and elsewhere; however, while it may be possible to argue that those Christian conquerors found self-justification for their actions through Church authority, one can safely assume that Hitler's rejection of the 'Jewish pity-ethic' in Christianity in favour of 'a strong belief in God in our nature' was a cynical and tactical appropriation of Christian belief from the outside. Such qualifications, however, make it sensible for us to regard Arendt's account as a useful meta-narrative rather than an inclusive historical truth.

academic results, such as a GCSE 'C' grade, relate directly to real, objective and commensurable standards – and that mark schemes provide tools to assess work against those enduring standards. Thus, conclusions based on the data can be taken as being “as unopposable as virtue itself” (Shore & Wright, 2000, p.61). However, a range of social factors – political expediency, class, ethnicity, economics, demographics – have been demonstrated to affect not just students' performance, but both the tools and the standards themselves (e.g. McCallum & Demie, 2001; Thomas & Mortimore, 1996). As Pring (2000) has argued, it is simply not academically justifiable to attempt to gauge educational achievement as if firmly linked to objective standards; yet the belief that this can be done is central to the contemporary cross-party discourse on education in British politics. Statistics and grades have become the new authority, claiming access to a higher realm of knowledge than that of the mere experience of teachers, students and parents; their transparent, comparable nature also promotes a culture of competition in which social stratification is both actualised and made visible – more as a 'natural fact' of differing achievement between social classes (as in Plato's Republic) than as a complex web of personal and local factors.

Arendt suggests that in the silence left by the break in tradition the question we must answer is “... not 'What are we fighting *against*' but 'What are we fighting *for*?'” (Arendt, 2006, p.27, italics in original). Similarly, Dewey states that, 'since education is a social process... a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies a *particular* social ideal' (1966, p.99). While the political legacies of social segregation and of authority of the intellectual over the practical remain, we are now in a position to criticise them more clearly from the outside, and to question their relevance to the present. The future of education will be realised somewhere on the spectrum of possibilities between centralised policies which seek to recreate objective natural categories and order provision around them, and an open, experimental, humane and democratic negotiation of approaches on the other. The default movement – urged by the momentous weight of history – is towards the former; the latter, Dewey argues:

... may seem remote of execution, but the democratic ideal of education is a farcical yet tragic delusion except as the ideal more and more dominates our public system of education (*ibid.*, p.98).

Given the barriers to a dialogic model of action highlighted in these historical analyses, as well as the new opportunities for its implementation, the next section looks at the possibility of, and enabling factors for, dialogic action in education.

2.6 Freedom, will, faith

My interest in this chapter is in the enabling and inhibiting factors towards action in the context of democratic education. So far this argument has focused on the intrinsic difficulty of engaging with the other, and also at the cultural and political barriers against – and opportunities for – action outside restrictive tradition. This section will look at the intra-personal or psychological barriers to action, again drawing parallels between the analyses of Arendt and Dewey. I will look at their definitions of freedom of action in a historical context, and their related definitions of ‘the will’, in order to cast light on how the will is mobilised in the cause of action. The section concludes with a discussion of the nature, role and object of faith in this context – and its centrality to both will and freedom.

Freedom is an emotive and ambiguous word – a combination that can be dangerous when it is ill-defined. The first critical distinction is that between freedom *from* and freedom *to*. If one claims that one is fighting for freedom, is it freedom from an oppressor, or freedom to pursue one’s interests, possibly at the expense of others? Arendt first argues that freedom is ultimately a political issue, since the intellectual debate around whether our thoughts and actions are physically and/or mentally determined in advance seems to have no practical bearing on our *experience* of freedom to choose and act in the political sphere; without the assumption of the possibility of freedom to act, the idea of politics would become instantly meaningless: “the *raison d’être* of politics is freedom, and its field of experience is action” (Arendt, 2006, p.144). However, much of the Western tradition of thought has concentrated, largely as a result of disillusionment with the political sphere, on the concept of freedom *from* politics – most notably an “inner freedom” which is an escape into the mind so that one might “*feel free*” (*ibid.*, p.144). Political philosophers such as Hobbes and Spinoza, for example, tried to equate freedom with security (freedom *from* interference) as the aim of government (*ibid.*, p.148). Arendt locates the root of this

idea in antiquity with Epictetus, who argued that one should limit one's actions to the sphere in which one had absolute control – the sphere of the self – and thereby become free from one's desires. Similarly to the Greek conceptions of democracy and the *vita contemplativa*, this path is only open to those who are already free from the demands of others through tyrannical control over their household and affairs; Arendt also notes that this move to escape is in itself an escape *from* the political realm, so that the awareness of lack of control in relation to others is prior and necessary to the idea of the escape into the self (*ibid.*, p.146). Freedom cannot then be conflated with moral and spiritual concepts of self-mastery or enlightenment outside the public sphere; nor is it tenable to conceive of a society in which the state contrives to keep each of its members free from the interference of all others, since that would by definition cease to be a society. Freedom must therefore exist in negotiation with others.

Dewey reaches a similar conclusion: the notion of an individual's absolute freedom *to* act at the expense of others would imply that the individual ceased to act within a society – where a society is that which is created by the working together of people in pursuit of shared, negotiated goals. Freedom *from* others' actions, on the other hand, would also imply that recourse is made to a higher, non-negotiable authority. For Dewey and Arendt, then, freedom is neither a quality nor a possession, nor is it a force in the world; it is a process, instantiated only through action with others. All freedom in the political realm, then, is freedom *to*; what we regard as freedom *from* is merely the changeable result of that negotiated process.

In the Christian writers St Paul and St Augustine, Arendt identifies a change from Epictetus' view of the self being kept under control through the actions of a cast-iron will; their experience was that the will is not the executor of freedom but that which falls short of action in a dialogue within the self:

... the two-in-one of solitude which sets the thought process into motion has the exactly opposite effect on the will: it paralyzes and locks it within itself; willing in solitude is always *velle* and *nolle*, to will and not to will at the same time. (Arendt, 2006, p.157)

This is perhaps most clearly illustrated by Augustine's exasperated prayer: "I had prayed to you for chastity and said, 'Give me chastity and continence, but not yet'" (St

Augustine 2004, p.68). Our sense of having a will arises from our failure to single-mindedly pursue our chosen courses of action: to experience the will is to be in conflict. Arendt notes in this the beginning of a dominant philosophical interest in freedom as mastery of the internal dialogue – as “will-to-power” – rather than as a political issue (2006, p.161). This is one that leads down a blind alley, since the nature of the will is always to resist, never fully overcoming. Freedom is the freedom to act; action is made possible by apprehension of the intellect and the application of will; yet these two alone, for Arendt, do not constitute freedom: “It is... as though the moment men *willed* freedom, they lost their capacity to *be* free” (*ibid.*, p.160). Freedom, then, cannot spring from the intellect and the will, but from “something altogether different which... I shall call a principle” (*ibid.*, p.160) – which does not exist within the self but only within the act of its realisation.

Dewey, in his discussion of the will, appears to fall into Arendt’s trap; he calls the will “the deliberate or conscious disposition to persist and endure in a planned course of action in spite of difficulties and contrary solicitations”; he describes a strong will as “executive”, while “a weak will is unstable as water” (1966, p.128). However, Dewey does not see the will as a quality of the person, deriving from character, but as an attitude towards the future – “an active identification with positive consequences” (*ibid.*, p.133) – which is contingent on particular situations. One’s will reflects one’s sense of interest in one’s surrounding environment, and the possibilities of action within that environment that present themselves to the intellect. Weakness of the will, on the other hand, is a failure of the intellect to have sufficiently thought through the consequences of possible actions, and thereby to become discouraged in the face of difficulty, rather than some integral failure of the personality. Dewey attacks the traditional conception within education that the student’s failure to engage sufficiently with the material is down to a weakness of will to be countered by further discipline; rather, he argues, it is a failure in the material, or the relevant choice of material, or in the method of teaching, that failed to make clear the inherently motivating opportunities for new action made possible to the particular student through the study at hand (*ibid.*, p.133). The commonplace belief that students should develop the capacity to persist with that which is of no discernible interest to them is inhumane and ultimately futile, since the consequence is that the students learn not to engage

the intellect in the activity. For both Arendt and Dewey, then, the will is not a measurable, characteristic quality but a force that follows from the intellect's situated apprehension of possible courses of action: it is an experience within that process, where the source is outside the self.

So what is the source of action, or Arendt's "principle", if it is not the will or the intellect? Arendt cites as examples of principles: honour, love of equality, excellence, fear, and hatred (2006, p.151). These are manifested in actions, during the performance of which the actors themselves are free. The skill in performance, and thereby the capacity for freedom, is "virtuosity" – similar to that of a musical performer, in which the artistry is not in the product but in the action itself (*ibid.*, p.152). The ideal society, therefore, is a "theatre" where such virtuosity can be performed and appreciated by all its members; within this web of plurality one can act, and react to others' reactions. I would suggest that Arendt's citing of principles does not sit comfortably with her location of uniqueness within action: how can one's action both instantiate a universal principle and be uniquely one's own? Instantiation of principles leads to the kind of reification that Arendt is otherwise trying to avoid.

Biesta finds a different metaphor for the source of action: imaginatively trying, within the context of pluralism, to understand the position of the other – whilst intelligibly retaining one's own (Biesta, 2006, p.89). Using Disch's phrase, Biesta calls this "visiting", which he argues matches with Arendt's description of "being and thinking in my own identity where actually I am not" (*ibid.*, p.241) – in a common phrase, putting oneself in someone else's shoes. By this account, the source of action is not principles but the space of difference opened up through the act of communication with the other: what was earlier defined as dialogic space. Our unique actions are thereby called into the world by the voice of the other, and our response of trying to understand the other and ourselves simultaneously. This is what I believe Dewey means when he states that "mind and intelligent or purposeful engagement in a course of action into which things enter are identical" (Dewey, 1966, p.137). We emerge as unique individuals through the active expression of our engagement with the other, the unknown – a situation that requires a new and personal response for which both our learnt responses (habits) and the learnt responses of others (information) are not adequate. Out of this engagement, Dewey argues, it is not

necessary to forge a common identity, but to agree common goals as a way of existing socially within plurality (*ibid.*, p.5-6). Action, this suggests, starts not with the will's drive, but with the other's call.

Two final questions remain: why is the call of the other so seductive, and what drives us towards it if not the will? Boldly, Arendt answers this by citing Jesus' claim that it is faith that has the power to move mountains. She sees faith as the quality required to create "miracles" – by which she means unique actions which could not possibly have been foreseen (Arendt, 2006, p.166). For Arendt, it takes a "miracle" (in fact, a series of miracles) to overcome the inevitability of the influence of the past upon the present – "the automatic processes to which man is subject" (*ibid.*, p.167). We are beset on all sides by the inexorable stagnation of civilisation; in response, the will could only attempt to apply the habits of mind and body that have already been developed in response to the *status quo*. What is needed instead is steadfast faith in the possibility of the unknown other, in new beginnings – in "the hidden source of production of all great and beautiful things" (*ibid.*, p.167). It inheres in us because we are capable of beginnings; it descends upon us as an act of grace. Caputo (2001) makes the distinction between the "future present" – the future that the present is tending towards, and the "absolute future" – one we do not see as possible in terms of what we currently understand (*ibid.*, p.8). The latter, he argues, enters religious territory – even if it is, in Derrida's phrase, "religion without religion" (*in* Arendt 2006, p.11). Caputo argues that it is our experiences of the impossible – perhaps Gandhi's defiance of the British Empire, or one's cheerful persistence with a house of cards – that give life its savour, elevating it above the everyday and predictable. It is our faith in dreams, that compels us, in Arendt's sense, to act. While this quasi-religious perspective could scarcely be further removed from current educational policy, it is, I believe, something like this faith that draws educationalists into their field, and that feeds our society's deep-seated belief in the power of education to build a better society.

In the next section I will explore some of the tensions and contradictions generated by Dewey and Arendt's radical views within their own work on education, and investigate potential paradoxes arising from both Biesta's and Wegerif's responses to the possibility of education based on dialogic theory.

2.7 Childhood, intervention, contradiction

Education... [is] always an intervention into someone's life – an intervention motivated by the idea that it will make this life somehow better: more complete, more rounded, more perfect – and maybe even more human. (Biesta, 2006, p.2)

Education is inevitably interventionist, socialising and normative. Even if one were to attempt to use pedagogy as if it were a neutral technology, it would still be based on fundamental ethical beliefs about what 'good' education is, and the role and value of the student in society. In the case of the current climate of targets and testing, therefore, we must look beyond the definition of 'better' as increasing pass-rates and ask: better for what? What ends are we looking to reach? What values are we looking to embody? Taking a position is unavoidable, and that position – relating inevitably to the relation between individuals and society – cannot avoid being both political and contestable. At the same time, in looking to argue for a theory of education, it is better to avoid polemic in favour of seeking common ground with others with different views in order to shape the possibility of a future to which we might all aspire. In this section I will attempt to show the extent to which all the key writers I have focused on reflect this fundamental tension, and how it requires accepting a paradox in order to reconcile it.

The inescapable conclusion of undertaking education intentionally is that one must have an end in mind; yet, as I have argued, any attempt to specify an outcome for education would be to negate the essence of the dialogic process, substituting instead a dialectic motion towards a final perfection of speech and ideas. While such an idea, as espoused by Habermas (W. Carr & Kemmis, 1986) may have admirable intentions, it cannot avoid the arrogant assumption that it reflects some objective ideal of truth – and that there is agreement as to how to get there. Dewey sees this as anathema to education; he argues against any ultimate end in education in favour of concentrating on the chosen object at hand. As soon as one sets an ultimate object for activity, that activity becomes "a mere unavoidable means to something else" while "the object alone is worthwhile" (Dewey, 1966, p.106). This, he argues, is the spirit of education which values the attainment of educational targets above the specific activities involved in the process of getting there. In addition, the fixing of ultimate goals reduces the possibility of flexibility in education – the ability to adapt to one's

environment and to the changing interests and desires of students. Instead, our educational aims must remain experimental, growing and changing in response to experience. Dewey takes as his metaphor for this approach the method of scientific enquiry, in which aims are tentative hypotheses: guiding one's course of action, but remaining useful or not solely in the light of the process of experiment and interpretation.

Here Dewey's argument is vulnerable. Such is his esteem for scientific methodology that he calls it "the organ of general social progress", representing "emancipation from local and temporary incidents of experience" (*ibid.*, p.130). He goes further in his later work, *Experience and Education*, suggesting that scientific thinking is the basis of intelligent action:

There is nothing in the inherent nature of habit that prevents intelligent method [exemplified by science] from becoming itself habitual; and there is nothing in the nature of emotion to prevent the development of intense emotional allegiance to the method (Dewey, 1938, p.100).

The trouble with the above is that it implies an inability to step out of the experimental mindset, especially when coming to terms with the other; by binding emotion to the service of reason, the ability to imagine the experience of the other is diminished. Dewey's philosophy here implies a morally graded progression towards the abstract and measured, an 'emancipation' from everyday experience – despite his earlier insistence that that approach taken alone leads to dry, bookish egotism. This sits uneasily with Dewey's contention that "social life is identical with communication", with "seeing it as another would see it... so that he can appreciate its meaning" (*ibid.*, p.5-6) at its heart. He is in danger of re-establishing a dualism between our relation to the material and social worlds:

... scientific method is the only authentic means at our command for getting at the significance of our everyday experiences of the world in which we live (Dewey, 1938, p.111).

This also implies that there is a unitary scientific method – a contention with which the history of science does not concur (Chalmers, 1982). There is no recognition of "interruption" here; none of Arendt's sense of "miracle". Intelligent action has become chained to the notion of cause and effect. This is the basis of Biesta's critique of

Dewey, arguing that he ultimately advocates education with an end in mind: the development of a fixed notion of “social intelligence” which makes his vision of democracy possible (Biesta, 2006, p.131). However, I would argue that in these passages of Dewey the phrasing reflects the strength of his belief in the benefits of scientific thinking in an age of discovery and technological advance, as being symbolic of what is possible. For him, it was the flexibility of scientific thinking that he idolised rather than a fixed idea of its essential nature. He argues that children must not be “put on the waiting list” for adulthood (Dewey, 1966, p.54), but that their “immaturity”, with its curious and questioning qualities, is just as valuable and beneficial as adults’ maturity (*ibid.*, p.41). Similarly, Dewey does not have a fixed idea of what democracy is – a fault which he criticises in Plato – but that democracy itself is a process of communication (*ibid.*, p.87); finally, “social intelligence” is not a quality one possesses but that one demonstrates *through* engagement with the world. Although I believe this demonstrates the essentially dialogic spirit of Dewey, Biesta’s criticism highlights the tension between his general theory of education and his passionate, political belief in the importance of science in his contemporary world.

Arendt’s essay, ‘The Crisis in Education’, reveals a similar tension: despite her insistence on the inherently political nature of action, she argues that:

Education can play no part in politics, because in politics we always have to deal with those who are already educated (2006, p.173).

The implication is that children cannot act, and that they must be prevented from trying until they are taught how to do so. For Arendt, this must be done through their coming to know their traditions and history, protected from the influences of the political sphere; the aim must be “... to teach children what the world is like and not to instruct them in the art of living” (*ibid.*, p.192). Yet such a representational model of the world runs counter to a dialogic theory of action, in which the meaning of the world is derived through action itself (see p.35). Such is the strength of Arendt’s personal belief in the importance of history and tradition in understanding ourselves and the world that she here condemns the young to be its unquestioning inheritors. Similarly to Dewey, her contextual political beliefs belie her general philosophy, reflecting a fundamental tension between mapping an ontological basis for the world and arguing for one’s own position within it.

Both Biesta and Wegerif, writing in a time when postmodern perspectives within education have been well articulated, avoid such contradictions; however, each reflects particular political positions and approaches. Biesta's starting-point is his reaction against the new culture of "learning" with its implications of consumerism and market orientation (2006, pp.22-24). While Wegerif hints that he shares the same concerns about the functionalist nature of education in a capitalist society (Wegerif, 2007, p.299), he presents his argument as a contribution to the existing field of pedagogy, entering into rather than rejecting current debates on taxonomies of thinking skills, transferability and the nature of creativity, for example. He presents his metaphor of "reflective dialogue" as a Venn diagram, consisting of the integration of creative, caring and critical dialogues which are the "primary colours" of thought (*ibid.*, p.156). While he does not argue that this is an objective model of reality, it is still presented as a model, an approach. This is an unavoidably political act: it is designed to inform pedagogy within a national system of education imposed through a central authority and curriculum. Biesta's approach is a critique from outside the system; Wegerif's is an attempt to influence education policy from the inside in the light of existing works and perspectives within the educational community.

One cannot separate personal beliefs about the nature of human beings and the educational process from arguments for a founding ontology of education. Even dialogic space remains a metaphor, despite what I find to be compelling arguments for our use of it to understand the world. The process of advocacy for educational change is fundamentally rhetorical rather than impartial. Thus, I suggest that we must find a way to honestly admit and incorporate our unique perspectives and passions into argument, rather than to attempt, by sleight of hand, to move from the personal to the universal in an attempt to locate our positions as unchanging truths.

2.8 Summary

Despite their differences in personal belief and approach, there is in these four writers a shared belief in the process of living in difference, and in its importance to education.

In response to the first research question, '*what are the implications of dialogic theory for democratic education?*' the following is taken forward: 'dialogic space' as the site of

ethical education, and dialogue as a valuable 'end in itself'; 'democratic action' as responding to the other openly and creatively in a spirit of solidarity, where freedom is always in negotiation; the role of the teacher as a bridge between the wealth of abstract human knowledge and the real lives of students; and finally the difficulty of pursuing this agenda in the face of an educational tradition steeped in a foundational belief in objective standards.

These ideas will inform the discussion of the next chapter, "Can we teach for democracy?", the subsequent frameworks for analysis of the empirical studies of democratic education interventions, and the subsequent discussion of the findings.

While it draws heavily on philosophy, this argument is not intended as a contribution to ontological theory *per se* but as a useful framework for discussing and evaluating democratic education initiatives.

3 Can we teach for democracy?

3.1 Introduction

If we take care of political freedom, truth and goodness will take care of themselves (Rorty, 1989, p.86).

In the previous chapter I avoided any attempt to define one key term in my title: 'democratic'. This was because to do so risks a paradox: as soon as we think we know what democratic education looks like, or what a democratic citizen must do, then we are in danger of training young people for a particular view of democracy imposed from the outside. Similarly, to have a fixed structure, pedagogy or outcome for democratic education would be to model young people's democratic futures on our present understandings. Also, the question remains whether democratic education can be a curriculum subject or aspect discrete from the rest of the education programme – and therefore largely knowledge-based and theoretical – or whether to be meaningful it must be integrated throughout school life, affecting everyday activities and structures – and therefore largely experiential. The former approach risks hypocrisy by seeking to teach about democratic participation without allowing sufficient opportunity to practice it; it also raises questions about whether, how, and from what standpoint one should assess students' knowledge of citizenship. The latter poses substantial theoretical and practical problems: how could we agree on the range and scope of democratic participation afforded to students when the question of which actions are 'good' is a highly political one? Would such an approach imply that students should share in the design and control of their own education – and if so, to what extent?

This chapter looks at these difficulties by focusing on the recent history of citizenship education in the UK since the introduction of citizenship as a subject in the National Curriculum in 2002. It argues that its current forms of delivery are failing, and that new approaches are needed that reach beyond the school. Instead of a formal curriculum, a 'negative' model is proposed: that democracy is best served by creating the spaces in which value-led action can emerge, be practiced, criticised, and refined – rather than

attempting to teach it. From this context, it is argued, democratic qualities can arise and be nurtured.

3.2. Citizenship in the curriculum

3.2.1 The introduction of the citizenship curriculum in England

In 2000, the Government commissioned a review committee under Bernard Crick whose report led to the development of a citizenship curriculum, implemented in 2002. Perhaps given extra impetus by Crick's past role as politics tutor at university to the then Education Secretary, David Blunkett (Frazer, 2000, p.90), this represented a historic departure from both the conservative and Marxist traditions of distrust of state-sponsored civic education. The wording of the introduction seems to place it firmly in the radical tradition of encouraging young people to become active agents of change rather than obedient recipients of cultural norms. It envisioned:

...no less than a change in the political culture of this country both nationally and locally: for people to think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting; to build on and to extend radically to young people the best in existing traditions of community involvement and public service, and to make them individually confident in finding new forms of involvement and action among themselves. (Crick, 1998, p.7)

Yet by 2005 the head of OFSTED had concluded that "citizenship education is the worst taught subject in secondary schools" and observed that schools "are seldom judged to deliver very good teaching in this subject" (Pike, 2007, p.476). It is argued below that the key factors for this failure are: the balance of theoretical and knowledge-based content against practical activity; disagreement over whether citizenship should be taught as a discrete subject or integrated throughout the rest of the curriculum; and the extent to which citizenship education has been seen to fit into, and to be of value within, a managerial discourse of performativity and assessment.

3.2.2 Balance of theory and practice

On the face of it, the curriculum which followed Crick's report incorporated both theoretical and practical approaches to citizenship. The four essential elements of the

Citizenship curriculum included “values and dispositions” and “skills and aptitudes” alongside “concepts” and “knowledge and understanding” (Crick, 1998, p.41); concordantly, the current citizenship programme of study requires that 13-16 year-olds should be able to:

...work individually and with others to negotiate, plan and take action on citizenship issues to try to influence others, bring about change or resist unwanted change, using time and resources appropriately... [and] analyse the impact of their actions on communities and the wider world, now and in the future. (QCDA, 2010)

While this stops short of compelling either students or schools to take responsibility for getting practically involved in extra-mural community activity, the clear implication is that such involvement is vital to the development of the dispositions and skills necessary for citizenship. Crick’s concluding paragraph begins: “But, since we learn by doing, the practical experience of citizenship is at least as important as formal education in its principles” (Crick, 1998, p.61). There is an implicit understanding here that the active and practical elements of citizenship education may be the hardest to implement, since they work against the grain of traditional classroom-based learning – and therefore greater efforts must be made to ensure that they are implemented. By contrast, the knowledge-based elements such as the workings of the Houses of Parliament are much easier to teach in a traditional fashion – but also run the risk of being perceived on the one hand as boring and irrelevant by students (as was believed at the turn of the 20th Century (Heater, 2001, p.112)), and on the other as complicit in promoting the *status quo* without developing students’ critical faculties – a criticism levelled at US civic education (Frazer, 2000). This distinction, therefore, mirrors that between the conservative and liberal approaches to citizenship: a knowledge-based approach implies teaching respect for established norms, best done in the classroom; an active approach implies encouraging criticality and working for change in the wider school and community. Crick wanted both – but was under no illusion as to the extent of the systemic resistance against active citizenship.

Despite Crick’s strong encouragement, an extensive report on the progress of citizenship education in schools in 2006 suggested that “active citizenship” was: limited to a minority of students; did not generally extend beyond the classroom; generally involved participation but not decision-making (such as charity fund-raising);

and did not connect the curriculum to whole-school issues (Ireland, Kerr, Lopes, Nelson, & Cleaver, 2006, p.vi). The report suggested that this is not due to a lack of student interest – it notes students’ strong desires to be more involved in and to have greater responsibility over decisions concerning their school environments and wider communities (*ibid*, p.72). It also stressed the potential for such activity to have significant and positive personal and wider social benefits for students and their communities (*ibid.*). However, the report also presented evidence that, as a result of some schools’ narrow focus on the delivery of the compulsory classroom-based elements of the citizenship curriculum: “...the citizenship curriculum has become divorced from the notion of citizenship as an active practice with links to the school culture and wider communities beyond school” (*ibid.*, p.74). Indeed, in this England is in contrast to many of its European neighbours, which, like Ireland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Holland, require that children must be substantially represented and involved in decision-making in matters of school policy (Deuchar, 2009, p.27). A key reason for this lack of representation, it is argued below, is the way school curricula and systems of accountability militate against active citizenship.

3.2.3 *Accountability and assessment*

While incorporating citizenship into the National Curriculum greatly increased the amount of time and effort devoted to its teaching, it has also raised difficult questions about its nature and appropriateness as an object of study. The Ireland report above suggested that schools have struggled to implement it as designed and intended; OFSTED have recognised in a quarter of schools what they adjudge to be a ‘continuing misunderstanding and dismissal’ of the subject (2006, p. 11). While researchers have considered the youth of the subject as a contributing factor, many have argued that fundamental incompatibilities are encountered when trying to fit citizenship education into a standard curriculum subject model.

In attempting to explain the apparent failure of citizenship to establish itself as a functioning course in many schools, both Pike (2007) and Garrett and Piper (2008) draw on Foucault’s analysis in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979) of the link between institutional forms of assessment and authority over the individual. While Crick insisted that citizenship education should develop “values and actions” as well as

“skills and knowledge” (Pike, 2007, p.472), there is no capacity within current models of examination to detect, assess and measure students’ values and actions. Indeed, to attempt to do so would raise a host of further questions about the right and role of the state to instruct in areas of students’ personal lives and their beliefs, and the extent to which students’ values and actions are influenced by their families and their wider social activity (*ibid.*). The products of curriculum assessment systems, such as an ‘E’ grade in GCSE History, are not generally considered to make a statement about a student’s moral character. However, the prospect of an ‘E’ in citizenship presents us with a choice: either we separate that which we look to measure in citizenship into the purely individual theoretical, knowledge-based element and the cooperative, active, participatory element, and then assess only the former; or we incorporate a judgement on values and action into the result and brand the student a below average citizen. Given that the latter would require all examiners to adopt a single elevated moral position from which to judge students equitably – a concept manifestly both undemocratic and absurd – citizenship courses and examinations have been designed to take former route, with the onus left on schools to incorporate the participatory element as a non-assessed add-on to the theory-based course (Ireland, et al., 2006). Given the near-universal pressure in UK schools to focus on performance in external examinations, marginalisation of non-assessed activity is inevitable.

A personal study of examination papers in GCSE Citizenship revealed a mixture of on the one hand abstracted, short factual questions prefixed with words such as ‘identify’ and ‘outline’ (for example, “identify one type of mass media”) and on the other, longer answer questions that elicit discussions of the links between possible citizen actions and their potential political results (for example, “Attending a music concert or marching can be a form of protest. Identify two other forms of protest action that are likely to bring about change”). Identifiable throughout is a morally neutral stance: at no point does the question paper suggest either that students *should* take action, or that there are any *right* moral positions. The choice of issues and contexts, such as Fair Trade and the debate over young people’s attitudes towards voting, at times imply that some activities are morally worthy – yet at the same time students are also required to come up with an equal number of arguments against any positive case they make. The tone of the papers is to encourage students to learn to view certain

prescribed issues of citizenship critically and even-handedly, expressing ideas on paper in an essay-like style familiar comparable to other language and humanities disciplines. In order to prepare for examination, the student is subtly encouraged to renounce passion for reason, advocacy for impartiality – to see issues of citizenship as an intellectual exercise in studying social cause and effect. Pike points out that although this approach may be designed to avoid moral and political conflict, it is not without moral and political implication. Citing Foucault, he argues that examinations are a form of authoritative power which create “rituals of truth” which enframe the students who take them (Pike, 2007, p.478); while ostensibly not morally judging students, the citizenship exams nonetheless contribute to a system that seeks to differentiate students in order to hand out unequal reward – in contradiction to the egalitarian values that underpin the liberal concept of citizenship. At the same time, the pressure applied by OFSTED for writing-led assessment (*ibid.*, p.480) contributes to this process of differentiation by ensuring that those already performing well in other subjects are given a head-start in their citizenship exams, and the skills and style they have developed is directly transferrable. While research into teacher attitudes reveals widespread reluctance on their part to assess citizenship activity (Davies, Harber, & Yamashita, 2005, p.103), it seems that Crick’s fears for the citizenship curriculum before its inception are being realised:

Without the experiential, participative side of citizenship learning, some schools could turn (and still might if inspection does not follow the aims as well as the precise language of the order) the brave new subject into safe and dead, dead-safe, old rote-learning civics. So easily examinable. (Crick, 2000, p.119)

The Ireland et al. and Davies et al. reports, however, are mostly based on evidence from England; there is evidence from the other countries of the UK that the citizenship order can, and has, been interpreted and implemented differently.

3.2.4 Citizenship in the rest of Britain

Both the Scottish and Welsh education systems have a history of both of interpreting central educational directives differently, and using their autonomy to differentiate their approaches from those in England – a trend that has become more pronounced since the creation of the devolved assemblies (Jones, 2003, p.2-4). In Wales, the implementation of the Citizenship Order has been influenced by its experience of two

distinct cultures: the more rural, Welsh-speaking centre and north, and the more industrial, English-speaking south (Garratt & Piper, 2008, p.484). The response drew on the Curriculum Council for Wales' 1993 document, *Community Understanding*, which emphasised "the need to develop distinctively Welsh elements of culture, while acknowledging the need to celebrate diversity" (*ibid.*). This rejected the formalised English, civic-based model of citizenship in favour of a community-based, bottom-up approach that sought to help students build their identity through drawing on different levels of involvement from the local to the global. It is striking that the Qualification and Curriculum Authority for Wales' 2003 document, *Developing the Curriculum Cymreig*, makes only one mention of the word 'citizenship' (within the phrase 'global citizenship'); instead, it focuses on opportunities to explore the themes of identity, belonging and participation throughout the curriculum, with specific reference to "practical involvement in the community" and "knowledge about democratic systems" within the personal and social education (PSE) curriculum (ACCAC, 2003, p.10-11). In this conception, the strengthening of a shared national identity through citizenship is eschewed in favour of fostering composite, personal and local identities developed through interaction with the wider community (Garratt & Piper, 2008, p.485) – there is an implicit rejection here of citizenship as a hegemonic, centralising, English concept. By refusing to distinguish citizenship as a separate subject, and also refusing to formally assess PSE (although a KS4 course may be introduced (Garratt & Piper, 2008, p.492)) the Welsh Assembly Government has also resisted assessment of citizenship knowledge and skills – and therefore avoided the drawbacks discussed above.

By contrast, the Scottish approach has been to embrace and redefine the concept of citizenship. In 2000, a year after the re-establishment Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Executive Education Department included "Values and Citizenship" among its five national priorities (Cowan & McMurtry, 2009, p.62). In distinction to what they saw as the definitions of the Crick report, the Scottish Citizenship Advisory Group in 2002 "adopted the definition of young people as citizens today rather than as citizens in waiting and said that 'citizenship is about making informed choices and decisions and about taking action, individually and as part of collective processes'" (*ibid.*, p.62). As in Wales, the Scottish model was to attempt to integrate citizenship within the wider

curriculum rather than as a discrete subject. The authors' subsequent research, however, suggested that this keenness from the Scottish Parliament was not strongly reflected in Scottish schools where, like in England, many schools and teachers saw themselves as either too busy to implement a comprehensive approach to citizenship across the school or didn't see it as a priority at all (*ibid.*, p.70). Whereas the Scottish model has tried to distinguish its conception of citizenship from that of England, putting the emphasis on participation rather than curriculum and assessment, its approach to doing so has had more in common with the top-down English approach than the Welsh – arguably, resulting in a similar degree of inconsistency and resistance.

The resistance to a discrete citizenship curriculum outside England, the insistence on a community-led, rather than a civic-led, understanding of democratic education in Wales, and the widespread resistance from teachers to assessment in citizenship together present a strong challenge to the British Government's approach to fostering democratic practice among young people since 1998. Centralised policies have looked to create and shape young people's democratic participation through citizenship education provision; its perceived need to align this provision with the machinery of academic assessment has brought up further inconsistencies and pressures. The Welsh model, by contrast, asserts that nurturing a sense of belonging and responsibility on a range of levels from the local to the global is a more appropriate way to foster democratic participation. While many young people in Wales are distrustful of 'community', often associating it with parochialism, interference and irrelevance (Bentley, Oakley, Gibson, & Kilgou, 1999, p.8), Garratt and Piper point out that such tensions can, as they have between the North and South in Wales "with considerable care" (Garratt & Piper, 2008, p.486), lead to a climate of local discussion, inclusion and accommodation regarding issues of identity and democracy.

This approach comes much closer to Dewey's of democracy as a practice rather than a subject: rooted in the awareness of difference and the commitment to continue to forge democratic practice and solidarity through dialogue and communal action. It regards politics as not deriving principally from the structure of governmental institutions, but from the sphere of public action. It acknowledges and welcomes diversity and difference as the fulcrum of the discussion from which the meanings of

identity and agency are continually reconstructed. The next section will look at how one might move beyond citizenship as it has been traditionally defined and practiced in search of a genuinely democratic theory of education for young people.

3.3 Beyond citizenship education

The argument of the previous chapter was that fostering a culture of democratic participation among young people cannot be left to schools alone. This is because the structures of accountability and performance that dominate current practice are antithetical to democratic action, and also because identifying with, and participating within, a wider community is essential to establishing a rooted dialogue between different perspectives from which such a culture can emerge. Concluding their report on citizenship education in the UK, Ireland *et al.* found that alongside the potential benefits of active citizenship education come practical, cultural and political constraints: the possibility of real openness and responsibility for students' activities; school organisation and resources; the compulsory curriculum; the extent of wider community involvement; and the political drive to hold schools accountable for reaching set targets in curriculum delivery and examination performance (Ireland, *et al.*, 2006). Formidable barriers exist, then, to the realisation of citizenship provision in which active participation is least as important as theoretical knowledge. This section examines a range of challenges to current conceptions of citizenship and education for democracy, and attempts to draw together from these a set of definitions for a dialogic approach to democratic education.

3.3.1 Students as 'not-yet-citizens'

Crick's model for citizenship sought to develop a climate for active democratic citizenship – however, its implications for the system of delivery have proven too radical, and instead citizenship has largely been vitiated of its active element and been recast as another contained and theoretical subject in most UK schools. However, Biesta, Lawy and Kelly (2009, p.7) argue that the approach to active citizenship of the Crick Report itself starts from a wrong premise: it sees students as not-yet-citizens who must learn to become so through prescribed, school-led activities. Citizenship is thereby portrayed as an outcome rather than a precondition of education. This then

requires finding suitable, approved 'extra' activities through which students can develop and demonstrate desired 'citizenship skills' – which schools do not have the time, resources or mandate to enforce (*ibid.*). It puts the onus on students to prove individually that they are or are becoming good citizens; it implies that this is a qualifying process in which not all will succeed. Instead, Biesta, Lawy and Kelly argue for an approach based on a Deweyian conception of democracy as not primarily an institutional structure or body of knowledge but as 'a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience' (*ibid.*, pp.8-9); the implication for citizenship education is that it must start by exploring students' experience of already *being* citizens: their relations with others, their role within institutions such as the school, and their perceived senses of freedom and agency within these personal contexts.

An overemphasis on knowing children are 'doing citizenship' may betray an all too instrumental mentality that fails to treat children ethically or to respect the subtlety, richness or diversity of their lives as citizens. (Pike, 2007, p.484)

Young people are always learning about their rights and responsibilities as citizens through their everyday interactions – not just through the 'hidden curriculum' (Meighan & Harber, 2007, p.75) but as part of the fabric of their everyday lives outside school. The extent to which they will become democratic citizens will reflect the extent to which they feel they are taken seriously, treated justly, given a voice and held to account for what they do. The perception of many students of the school as an undemocratic institution is a critical factor which undermines genuine citizenship education by ensuring that they feel alienated from the start.

From a North American perspective, Kesson (2008) highlights links between overarching government strategy and the nature of citizenship education provision in schools. She argues that the current approach to citizenship education in the US, promoted by George W Bush's administration as part of the *No Child Left Behind* initiative, was designed to reinforce obedient patriotism through a concentration on traditional history and civics and on the act of pledging allegiance (*ibid.*, p.169). In analysing this, she draws on Raine Eisler's distinction between two major paradigms of values and behaviour in the modern world: the "dominator" model and the "partnership" model. She argues that the former paradigm 'is characterised by relations of control, domination, manipulation, rapaciousness, and competition' – and

is foremost in contemporary politics and government. The “partnership” model, by contrast, is characterised by “equity, caring, sustainability, non-violence, and justice”, and is growing “beneath the surface” via thousands of community and non-governmental organisations (*ibid.*, p.170). While acknowledging the over-simplicity of this distinction, Kesson argues that it is nonetheless useful for understanding the difference between conservative and liberal forms of citizenship education. Allegiance to the flag represents an unquestioning belief in the *status quo*: the value of individual competition between students in the race for financial reward, and the right of the USA to continue to dominate international affairs and the world’s resources at any cost – including the recourse to violence – rather than to engage in substantive dialogue with others (*ibid.*, p.173). She collectively terms these as indicators of “weak democracy”: minimum participation, focus on individual rights and property, citizens as passive consumers of state provision; support for the current systems of governance – while “strong democracy”, on the other hand, is “a way of life characterised by empathy, equity, commitment and connection” (*ibid.*) led by actively engaged citizens. In the long term, she argues, the practices of weak democracy are not enough to uphold good governance and a functional society.

Analogously, one could argue that the practice of citizenship education in England has been adopted and directed by government – using a dominator model – in order to try to meet its specific objectives and concerns. These are also in defence of the *status quo*: building support for voting within a representative democracy; promoting understanding of and obedience to the law; promoting voluntarism to support communities perceived as crumbling; reinforcing the belief in qualifications – through which students earn integration into the current system – as the valued outcomes of education. Biesta and Lawy (2006) argue that a discourse of citizens as passive consumers of services such as education, rather than as active agents in agreeing on how to distribute and use resources equitably, began under the Conservative government of the 1980s and continued under the succeeding New Labour administration (*ibid.*, pp.69-70). By enshrining the language of ‘choice’, both reinforced the notion that the role of citizens is to choose (where possible) between alternative sites of provision rather than get directly involved in shaping their local school. This fits Kesson’s criteria of weak democracy, where stakeholders leave it to external providers

to determine the nature of communal provision – a form of outsourcing of community services. While the current Conservative administration talks of a ‘Big Society’, which claims to address this issue by giving parents the chance to establish and run ‘free schools’, it is too early to know what the outcome will be. In any case, the stakeholders empowered in this new discourse are providers of education and parents, not students; it implies that parents will shape their children’s opportunities for democratic participation as they see fit, and that students would remain the subjects rather than the agents of citizenship education.

3.3.2 Student voice as democratic citizenship

Lodge (2005) notes that following the turn of the century there has been an increasing body of research claiming the benefits of student voice and student involvement in the life of schools; influential in this movement have been Lodge herself, Flutter and Rudduck (2004), Fielding and Bragg (2003), and Arnot, McIntyre, Peddler and Reay (2004). Reflecting a similar typology from Fielding (2004), Lodge argues that there are four types of approaches to student voice: quality control, students as a source of information, compliance and control, and dialogue. The first two focus on the needs of the institution, not the individual; the first and third see the student as passive, not active, in the process. While sharing many of their aims, Lodge critiques Flutter and Rudduck for stopping at the idea that it is helpful for students to talk about how they learn best; this, she argues, may be immediately empowering but doesn’t recognise the added value of students and teachers committing to a process of joint enquiry around and through learning (Lodge, 2005, p.137). Fielding mirrors this criticism:

Too much contemporary student voice work invites failure and disillusion, either because its methodologies and contextual circumstances reinforce subjugation, or because its valorisation pays too little attention to the extent to which young people are already incorporated by the practices of what is cool or customary. Transformation requires a rupture of the ordinary and this demands as much of teachers as it does of students. (Fielding, 2004, p.296)

To try to ameliorate students’ experience of the conditions of learning without engaging them in a dialogue about what those conditions are, why they are, and how they might be instead, is a form of compliance; in addition, without developing within

students a desire to investigate these conditions actively, they will in consultation be ruled by “what is cool or customary” without critical engagement. For both Lodge and Fielding, the way forward for voice is its conception as dialogue: substantive, equal, valued, and with real practices and resources at stake. Anything else risks letting students down further by appearing to value their voice but only then changing surface features: the “tokenism” set out in Hart’s “ladder of participation” (Hart, Espinosa, Iltus, & Lorenzo, 1997).

Whitty and Wisby’s (2007) extensive survey of schools’ and students’ attitudes towards, and use of, provision for student voice revealed a marked gap between perceived its importance and its practical influence. This is most notable regarding the main tool of student voice used in schools: the student council. A large-scale survey of secondary students suggesting that while over half were aware that they had a council, “less than a fifth thought their councils were effective”, and the main areas of influence were on “toilets and chips’ issues” (Wyse, 2001, p.311). Less than 10% of students felt they had the right to a say on matters of teaching and learning.

For a democratic process to take place, a culture of shared ownership and responsibility must be in place; measures to promote student voice, even those unusual ones doing so by trying to promote genuine dialogue, will not succeed until this is addressed. Students start from a mindset of endemic disempowerment, and addressing the school environment alone is not sufficient for the development of agency. Nonetheless, the concept of genuine, engaged dialogue as the pathway for meaningful student voice supports the argument of this thesis. The next section looks at initiatives to try to turn schools to face challenges in wider society in the search for sites for developing agency.

3.3.3 Citizenship and futures

So far I have highlighted several objections made on liberal and philosophical grounds to imposed curricula of citizenship. Another minority voice arises from those who foresee that today’s young people will soon have learn to respond creatively and dynamically to increasingly urgent environmental and social challenges if they are to avert civilisational catastrophe. Richard Slaughter, presenting evidence of impending environmental disasters and the radical consequences for Western societies of the

dwindling of fossil fuel supplies (Slaughter, 2008, pp.58-60), argues that schools, in the face of this challenge, 'are still caught up in past perceptions of problems' (*ibid.*, p.64) – especially in endless reiterations of the 'conservative' versus 'progressive' debate in which neither side directly addresses these crises. He contrasts the farsightedness and relentless energy which multinational companies invest in modelling, and adapting for, future scenarios – for the purpose of securing their future profit margins – with the intransigence of educational bureaucracies who see their purpose as 'minding the shop' (*ibid.*, p.66) on behalf of governments with short-term priorities, resisting significant challenges to current practice as determinedly as white blood cells defend the human body from outside infection.

School systems have been run, by and large, as if the future remained open and unproblematic. That was once a reasonable assumption but it no longer is. The future of humanity is currently under greater threat than most are willing to admit... Schools need to face these facts. They need a more dynamic and responsive structure... They also need to develop their own specifically futures-oriented understanding more fully than ever before. (Slaughter, 2008, p.70)

Slaughter cites as typical the development of a pilot course in Futures Education in Queensland, Australia which received very favourable reviews from students and teachers alike. Based around the use of a range of simple-to-use tools and approaches, he argues that such courses can develop "foresight" in young people – which transforms their perspective on the future from one of inevitable and uncontrollable deterioration towards it being "awe-inspiring", engaging and open to change (*ibid.*, p.68). The subsequent foreclosure of this course despite its proven worth, Slaughter argues, is symptomatic of endemic bureaucratic short-sightedness and intransigence in the face of all radical pedagogical initiatives – not just in Futures Education. The previous chapter suggests a similar process at work in the translation of citizenship education in the UK from Crick's original vision to its current cautious, theoretical realisation. Directives for the development of active citizenship did not need to be met with concerted resistance; rather, they were simply broken against the immovable rocks of established procedures and practices – often driven there by the periodic waves of regime change and budgetary cutbacks during which all bar core subjects become vulnerable.

Slaughter's concept of foresight makes similar assumptions to those of active citizenship: the belief in the power of one's own individual and collective actions, and a willingness to take responsibility for challenges ahead. So defined, foresight, like wisdom, is intrinsically good – while foresight gained but not acted upon is morally reprehensible. The aim of Futures Education as described here is not impartial academic understanding and prediction but an extension of understanding to include acting in favour of desired, consensual outcomes. To extend the analogy, citizenship education thus imparts a moral imperative not just to learn about civic life but to act in the service of society. Systemic pressures to contain citizenship education within academic norms of impartiality and objective assessment, therefore, are similarly reprehensible as they fail to encourage and support young people in taking responsible personal action, and thereby developing the skills and confidence that will help them respond to a challenging and uncertain future. From this perspective, the intransigence of educational bureaucracies is not only limiting the development of young people's capacities to act democratically, but also working to prevent the next generations being equipped to take radical and urgent action in the face of impending disasters. More than a change in curriculum, need schools need "a more dynamic and responsive structure" (Slaughter, 2008, p.70) in which students have greater autonomy, and their actions can have real value and consequences.

3.3.4 Citizenship, postmodernism and dialogue

Wegerif provides a postmodern challenge to current models of citizenship provision (Wegerif, 2009), arguing that the Internet can act both as a powerful metaphor and as a tool in exposing the weaknesses of present conceptions of citizenship and in enabling people to redefine and recreate it. Drawing on a range of research into non-literate and early literate cultures, Wegerif suggests that the primacy of either form of communication in civic life implies a particular approach to ethics, belonging and citizenship. Oral cultures generally have "participatory" approaches where face-to-face dialogue promotes "the Golden Rule, or 'do as you would be done by'", as the basis for acknowledging others' rights; on the other hand, most exist in a state of perpetual conflict with those outside their social group, and with whom therefore there is no dialogue (*ibid.*, p.2). Cultures with written codes of law, by contrast, tend to emphasise "'monologicality': the assumption that there is only one true perspective or voice"

(*ibid.*, p.3), which has historically often been linked with a canon of sacred texts – from Hammurabi’s Code of Laws to the Bible – which outline standards for morality and judgement of behaviour. The implication is that the morality of human relations has already been fixed, and that the challenge for individuals lies in the interpretation and application of those codes. The ability to write and transport codes of conduct was a precondition of empire; they have been copied and transported as a way of centralised authorities extending their hegemony over distant populations (*ibid.*). In the modern era, nation states still use written laws as the basis of their identity, intertwining questions of justice and citizenship within a largely fixed medium controlled by the central authority. While this allows for communities of strangers under one code to interact peacefully, and even for different nations to communicate on the basis of shared values, it requires the imposition of fixed ideas from above. Neither of these models allow for a dialogic and inclusive approach to citizenship education which would enable young people to contribute to a living discourse around responsibility and community, locally and globally.

Wegerif claims that interactive technologies such as Web 2.0 can – but not necessarily will – give us the benefits of both oracy and literacy: genuine, substantive dialogue and the means to write, share and edit it around the world. He cites Poster’s argument that it can challenge the modernist conceptions of national sovereignty and rational autonomy on which our world system has been largely based:

Electronic culture promotes the individual as an unstable identity, as a continuous process of multiple identity formation and raises the question of a social form beyond the modern, the possibility of a post-modern society. (Poster, 1995, p.398)

In an age of instant global communications and networking, traditional authority is partially undermined as meanings and decisions are perpetually contested. Citizens can form wider, international allegiances and come into direct contact with different voices – or they can seek out exclusively like-minded opinion and interests over a far wider area and reinforce their isolation from different perspectives. Wegerif argues that this morally neutral technology offers important opportunities for education to encourage young people to take the former approach (Wegerif, 2009, p.5): if they can become disposed to reach out to the other in the spirit of solidarity rather than tolerance (see p.24) and of seeing difference as an opportunity rather than a threat,

then the 'call' of difference will promote their active participation in local and global contexts. In Levinas' terms, this would be a culture of "infinite responsibility" towards the other (Levinas, 1989), where in responding to the other's call we realise that we cannot know in advance what the impact of our connection will be – and are therefore morally bound to try to put ourselves in the other's shoes.

Wegerif's perspective contains the germ of a postmodern vision for a democratic society: through such engagements our identity could become increasingly less confined by static inherited constructs such as nationality and cultural group. While these notions would persist, their meanings would no longer become fixed and citizens could interpret and adopt them flexibly. New encounters, debates, allegiances and compromises could continually come into being without the need for isolating and contentious fixed points of identity and moral judgement – a state of active and living dialogue with difference in which the goal is not resolution of difference or establishing a shared identity, but only dialogue itself. This raises questions about the nature of democratic states, as this approach could not be imposed by law, but would have to develop culturally – and state institutions would have to lead, encourage and adapt in response.

Wegerif's dialogic theory draws heavily on Derrida's notion of 'différance' (see p.21); Derrida, however, argues that democracy, and the notion of a democratic state, are 'aporetic' or fundamentally paradoxical. First, there is an irresolvable tension between the rights of the individual and the group:

There is no democracy without respect for irreducible singularity or alterity, but there is no democracy without the 'community of friends' . . . without the calculation of majorities, without identifiable, stabilizable, representable subjects, all equal (Derrida in Patton, 2007, p.773).

This requirement to identify, fix and count subjects in order to represent them and to hold them, and be held, to account is in perpetual tension with a democratic recognition of the right of individuals to be respected as unique and changing – and to be valued equally in their beliefs even when they conflict with those of the majority. Secondly, democracy is required to represent the voices of those within it who reject its values and processes:

Democracy is the only system, the only constitutional paradigm, in which, in principle, one has or assumes the right to criticize everything publicly, including the idea of democracy, its concept, its history, and its name. (Derrida, 2005, p.87)

From the perspective of the state, however, these voices can lead to non-democratic takeovers such as the Nazi regime or a fundamentalist uprising (*ibid.*, p.33). Therefore, in order to preserve the right to representation of its citizens, democratic states are paradoxically forced to suspend the rights of some citizens to speak and act – protecting democracy at the same time as undermining it. Derrida calls this an “autoimmune process” (2005, p.35) of defensive self-destruction where not acting would also be destructive. These paradoxes partly arise from, partly are compounded by, the fact that democracy is not an abstract concept but an idea inherited from antiquity intertwined with a long and complex history of contingent practices (Patton, 2007, p.772). For Derrida, these tensions and contradictions mean that there is no ideal form of democracy, nor any possibility of its attaining a perfect form; instead it should best be seen as a “militant and interminable political critique” (Derrida, 2005, p.86) of deconstructing present practices. In doing so, the object should be working towards “the democracy to come”, which Derrida says “...will never exist, in the sense of a present existence...” (*ibid.*) because it can have not defined structure that would avoid contradiction., Instead it must be a process which “...must have the structure of a promise – *and thus the memory of that which carries the future, the to-come, here and now*” (*ibid.*, p.85-6, italics in original): democracy (in the desirable form of the “democracy to come”) is thereby defined as active intervention in the world in reference to its own future ideal. The tautology is held off only through continued action, which allows it to remain a quest rather than a fixed state.

Derrida’s paradoxical “democracy to come” accords with Wegerif’s belief as dialogue as an end in itself; it also parallels Slaughter’s call for an education system based around preparing young people to respond to the unknown and unexpected. Taken together, these make a strong case in favour of an approach to democratic education based on encouraging young people to continually rediscover their values in dialogue with others, and to further them through engagement with a range of communities. This is also the spirit of Crick’s intentions for citizenship education. The pursuit of an active citizenship agenda would be inherently exciting and risky, since it requires that children be allowed to take action to influence their context in line with their values;

yet only through such experiences can they develop crucial the habits and dispositions that will allow them to act powerfully in the wider world. To learn *about* democracy and citizenship is not sufficient; children must be actively challenged and supported to *be* democratic citizens. Democratic education, then, must concern itself with the opening of spaces rich in opportunity – and which offer the chance for informed reflection and meaningful action. Yet to realise this model would require a serious investment by the wider community as well as by schools – not so much of money but of time, interest, responsibility and trust in young people to allow them the scope to more fully express their membership as citizens in society. This would require a general cultural shift in understanding of the purpose and forms of education, detaching it from the ossifying and near-tautological position that it is ‘the thing that goes on in schools’ towards an on-going active dialogue about how young people can learn to act meaningfully and responsibly personally, socially and the world. Such a dialogue inevitably – and uncomfortably – turns the mirror of scrutiny upon adults, their roles and their institutions as well.

3.4 Conclusion

I have argued that a dialogic ontology provides the most useful perspective for undertaking education in a democratic spirit: it promotes dialogue across difference, the emergence of students’ uniqueness through ethical relationships, and a pluralistic society – all without recourse to a singular, hierarchical authority.

The relations between students and educators remain difficult under this model – especially the use of “transcendental violence”, or forcing students to be free (p.26) – is only negotiable in the unique relations between individuals rather than through fixed rules. Dialogic education considers young people not as needing to be prepared for society and adulthood, but as in society already – as people in the process of becoming through their thoughtful response to and reflection on others and their environment. As such, it makes no concrete distinction between the process of education and that of life itself, no separate realm requiring a discrete philosophy. Rather than making recourse to the ultimate end of an ideal person or state, it declares itself an end in itself – an endless process of beginnings and becomings in

communication with others. It leaves the idea of human nature “radically open” (Biesta 2006, p.9). The implications for ‘teaching democracy’ are radical for school and wider society: a move away from regarding democracy as a subject, and towards practicing it as an integrated way of life, with children as full citizens. Such a move would require a substantial cultural shift as well as one in educational practice.

In summary of the arguments developed in *Chapters 2 & 3* above, the following propositions are put forward to shape the methodology and be tested by the two studies:

- a. Dialogue is central to ethical education*
- b. Ethical education is necessarily democratic*
- c. Democratic education requires opportunities for practical action*

These will be revisited in *Chapter 8* in light of the findings and analysis.

4 Leadership education as a site for democratic dialogue

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter proposed a dialogic theory for democratic education. This chapter develops the concepts of ‘responsible leadership’, ‘dispositions for learning’, and a ‘pedagogy of challenge’ with reference to the relevant literatures; it explores how they might be combined to create a framework for testing the above theory. These concepts were developed in response to the opportunity to carry out research into the effects of short courses in leadership education on teenagers as part of this PhD study (see p.11). A theoretical model for developing responsible leadership in students is proposed, which was created and refined during and after the initial study, and which informed the main study.

Section 4.2 briefly outlines the concept of student leadership in the current discourse of British schools. *Section 4.3* defines ‘responsible leadership’; *Section 4.4* defines ‘dispositions for learning’; and *Section 4.5* defines ‘a pedagogy of challenge’. Finally, *Section 4.6* looks at the significant literature in student leadership that was published too recently to influence the methodology, but which informs the discussion chapter.

4.2 Student leadership

4.2.1 *Tensions in the concept of student leadership*

The concept of ‘student leadership’ can be read as an oxymoron: the student is, after all, traditionally conceived as a follower, not a leader. Most students have no formal role of authority within the school, while the teacher leads by virtue of his or her role of authority, which is granted in turn on the basis of superior knowledge, and ability to impart that knowledge. This authority is then backed up by the power of teachers to invoke institutional sanctions against transgressing students. Fielding (2004), Lockyer (2003), Woods (2005) and many others have argued that this hierarchical model is culturally more persistent in education as compared to other fields of social life, where flatter hierarchies have become more popular and acknowledged as more productive (see 4.3.1 below). The factors involved in this have been discussed in *Chapter 3*.

However the teacher, while leader in the classroom, must often be responsive and accountable to senior management at the expense of personal and professional autonomy and authority, while management is in turn accountable to an inspectorate who, in turn, must interpret government policy; finally, that government policy is so subject to the perceptions of its palatability and popularity among the public in a democratic country. Between different strata of this hierarchy there are also substantially differing and conflicting values, which are in turn shifting and changing (Cribb & Ball, 2005), as are the terminologies used to express them. So, the possibility and practice of leadership at any point in the educational hierarchy is made greatly more problematic by the fact that both the means and ends of education are hotly disputed. Within this frame of perpetual controversy, the voice of children themselves is heard the least – they have been kept on the outside of a debate *about* them rather than *involving* them (Flutter & Rudduck, 2004, p.3).

This makes the role of students harder to interpret in the context of a traditional conception of leadership, as applicable across all contexts including those outside education:

“... a process whereby intentional influence is exerted over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization.” (Yukl, 2010)

Inasmuch as students are seen as the *object* of such processes, then, student leadership is meaningless – except to the extent that directed training and appointment of students in particular aspects and roles of leadership (to be prefects, for example) suits the values and purposes of others. Strain (2009, pp.70-71) argues that there has recently been a linguistic “turn” in discussions of leadership in education to privilege strict role hierarchy, emphasise the role of “school leaders” – that is, senior management – in setting the values and directions of the school, and to frame not only students, but also classroom teachers, outside that discussion. Instead they have become increasingly accountable to external systems of performance measurement in ways that exclude them from influencing those values and directions. In this, UK Governments have been influenced by thinking from the USA which has regarded education as similar to other types of business, and therefore focused on identifying outcomes for delivery and setting targets to raise productivity (Leithwood & Riehl,

2003). Fullan further asserts this as a “moral imperative” , firmly allocating leadership to principals alone (Fullan, 2003); while he suggests that test scores are not alone the aim of all schooling, he does not suggest anywhere else in his book what else might be. In a bilateral gesture, he particularly praises the direction of the English education system since 2000 – highlighting the intellectual leadership of Michael Barber, Head of the ‘Delivery Unit’ in the New Labour Government who, with the full support of the Prime Minister Tony Blair, described this direction as moving “...toward a new phase: informed professional judgment. This means teachers who are driven by data and by what the data tell them” (Barber, 2007, p.186). Barber positions data-driven decisions as being opposite to what he calls “uninformed professional judgement” (*ibid.*), that is, any teacher’s practice before the implementation of the regime of national standardised testing and government-led targets. This constitutes a bold rewriting of history whereby nobody in the millennia-old history of pedagogy really knew what they were doing until the 1990s. It offers an absolute challenge to the idea of students’ and teachers’ voice alike as it implies that they cannot know how well they are doing, and at all that matters is their standardised performance. While the language of succeeding Conservative administration has been couched more in favour of returning to the rigorous standards of a previous generation, the growth of the system of accountability to management and government has continued apace. The result is that teachers are under pressure not to be open to the voices of students as they may conflict with those of management or Government, whose criteria for success do not recognise or incorporate those voices.

Nonetheless, Yukl’s definition of leadership above can also be interpreted as putting students on the inside of the leadership process, affording them the opportunity to exercise influence on their own actions and direction, on each other, on teachers, and on the wider school and community – and in the process becoming greatly more motivated. This can be rationalised in terms of the arguments in *Sections 2.5, 2.6 & 3.3* above; within the literature on leadership, this is substantially mirrored by Frost’s conception of student agency, which is examined in the next section (D. Frost, 2006).

4.2.2 *Student leadership in British schools*

As argued above, there has been a growing emphasis since the late 1990s in the English education sector on leadership in schools as distinct from, but related to, their management (Strain, 2009, p.67). Two examples among many are the formation of the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) in 2000 with a remit to promote high-quality leadership among school leaders, and the implementation in 2004 of the statutory National Standards for Headteachers outlining the key areas in which they are required to perform. The great majority of these initiatives focus on the top-down leadership rather than in developing leadership capacity in students (C. Day et al., 2009, p.151).

There was, however, one brief crossover. In 2001, the NCSL also commissioned a course for developing leadership in students using the same key areas as the National Standards, which was devised by the University of the First Age and Community Service Volunteers, and which both organisations continue to deliver independently to date; it is one such course that forms the context for the initial study detailed in *Chapter 6*. However, this initiative was only funded for a year and student leadership was subsequently removed from the NCSL's remit. There has since been a great deal of research into adult school leadership (for a review see Bolden, Case, Gosling, Hooper, Kinsella, Ladkin, Ladkin Neville Osrin, et al., 2005), but student leadership initiatives have not received sustained government funding or sustained academic study. This may reflect an wariness at policy level towards suggesting that students might have the right to question and influence both the structures and content of their learning (R. Frost, 2008); it may also reflect a pragmatic interest in higher-level school administration rather than in leadership at the level of students' personal development.

An exception to this is the work of the Leadership for Learning Group based at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge (see for example D. Frost & Roberts, 2011; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009). Drawing on previous work on student voice (Fielding, 2004; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004; Rudduck & MacIntyre, 2007), Frost makes the jump from demanding forms of student representation and participation to putting the exercise of leadership, or student agency, at the heart of the learning process itself

– and recognising it as one of the most valuable aims of education as a whole. Of the ‘Carpe Vitam’ project, in which schools and students jointly explored shared leadership, he argues:

“In our discussions the agential nature of learning became clear: real learning enables human beings to make a difference not just to themselves but to the world around them and opportunities to make a difference stimulate and drive learning forward.” (D. Frost, 2006)

The more recent work of the Leadership for Learning group in exploring the principle of agency in practice in schools was published too late to inform the methodology of this PhD study; as such it is described in more detail in *Section 4.6* below. However, Frost’s conception of agency has strong parallels with Arendt’s concept of ‘action’ as described in *Section 2.4*; in sidestepping opportunistically into the field of leadership, then, I would argue that this study has found an ally in the Leadership for Learning group’s approach. It is this still under-researched area of student leadership that this study looks to develop, both in relation to the concepts of dialogue, citizenship and agency as outlined above, and to the concept of ‘dispositions for learning’ as outlined in *Section 4.4*. The term ‘responsible leadership’ is proposed below to unite these diverse concepts as the basis for a dialogic theory of democratic education.

4.3 Education for responsible leadership

This section works towards a definition of responsible leadership by drawing on elements from two well-developed leadership theories – distributed and authentic leadership – as well as from the concept of leadership for learning outlined above, to frame the role of leadership in terms of the thesis as a whole.

4.3.1 Distributed leadership

In the academic community and among training providers, the model of leadership has largely shifted away from a ‘great individuals’ perspective, which focuses on the leading individuals’ skills and characteristics, towards the concept of distributed leadership, which focuses on the changing relationships within a team with shared goals (Bolden, Case, Gosling, Hooper, Kinsella, Ladkin, Ladkin Neville Osrin, et al., 2005; Spillane, 2005; Woods, 2005). The latter implies that the practices of leading and

following are intimately linked, and that these roles can change depending on the situation. This function of distributed leadership has been variously characterised as “conjoint agency” (Gronn, 2002, p.423), and the “leadership complex” (Gibb, 1969, p.216). Despite differences in definition, Bennett et al. summarised the literature into three principles: that leadership is an “emergent property of a group”; that its boundaries are open to outside influence; and that expertise is seen as “distributed across the many, not the few” (Bennett, Wise, Woods, & Harvey, 2003, p.7). Emergence, openness and plurality are all concepts that were highlighted earlier as central to a dialogic theory of democratic education, making distributed leadership a useful concept for this approach – in particular, its focus on the relations between people rather than on the static properties and roles of the people themselves.

Day’s distinction between leadership training, education and management is also useful here: “leadership training” is for individuals’ present roles; “leadership education”, for individuals’ future roles; “leadership management”, for the present and future of an organisation (D. Day, 2001). Day sees the latter two functions as being equally important in the business context. However, applying this distinction to young people we can conclude that leadership education, with its focus on individuals’ skills and dispositions that will be of use in varied future contexts, is the most important. From this perspective, schools could be seen as ‘safe and confidential settings’ (Bolden, Case, Gosling, Hooper, Kinsella, Ladkin, Ladkin, et al., 2005 p.18) where students are allowed to experiment with different leadership approaches without risk to themselves or the organisation – as would be the danger in the case of a business, for example. Distributed leadership models could afford schools the flexibility and level of delegation required to allow students opportunities for bounded responsibility, and therefore for meaningful action (p.65).

While the concept of distributed leadership has received widespread support, it has also come under criticism for being too vague, and that its associations with valuing all members’ contributions could be used to enforce the delegation of power within a rigid, top-down command structure (Hatcher, 2005; Strain, 2009; Woods & Gronn, 2009). This may be of particular relevance to school contexts: while distributed leadership implies that students should be included in the decision-making process, efforts to elicit student voice may backfire if they discover that, having been given

responsibility and taken pains to gather opinions and form plans, they have no real authority to institute changes (Soep, 2006). In drawing on distributed leadership theory, therefore, I have undertaken to be clear about the ethical and reciprocal nature of the relationships between people in groups in my subsequent data collection and analysis. I would also argue that the use of this theory in name alone to justify deceitful practices does not invalidate its use in genuinely inclusive, democratic contexts. This criticism, however, contains a kernel of truth: that just because leadership is distributed, it doesn't mean it is *good* – and since education is always a normative practice (p.37), a model for leadership education must contain a normative aspect. A further criticism is made along these lines by Woods who argues that distributive leadership is insular and functionalist because it has an analytic framework that does not consider the wider societal and human values that should inform it (2005, p.34).

A further limitation of distributed leadership theory in the current context, as suggested by Day above, is that focuses principally on the structure of a particular current organisation; this limits its utility with school-age children, where the focus is less on the role of students within their present learning institution and more about preparing them as individuals to work effectively in future contexts. This implies that one must therefore also look at leadership models which focus on individuals' personal development to a greater extent than on the institutions or even on the particular groups in question.

4.3.2 *Authentic leadership*

The concept of authentic leadership has been proposed as a “root construct underlying all positive forms of leadership and its development” (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p.316), which focuses not on structures or relations of power but on what makes leadership good; it is grounded in the humanistic psychology of Rogers and Maslow. This normative approach establishes “self-actualization” (*ibid.*, p.319) as the foundation of leadership: acts of genuine leadership are thereby unique expressions of an agent's values through action; the results, they argue, are generally both persuasive and inspiring. This position has arisen in part in response to the perceived absence of genuine, forward-looking leadership arising from “...Wall Street's unquenchable thirst

for quarterly profits” (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005, p.344). Instead, it looks to enshrine more humane values as underpinning our definition of good leadership.

While authentic leadership is significantly different from structural definitions of leadership, it accords with a distinction in common usage. Sometimes when we call for leadership, we are referring to hierarchical models and authority roles, but at other times we refer to the need for values-in-action implied by authentic leadership. This latter normative perspective seems particularly relevant to an educational context: leadership education for students need not be about teaching them to become Chief Executive Officers but instead it could be about enabling students to reflect their values through their actions, both individually and collectively. However, the potentially problematic corollaries of this approach are that one must define examples of bad leadership as not being genuine leadership at all, but perhaps as forms of deceit or tyranny; also, one must assume that the expression of people’s uniqueness is always a good thing. In addition, there are many potential problems regarding identification and assessment of authentic behaviour (see Cooper, Terri, & Schriesheim, 2005).

There are also problems with an authentic leadership approach when applied to education. As implied by Gardner above, much of the literature on authentic leadership emerges from a strongly business-oriented context with a focus on a company’s bottom line (e.g. George, 2003); this may limit the forms of expression of values through action in wider contexts. In addition, examples given in this literature tend to be given as the individual heads of organisations (e.g. Shamir & Eilam, 2005). This conforms quite closely to the structural model of ‘charismatic leadership’ and implies a less distributed approach, as power is implied as naturally residing with one person and reflecting their vision and ideals – a model not appropriate to students and others in flat-hierarchy contexts. Finally, on an ontological level, this approach may also presume that there is a unique and pre-existing ‘self’ within us all, and that natural leaders are revealed as leaders through their authentic action. This may lead to a more determinist view of people’s potential for leadership which is not the most useful in the context of youth education, nor does it sit well with the responsive, relational nature of identity within dialogic theory.

Several of these issues arise in Whitehead's (2009) review of what he identifies as the under-researched field of adolescent leadership theory. Firstly, he advocates authentic leadership as the best option because authentic leaders act as role models for self-awareness, concern for others, building ethical frameworks and commitment to organisational success (*ibid.*, p.851). However, despite criticising existing adolescent leadership programmes for being designed on adult principles, he also transfers the characteristics of wider authentic leadership theory onto adolescents in school programmes. A further serious problem with this approach is that he bases authentic leadership on a mature, ideal skill-set which is rare to find even in adult leaders. He does not go on to say how these might be developed, but only how "natural leaders" who have these skills in development emerge and might be identified, and how they might be encouraged through participation in adult-defined structures (*ibid.*, p.858). The argument of this thesis, by contrast, is that all young people should be seen as having capacity for authentic leadership through the expression of their own values in action in relation to others; students' authenticity cannot be identified and captured to serve existing institutional ends. Similarly, other reviews of the field have focused on the need to identify student leaders with a view to supporting the next generation of contributors to civic society, rather than on the development of leadership capacity among the student population as a whole (Lingis, 1994; Spillane, 2005).

4.3.3 *Defining responsible leadership*

In response to the discussion of these two leadership theories, it could be argued that Heifetz *et al.*'s model of "adaptive leadership" (Heifetz, Kania, & Kramer, 2004) productively brings together elements of both. It demands that all stakeholders in an organisation are consulted in the face of complex challenges, and that the answer lies not in one person's approach but in a joint response – a core principle of distributed leadership. It also requires that all stakeholders are motivated into becoming actively and creatively involved in the problem-solving process, thereby drawing out their best, authentic contributions. However, this approach posits the systematic use of a particular set of tools, firmly orchestrated from the top, in order to bring about this process (Randall & Coakley, 2007, p.328). This approach, therefore, does not allow the space for new ideas and approaches to emerge from a flatter hierarchical structure such as among student peers.

Much closer to the mark is Woods' conception of 'democratic leadership' (Woods, 2005). This is a compound, subtle and persuasive theorisation which focuses on 'a commitment to key values and ideas that are the foundation of democracy' (*ibid.*, p.xx) and of which the aims are to: 'share power', 'share hope', and 'share the fruits of society' (*ibid.*, p.xxi). It is also well-suited to the context of education, and particularly that of student leadership, in that it argues of democracy that:

"Its centre of gravity is the flowering of the person – his or her positive attributes, capabilities and unfolding *humanistic potential* – in a social order in which they are actively and self-consciously engaged." (Woods, 2005, p.16)

This is a conception that mirrors to an extent the argument presented in *Section 3.3.3*: that democracy is not a fixed state of governance or human relations but a continuing process of personal development in a society committed to such a process. However, Woods' account is not compatible with the theoretical framework of this thesis with regard to at least two of the principles that he maintains must underpin democratic leadership: "integrational towards human capacities" (2005, p.39), and "oppositional". With regard to the former, I will argue in the next section that a fundamental problem with looking to develop 'human capacities' is that, as with looking for desirable 'dispositions for learning', there can be no way to definitively agree on any one mutually exclusive list of such capacities, which are inevitably normative and thus contestable. For example, by choosing to locate our "primitive sense of what is right" in the child's cry of "it's not fair!" (*ibid.*, p.39), he privileges this over the arguably equally primitive sense of what is best for oneself, regardless of others, in the child's "I want it!". The reason for this privileging of the social and egalitarian is apparent in the second principle; Woods argues that, "Democratic leadership recognises the need for an oppositional stance to the dominance of instrumental rationality and the alienating character of the social order" (*ibid.*, p.44). While the broad political sentiment here is in tune with the argument of this thesis, the commitment to opposition within the definition of student leadership makes genuine dialogue with the Other impossible. Instead, it contains an in-built and fixed commitment to the type of Marxist dialectic espoused by Paulo Freire (see p.79 below) that fixes its own immovable version of truth.

Instead, I suggest another theory: 'responsible leadership'. It combines the openness, emergence and plurality of distributed leadership with the normative element of authentic leadership, and also with the teleological openness that dialogic theory demands. It posits a dialogic ontology (Wegerif, 2007, p.27) in which good action emerges as an ethical response to an encounter with different people and perspectives that preserves the possibility of freedom of action for all parties within and outside the relevant group. The challenge offered by such encounters to member's beliefs, opinions and plans *calls forth* appropriate responses, reflecting their values while respecting the *otherness* of the other (Biesta, 2006). This model implies that there is no fixed underlying 'self' which is revealed through good action, since responses are always embedded in context; rather, agents' uniqueness is instantiated, and briefly visible, only in the moment of responsible action (Arendt, 2006, p.151). In common language it is not about people *doing what they want to do*, but about them *doing what's there to be done* in a way that is uniquely their own. It argues for a shift away from educationalists attempting to teach students *about* citizenship towards allowing students to learn how to *be* democratic citizens through providing genuine opportunities to act (e.g. Biesta & Lawy, 2006). Responsible leadership, therefore, requires the cultivation of dispositional qualities: habits of mind and character that stimulate young people's intrinsic motivation for communication and action, and enable them to respond actively, insightfully and ethically to new and challenging situations. The next section examines what educating for such dispositional qualities might look like.

4.4 Dispositions for learning

To be a good learner you have to be able. But if such capabilities are necessary, they are not of themselves sufficient. One has to be disposed to learn, ready and willing to take learning opportunities, as well as able. (M. Carr & Claxton, 2002 p.10)

Schools tend to take a largely "abilities-centric" approach to learning (Perkins, Tishman, Ritchhart, Donis, & Andrade, 2000 p.269), placing far less emphasis on the motivational and habitual factors which underlie ability, generate intrinsic motivation and are transferable between learning contexts, and more on the expression of that

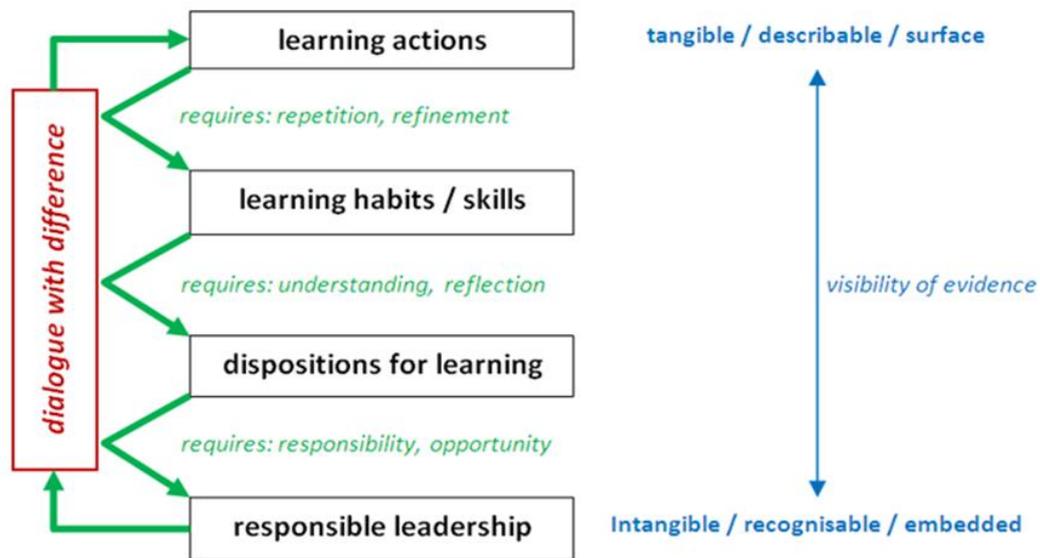
ability in particular contexts – especially in relation to subject-based examinations. In the assessment of academic subjects, the factors of readiness and willingness can be largely bracketed out by the use of high-stakes examinations and assignments. These provide set times, places and deadlines for students’ work and strong extrinsic motivation to succeed. Perkins and Tishman’s studies have suggested that, given subsequent opportunities to utilise knowledge and skills acquired for formal examinations, students may neither be able to identify such opportunities, nor be willing to act upon them – and that these dispositional factors may therefore be more important than raw ability and subject knowledge, even in the case of academic tasks (Perkins & Tishman, 2001). In this research these qualities are termed ‘dispositions for learning’.

Several attempts have been made to categorise the necessary dispositions for learning, the most prominent being Carr and Claxton’s “resilience, playfulness and reciprocity” (2002, p.9); however, they provide no compelling argument to accept this list above the many others proposed in relevantly similar fields (Coffield, 2002). Indeed, Claxton accepts in later work that dispositions are in danger of being seen as “a class of mental entities distinct from skills” while, unlike skills, they can neither be taught nor tested directly – since the manifestation of dispositions for learning must depend on individuals’ subjective, personal engagement with specific contexts (Claxton, 2008). I propose that these dispositions for learning cannot be definitively listed and categorised objectively, as they can only be observed and interpreted subjectively within particular contexts; instead, they can all be understood as aspects of the single quality of *openness*. By openness I mean a propensity to remove and reject both self-imposed and socio-culturally imposed limits on responding to the call of the other: a readiness and willingness to engage in a genuinely open dialogue with difference and, where possible, to step outside of previously held attitudes and beliefs in search of deeper understanding.

The model in *Figure 1*, therefore, proposes that responsible leadership arises among students through appropriate learning actions and activities which, in turn, lead to the development of learning habits and skills, and then of dispositions for learning. Moving between these stages requires both appropriate contextual factors (such as ‘self-understanding and reflection’) and engagement in a dialogue with difference which

calls students to respond personally and authentically, rather than in ways which are fixed and pre-determined. The model describes a gradual movement from the visibility, tangibility and physicality of learning actions and activities towards the invisibility and intangibility of responsible leadership which, like other complex normative qualities such as wisdom, is describable only *ostensively* – that is, we cannot define it, but we know it when we see it. The model further proposes that responsible leadership leads to new learning actions in response to the dialogue with difference, thereby perpetuating the learning cycle.

Figure 1: A learning cycle for developing ‘responsible leadership’ among students



4.5 A pedagogy of challenge

4.5.1 Introduction

How could the model for responsible leadership above be realised among students? By synthesising the above literatures on leadership education and democratic action in schools on the one hand, and a study of the methodologies of courses in leadership on the other, I propose a new interpretation of the key pedagogical elements for successful education for student leadership. To lay the foundation for this, however, I will start with a brief exploration of the concept of pedagogy. In doing so I will draw on the work of Robin Alexander as someone who has addressed this issue extensively by looking at national conceptions both contemporary and in the past, and at comparable

international interpretations. Furthermore, as Alexander has also been a leading exponent of a dialogic classroom pedagogy, this offers the opportunity to gauge the extent to which his conception of pedagogy is appropriate to this study.

4.5.2 *Conceptualising 'pedagogy'*

In recent times, Robin Alexander has made concerted efforts to contextualise and redefine our understanding of pedagogy (Alexander, 2004, 2008a); in particular, he has sought to distinguish it from what he argues is its pernicious implicit conceptualisation in government discourse. His definition is as follows:

Pedagogy is the act of teaching together with its attendant discourse. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command, in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted. (Alexander, 2004, p.11)

Alexander argues that 'what one needs to know' as a teacher should encompass not merely technical approaches to delivering curriculum content in such a way as to meet assessment targets, but a far broader and more fundamental knowledge and skills base that reflects the wider role and purpose of education as a pillar of 'culture, social structure and human agency' (*ibid.*, p.10). Crucially, this positions the teacher as an *interpreter* of human knowledge and culture in relation to introducing it to children, rather than a *deliverer* of a political, social and cultural perspective handed down from above.

Alexander here draws heavily on Brian Simon's earlier work on pedagogy, which makes a passionate case for the defence of pedagogy from political ideology (Simon, 1981). Simon argued that the UK's particular cultural history, characterised by a traditionalism and elitism that led to a segregation of education provision between the privileged minority and the rest, meant that mass education has been associated with a functional approach based on instilling the basics of reading, writing and good character rather than cultivating inquiring and sophisticated thinkers. The cultivation of such refined characteristics remained the focus of the private schools for the children of the elite. Thus, unlike on the Continent, pedagogy has not been conceived either in scientific terms, or in terms of its most fundamental educational principles (Alexander, 2004); Alexander's large comparative study of classroom dialogue in five

countries found that the pedagogy in the UK prescribed on the whole considerably more passive roles to children in classrooms, as distinct from the approaches in France and contemporary Russia – which demonstrated a wider cultural imperative of teaching children to speak publicly and defend positions as a valued characteristic of citizenship (Alexander, 2001).

Since Simon's chapter, Conservative and Labour governments, gone far further than he had then envisioned possible in encroaching prescriptively into pedagogical territory: most notably through the introduction of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, which have laid down in increasing detail and with an increasingly coercive tone (just short of legal prescription but enforced by the inspection regime) not just what teachers should teach, but when and how they should teach it (Alexander, 2004) This in turn was supported by a revisionist historical narrative that portrayed teachers as well-intentioned but ignorant in regard to good practice, and thus in need of government prescription (*ibid.*, p.16). He highlights the irony of then Education Secretary Kenneth Clarke's preface to the National Literacy Strategy: 'A central message of this document is that teachers have the power to decide how they teach, and... the Government supports that' (DFES, 2003, para 2.7). Instead, such prescriptive central measures demonstrate that pedagogy:

“...should concern itself with competence, excellence and failure in teaching methods rather than learning, curriculum and assessment... Teachers, in this characterisation, are technicians who implement the educational ideas and procedures of others, rather than professionals who think about these matters for themselves.” (Alexander, 2004, p.11)

In response to this political climate, and to a growing body of educational, psychological and neuroscientific evidence (Alexander, 2012), Alexander has since developed an alternative pedagogy of 'dialogic teaching', for which he posits five principles: collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful (Alexander, 2008b). These principles, and the arguments that underlie them, have become highly influential in the field of educational dialogue (Lyle, 2008; Skidmore, 2006). However, while the findings of this study will be interpreted in the light of Alexander's pedagogic principles in *Chapter 8*, I suggest that they are not the most appropriate for underpinning its methodology. 'Dialogic teaching' is first and foremost a classroom

pedagogy, with the final principle of ‘purposeful’ tied strongly to subject-based knowledge. The aim of this study, by contrast, is to enable the development of dispositions for learning that empower young people to put their values into practice through democratic action. The argument of *Chapter 3* was that political, cultural, systemic and practical pressures make such democratic action very difficult to implement within UK classrooms – one that accords with much of Alexander’s analysis above. In this study, then, in order to focus clearly on precisely those dispositions, I have chosen to study extra-curricular courses which, by operating outside of the tightly prescriptive environment of classroom activity, have far greater freedom to do so.

Stepping outside the mainstream of educational practice in itself aligns this study’s conception of pedagogy more closely to ‘critical pedagogy’, as attributed to Paolo Freire (Kincheloe, 2008) in that it becomes implicitly critical of such practice as deficient and even damaging, and requiring a radical alternative. However, while this study looks outside the mainstream for evidence of a democratic pedagogy, it does not, as Freire does, call for ‘radicalization’ of pedagogy (Freire, 2000) as part of a societal revolution along Marxist lines as a prerequisite for lasting educational change, and before which revolution all forms of education are best understood as a form of resistance; Matusov (Matusov, 2009), among others, has argued that this implies a dialectic view of history that narrows the possibility for freedom of democratic action.

By contrast, then, the conception of pedagogy framed by the thesis accords with Alexander’s requirement that pedagogy must be founded in fundamental considerations around the nature of knowledge, society, and our educational institutions in the light of ethics, psychology, philosophy and history. Genuinely professional judgements about what and how to teach should be informed in some measure by all of these, and in ways that are open to new and different interpretations rather than to accord with judgements and prescriptions laid down by others. However, it also accords with the conception of student agency and leadership proposed by Frost (D. Frost, 2006) which proposes human agency as the lynchpin of our meaningful understanding of, and engagement with, the world. By privileging the role of personal and collaborative meaning-making through active engagement with issues which bridge the divide between the classroom and wider society, Frost’s

conceptualisation problematises Alexander's implicit suggestion that pedagogy, and indeed dialogue, can be neatly contained within the classroom and directed principally towards subject-based ends – and that it is principally focused on *teaching* as the way to do this. This perhaps reveals in Alexander's argument a greater degree of *realpolitik* in that he is outlining a formulation of pedagogy more likely to accord with mainstream practice while incorporating radical ideas; inasmuch as this compromise comes particularly at the cost of student agency – especially in regard to choice over what is taught and the direction of learning – it makes it all the less suitable as a pedagogical framework for this study. The process of students taking action to develop their agency cannot fit solely into rigid structures of fixed-length, subject-based, classroom-bound lessons; it cannot focus on teaching as the principle catalyst for learning, as it requires ceding greater responsibility to students for the sites and nature of their engagement with other people and places. While dialogic teaching may well complement and this through its mainly theoretical focus on engaging meaningfully with curricular knowledge, this study must look elsewhere for settings in which a much less prescriptive pedagogy – one of challenge – can be implemented and assessed in relation to developing students' agency through practical action.

4.5.3 *Defining a pedagogy of challenge*

For the purpose of explanation, let us assume that theories of teaching and learning can be divided into two categories: first, those that focus on 'accretional' or 'scaffolded' learning; secondly, and less commonly, those that focus on a pedagogy of 'interruption' (Biesta, 2006). Variations on accretional approaches dominate research on learning theory and accounts within teachers' training: these promote steady, planned progress with the learner being supported to take a series of consecutive steps towards more complex understanding and processes. The expectation is that we largely know what we want the learner to learn, and have strategies in place to enable this to happen. The latter type of learning, however, is one that is more familiar in out-of-school, everyday contexts: being put in situations where people do not know what to do, feel challenged to the point of discomfort, and are forced to adapt, improvise and act in unaccustomed ways in order to find a solution. Examples might include trying to communicate with someone who doesn't speak the same language, or taking on responsibility for others after a family bereavement. While these are usually

accidental experiences, they can provoke profound changes in understanding, motivations and abilities. Biesta argues that this can be adopted as a deliberate pedagogical approach: educators putting learners in situations where they are confronted with very different perspectives, beliefs and priorities – and thereby forced to reconsider, defend and adapt their own: “... it means that education ceases to be a process of giving, and instead becomes a process of asking... difficult questions” (Biesta, 2006, p.85). By presenting personal, context-dependent challenges, an interruptive pedagogy calls forth personal responses that reflect individuals’ personality and values – allowing them to build self-knowledge and confidence. An older term for this, derived from the traditional independent school ethos and picked up by Gosling in the context of leadership, is *character* (Gosling, 2004); the term I propose for an interruptive pedagogy in the context of leadership education, founded in a dialogic ontology, is a *pedagogy of challenge*.

Dewey argues that our very environments can engage us in challenging dialogues “...by means of the action of the environment in calling out certain responses” (1966, p.11); for example, if a boy on an outward bound course is encouraged to climb a rock face for the first time, one might say that the environment *calls for* attributes that he did not know he had. Similarly, I propose that education for responsible leadership should be challenging, communicative, emergent and active, and that a pedagogy of challenge provides the most effective way of creating spaces in which students can make relevant progress in attitudes and behaviour. It should provide encounters with difference which highlight valuable habits and skills for learning and provides the space for students to discuss and improve them; it should challenge their self-imposed limits of what is possible, leading to changes in their dispositions for learning; it should give them the opportunity to act collectively in pursuit of aims they value. It should encourage students to elicit and respond to the perspectives of others. It should do this by putting them in difficult situations in order to call out their unique responses, thereby building their confidence, self-knowledge and a positive attitude – by allowing them to make mistakes and to learn from them. In relation to leadership education, Bennis states “...there is no difference between becoming an effective leader and becoming a fully integrated human being” (1999, p.23); a pedagogy of challenge acknowledges this.

The role of educators in a pedagogy of challenge is twofold: to challenge students, and to create and maintain the spaces in which students can productively, ethically and safely respond to those challenges – with the proviso that a pedagogy of challenge remains intrinsically risky, and that risk must continually be managed through professional judgement and the ethical relationship of dialogue between educator and student.

Is this description of a pedagogy too brief? Would it be stronger for the inclusion of greater detail of approved types of student/teacher interaction, of environment and activity? The argument of this thesis is that it would not. While dispositions for learning and democratic agency could be developed within the subject-based classroom, the particular focus on subject-based knowledge is neither necessary nor intrinsically useful to that development; indeed, it is likely to impose restrictions on enquiry and action that, while necessary in the pursuit of particular paths of learning, are not those being explored here. Nor is it argued that any particular site of activity is greatly more conducive to a pedagogy of challenge than any other. There is a history of using remote outdoor locations to set challenging activities for students; however, as the preliminary study will show, this can be done off-timetable in a school also. Finally, no greater stricture on the nature of teacher/student interaction is required other than it be informed by a respect for the otherness of each, and the desire to promote its expression and learn from it, within the framework of trust and responsibility outlined by Biesta above.

Both studies sought to develop and test this model through the study of courses which to a significant extent used this approach. The next chapter describes the sites of these studies, the methodological approaches adopted, and the developments that took place between them.

4.6 Recent literature on student leadership

The framing and research of this project took place at the same time as a relevant and significant body of work on student leadership in schools was being published. This section reviews this literature retrospectively; while it could not be incorporated into

the theoretical model that informed the two studies, it will nonetheless be integrated into the discussion of the findings.

In a recent book, Frost (2011) discusses the 'Influence and Participation of Young People in their Learning' (IPiL) project, which arose from a body of work on student voice and participation from the Leadership for Learning (LfL) group (e.g. MacBeath, Demetriou, Rudduck, & Myers, 2003; Rudduck & MacIntyre, 2007), and also by Michael Fielding (2004). The aim of IPiL was to record the experiences and views of teachers and students in 26 schools, who attended a series of facilitated workshops over 6 months on exploring different avenues of student voice and participation (D. Frost, 2011, p.869). These included forms of consultative student survey, schools councils and forums, student positions of responsibility, students 'stepping into teachers' shoes', pupils as researchers, and pupils' choices in learning. Frost notes that the first five forms of participation can happen at the margins of school life, remaining separate from the core activities of teaching and learning; the last takes on issues of classroom practice directly, thereby potentially threatening the authority of the teacher. However, by giving students choices over issues related to their learning such as learning approaches, primary school topics, levels of challenge and targets, and even extra-curricular time directed at building learning skills, teachers did not feel threatened (*ibid.*, p.878) – this is not surprising as while initiatives under this heading included activities such as shared target setting between students and teachers, this did little to challenge directly the control of the teacher and the curriculum over the overall shape and direction of classroom practice.

These distinctions help clarify the lines between student voice, student engagement, and democratic participation. Frost summarises IPiL's impact on students by saying, "All of the practices described above make a significant contribution to the quest for experiences which enable students to draw upon their capacity for agency and to develop it" (*ibid.*, p.879), yet he acknowledges that schools must go further to enable full participation and democratic education. Frost then presents the Learning to Lead programme, started in The Blue School in Somerset as a model for LfL's approach to more democratic engagement: here an active and diverse system of school councils and groups holds sway over many areas of extra-curricular activity and over systemic

features such as the school environment. The council actively negotiates with staff over issues that impact over budgets, school resources etc. Students speak with great enthusiasm and conviction about their positive response to the project and the confidence, skills and sense of value and belonging they have derived from their participation; in turn, teachers respond that the students have “become more willing to take risks and try new things” (*ibid.*, p.882). Extra-curricular projects allow students and teachers to step out of their hierarchical roles with respect to subject knowledge and to work alongside each other on shared projects. Some of the projects and groups reach out into the local community and beyond, such as Fair Trade groups and African school links. (*ibid.*, p.883). In turn, The Blue School’s practices have become the inspiration for the creation of a wider network of schools dedicated to spreading such student participationⁱⁱ.

In providing opportunities for genuine student responsibility, dialogue and opportunity such initiatives can contribute to much more active forms of citizenship within the school; however, as Frost notes:

In the initial stages of implementation some teachers have doubts about their students’ capacity to take responsibility and to exercise leadership but experience tends to settle these doubts. A far greater challenge stems from the way that this programme tends, in many cases, to run in parallel to the mainstream curriculum experience rather than being integrated into it. (D. Frost, 2011, p.883)

Frost presents a school in which students have significant influence; however, this is limited by the understandable fact that no part of students’ democratic mandate engages directly with the curriculum or the provision of teaching – its main purposes. In this sense the Blue School is trying to create a democratic community *around* the school but not at the heart of it. The only school in England that currently allows students a full democratic role in all aspects of school life is Summerhill, which after 80 years of running battles with government over its radically egalitarian and participatory approachⁱⁱⁱ, has finally received an official accolade from OFSTED (Welch, 2007) based on the personal development of its students. This is only possible,

ⁱⁱ <http://www.learningtolead.org.uk/index.php>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.summerhillschool.co.uk>

however, through its independent status, removing it from direct local authority or central oversight and control. As argued in *Section 3.4.1*, schools face powerful constraints when they look to involve students in the political processes of compulsory education as distinct from the voluntary fringe. In this sense, students remain 'not-yet-citizens' even in actively participatory schools with a leadership focus. Summerhill is the only school in a position to take a Friarian perspective, and to encourage students to critique the notion of education itself and their relation to it.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has proposed the role of 'dispositions for learning' and a 'pedagogy of challenge' in developing 'responsible leadership'; in doing so, it has created a model for exploring the propositions about a dialogic theory for democratic action, which were outlined at the end of *Chapter 3*. How this model will be tested in practice is the subject of the next chapter.

5 Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to set out the theoretical framework, methodology and method that underpin this study. The shape and style of this chapter reflect both the large amount of theoretical underpinning and the emergent, iterative approach undertaken in this study as a whole. *Section 5.2* provides a summary of the theoretical groundwork previously outlined with reference to the two studies reported in *Chapters 6 & 7*. *Section 5.3* lays out the implications of the theory for the choice of research sites. *Section 5.4* reviews the choice of research methods and potential alternatives. *Sections 5.5-5.8* describe the research design. *Sections 5.10 & 5.11* describe the initial and main study in turn, looking also at how the lessons from the first, and from the other investigations that did not lead to studies as described in *Section 1.1*, shaped the second. The aim is at least to meet the minimum definition of research as “systematic self-critical enquiry” (Stenhouse, 1981, p.103) by showing that significant decisions were taken knowingly and with their assumptions and consequences thought through. *Section 5.12* finally considers considerations of ethics and reflexivity in the study.

5.2 Theoretical framework

Chapter 2 set out at some length a case for dialogic theory in studying democratic education initiatives; it is this theory that provides the framework for this thesis, from its ontological claim that ‘reality’ exists only as a process of constructing meaning in dialogue to its shaping the method of data analysis.

Why use dialogic theory to study education? According to Wegerif, the question of *where* learning takes place offers a challenge to the Western tradition of philosophy based fixed notions of space/time (Wegerif, 2007, p.4). Vygotsky’s spatial metaphor of Zones of Proximal Development implies that learning happens in a space that has already been mapped out, and has now become accessible to the learner through prior study; however, “It does not address easily... the question of how we might teach in a way that promotes creativity, reflection and ‘learning to learn’” (*ibid.*, p.4). This

suggests that using the familiar metaphor of physical space to describe the contexts of learning is inadequate. A better metaphor for where learning takes place is, Wegerif argues, cyberspace: a spatial concept that is meaningful, but cannot be captured by reference to physical computers or cables any more than the products of our imaginations can be said to be mapped out physically in our heads. Wegerif's contention is that "Dialogic space opens up when two or more perspectives are held together in tension" (*ibid.*), and that it is in this nonphysical space that learning occurs. This metaphor presents space as openings for the encounter with difference.

This study is interested in these virtual dialogic spaces as places of uncertainty where young people come into contact with, are challenged by, and respond to, difference – and in how these spaces can be created and managed. As such, it is interested in a fundamentally different understanding of reality than that provided by scientific and common-sense accounts of the 'real world' of physical things, or by that of a dualist view of mind and matter. Whether a dialogic ontology necessarily rejects the existence of a unitary, fixed reality beyond our capacity to imagine it is a moot point; I would argue that it does while others, including Wegerif (personal correspondence, Wegerif, 2010) disagree. Its implications for the realm of meaning, however, are clear: meaning is not tied down to any underlying reality, nor is it ever fixed or final. Rather, it is a response to the questions that we ask and the distinctions that we make in response. While it is shaped by the constraints we experience more or less in common, it exists only as, and through, the process of dialogue across difference. Meaning is a living, intersubjective construction derived from a "metaphysics of *existence*" rather than a "metaphysics of *essence*" (Garrison in Biesta, 2010, p.719); it forgoes the ultimate aims of fixed truth and final agreement in favour of a recognition of dialogue "...not only as a means to the end of knowledge construction but also as an end in itself" (Wegerif, 2007, p.8).

Furthermore, as argued in *Chapter 3*, a focus on dialogic space is highly compatible with the concept of democratic education. The methodology of a democratic education environment is not to direct young people's futures down prescribed paths, but to allow them to create their own through encouraging critical questioning of the world around them and their development of their values in active response. Similarly, it is not teaching fixed, inherited bodies of knowledge that represents their democratic

development, but the process of creating and re-creating knowledge in dialogue with others. The process of engagement, rather than the preconceived terms of that engagement, is the focus. This concurs with Dewey's claim that democracy is primarily a "mode of associated living; of conjoint communicated experience" (Dewey, 1966, pp., p.87) rather than a political system.

Finally, a dialogic approach also fits with the concept of a pedagogy of challenge. This need not be apparent if one assumes that dialogue is always and necessarily positive, cooperative and constructive; Bakhtin's description of dialogue as 'shared enquiry', as interpreted by Wegerif and others, (Wegerif, 2010, p.24) is open to criticism as one could argue that it is possible for people to be engaged in an oppositional dialogue where neither sharing nor enquiry are intended, and yet which leads to productive outcomes – even if they are not realised at the time but only on later reflection. Indeed, a pedagogy of challenge, building on Biesta's "pedagogy of interruption" (Biesta, 2006, p.27), argues that students often learn when deliberately put in situations that disturb their intellectual, physical, emotional, cultural or habitual comfort. Teachers' instigation and management of these situations, with care and insight borne of a personal, ethical relationship with the student, is thus a powerful tool for promoting learners' development. Whether such encounters with difference are experienced positively or negatively generally depends on one's disposition towards the situation at the time; this may indeed change so that an experience that feels uncomfortable is looked back on afterwards as valuable. The argument here is that something like an "ideal speech situation" (W. Carr & Kemmis, 1986), while generally desirable, is not necessary for learning through dialogue as our disagreements and failures in understanding can promote introspection and highlight our need for new approaches. The skills and habits of dialogue must themselves be learned, and often the hard way.

Taken together, these compatibilities strongly suggest the utility of dialogic theory to the present study both ontologically and epistemologically. Like any theoretical approach, a dialogic theory may have weaknesses in the particular contexts of study; these will be examined in the reflection sections of the methodology below and in the discussion chapter later.

5.3 Selecting the objects of study

As researchers, we make political decisions, consciously or unconsciously, when deciding whom we want to ask to speak about what and when we figure out how to do the asking, observing, or measuring. (Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton, 2001, p.324)

The topic of this study – democratic education – rules out, by the reasoning of *Chapters 2 & 3*, the great majority of mainstream educational practice in the UK as potential sites of research. In terms of the above quote, this is inevitably a political statement – particularly so, as it implicitly critiques that practice. My aim in those earlier chapters was to provide a solid and convincing argument for this political stance so that it clear that this decision was made consciously. The theoretical stance outlined there demands that young people be given a large measure of responsibility for their aims and actions in any given educational context. Given how uncommon this is, I have been in a position of having to work with the examples of democratic practices I have been able to find.

Fortunately, I have come into contact with several small-scale educational projects with democratic aims and approaches both through my university and subsequently through wider research and contacts. My associations with these organisations have been in several roles: assisting as a facilitator, observer, participant-observer, and near complete design and delivery of a short course. I have brought my theoretical assumptions and my interests to each of those roles; in turn, my close involvement with these innovative courses and organisations has influenced my theoretical and practical approaches, and in some cases led to a considerable change of direction. I hope it is neither trite nor overly convenient to call this a dialogic approach: combining underlying theory with practical opportunity as part of a continuous pursuit of meanings in context. As discussed in *Section 1.1*, some of these engagements were not sufficiently relevant or productive to become studies in this PhD; the extent to which lessons from the initial study shaped the main study is detailed in *Sections 5.10 & 5.11* below.

There are examples of schools, past and present, running on stated democratic principles (Fielding & Moss, 2010); yet the opportunities for work and research afforded to me early in my study were short to medium-term interventions within

mainstream schools. In some cases, such as the *Aspire* project (see *Section 1.1.3*), this is in the context of schools espousing an aim to incorporate more democratic processes across the institution, for which the initial outside-led interventions are sowing the seeds. In others, such as the initial study, the intervention was seen as a way of enriching the school community by enhancing the skills of some of its best performing students – but not as part of a process of radical change. By contrast, the main study was of a term-long course for students having left school or college, which therefore had considerable freedom in its approach, and deliberately gave participants high levels of responsibility as a deliberate contrast from their previous experiences. Influenced, then, by the opportunities made available to me, my interest has been directed towards understanding and demonstrating what difference democratic activity and pedagogies of challenge can make to students unused to such opportunities, and whether even short interventions can make a significant and lasting difference.

5.4 Review of possible methodologies

5.4.1 Dialogic as a pragmatic paradigm

If this study had been of a well-established democratic school, or even of a school fully committed to a process of democratic reform, then predominantly observation or narrative approaches would have been a logical choice: a longitudinal study attempting to understand the culture of an institution and how it shapes and is shaped by the students and staff. This would have lent itself to a hermeneutic analysis seeking to draw out the meanings and significances of a particular institution's approach – not as a transferrable exemplar, but as an example of what is possible, and how and why it works in its context. This would be firmly located in an interpretive paradigm, not seeking to generalise but to draw out the inherent value of the case studied (see for example Holzman, 1997, pp.107-127).

The approach of this study, however, has been to study more than one short-term intervention, where intervention implies a discrete period of activity significantly different from that which the participants have generally been exposed to in the past. As a result, a case study approach has been selected because the object of the

research is the phenomenon of these democratic education courses and their effect on their participants (Creswell, 2007 p.74-78) – rather than the participants themselves, or the institutions they are in, being the object of enquiry.

The term ‘intervention’ suggests experimentation and has overtones of a scientific, positivist approach; this is common within the positivist and post-positivist paradigms of educational research, where the aim is generally to use statistical measures using a pre-post test methodology to test for generalisable data on the effectiveness of an intervention. It implies that there is an objective reality that can be uncovered by systematic scientific enquiry. This approach has been strongly advocated by researchers critical of the perceived dominance of the interpretive paradigm and its failure to contribute new evidence-based approaches with demonstrable use to classroom teachers (Hargreaves, 1997; Tooley & Darby, 1998); in turn, these arguments have become influential in government circles, being seen as better serving the needs of policy-makers (Hammersley, 2000).

However, the dialogic ontology set out in *Chapter 2* on which these empirical studies draw suggests that the only reality one can investigate is the dialogue constructed in the gap between our differing perceptions and our similarly experienced constraints on those perceptions. To an extent, dialogic ontology thus accords with the interpretivist tradition in “... studying things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin, 1998, p.3). However, a dialogic ontology implies that others’ meanings cannot be entirely subjective either, as they are constructed only through the acts of sharing them with others – and that the dialogues from which such meanings emerge are a form of intervention, or joint enquiry, that alters both the insider’s and the outsider’s perspectives. This approach, then, can be called pragmatic in that it focuses on the results of enquiry rather than requiring that they be derived from particular methods informed by a particular world-view; however, it does not fall into the trap of some pragmatic enquiries by sidestepping entirely the nature of reality presumed by the research approach.

5.4.2 Issues with studying short-term interventions

On theoretical grounds, a principal objection to the use of short-term interventions in education is that the variables cannot be controlled sufficiently to demonstrate whether a particular intervention is, on the one hand, the major cause in, say, raising the attainment of a particular group, and on the other, whether the same intervention would have a similarly positive effect elsewhere. New educational initiatives are often undertaken with great drive and enthusiasm by committed teachers with well-thought-out approaches and resources; this enthusiasm and specific expertise often rubs off on the students, who respond with higher levels of engagement and greater achievement. However, this does not imply that the same approach, when placed in the hands of another teacher who does not necessarily share the same passion and have the same commitment, that the results will be repeated. Similarly, students singled out for a short term intervention can respond differently simply because they are under special scrutiny. While this observation, known as the 'Hawthorne Effect', has come under much criticism and is now a field for debate in its own right (Luthans, 2002), it remains possible that short term interventions can have a significant impact on participants, but that the nature and scale of this is hard to predict and dependent on context. The subsequent studies account for this through their focus on the specific contexts, activities and individuals involved, and building narratives of change across them.

In addition, there are practical problems with radical short-term interventions. In particular, those involving different environments, mixing different participants, different methods and roles, are likely to have a significant short-term effect due to their strangeness alone; this is most to be expected directly after the intervention. If their impact is measured – as is common – through pre-post questionnaires using quantitative instruments, students may be influenced by a range of factors: feelings of personal or group achievement, of excitement, relief or euphoria following from the very different experiences they have had; a sense of empowerment and confidence, or gratitude (or resentment) towards the course leaders and a desire to please them, or flatter themselves, by giving higher scores in the tests than they gave before the intervention. These feelings, perhaps powerful at the time, often may not endure, the result being a distortion of the measured impact of the course. Also, in the case of the

use of indicators such as self-concept, participants may report that, for example, they feel more able to complete difficult tasks, directly after an experience where they were helped and encouraged by peers and trainers to do so; these experiences may not be transferrable to everyday contexts where the stimuli, motivation, support and aims are very different. As Podsakoff and Organ note in their critique of self-report on the effects of activities in future contexts as a means to collect data, "...we are requiring the respondent to work at a fairly high level of abstraction" (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986, p.533). Again, the response of this study to trace links between participants' contexts, experiences and attitudes to increase the plausibility of analysis and findings.

Finally, while one of the aims of this study is to look at the lasting impact of democratic education interventions, their short term nature makes it problematic to trace their effect over time. Unlike with a scientific experiment, when evidence of change as a result of an intervention is generally a sufficient result, I am interested in observing changes to attitudes and behaviour which are not necessarily immediately apparent – or even if they are apparent, whether they endure. A longitudinal study traditionally lasts at least a year (Saldaña, 2003, p.6), and in that time the presumption is that the factors that are under observation in the participants' environment largely persist; in the case of this study the intervention may last as little as two days, and yet its lasting impact is being sought. A response to this is to take a 'from-through' approach rather than a 'from-to' approach (*ibid.*2003, p.6): accepting that the study cannot look to reveal the final and enduring impact of the courses, but only look to follow some effects, as reported by the participants themselves or by others, over time. Again, this is complicated by the fact that teenagers are in a period of fast intellectual, emotional and social development where there are many other factors influencing their attitudes and behaviour. It would be of limited use to show that these courses affected participants for, say, a few days, with the possibility that all was subsequently forgotten as the excitement died down and normal life resumed; on the other hand, it would be implausible to try to argue that it affects them for many years to come in tangible, demonstrable ways. There would be far too many competing variables to make such a claim. This study makes a practical compromise by opting for research projects of around three months, which look to trace links between experiences during interventions and resulting changes in attitudes and behaviours – without implying

that those changes are necessarily permanent, or that there were no other factors influencing that change.

5.5 A case study approach

In both the initial and the main study, the case in question is the impact of the short course in leadership education on the participants' dispositions for learning; this is observed principally through their changes in attitudes and behaviours over time, and also through researcher observation and, in the case of the main study, interviews with the course leader.

Given the limitations discussed in the previous section, the approach of this study is to look to trace participants' changing understandings before, during, after, and beyond these interventions – in other words, to help them reflect on whether they believe themselves to have changed their attitudes and behaviour in response, and to ask them for relevant examples from their thoughts and actions. It could be argued in response that students' changing notions of what they think they can achieve may not be reflected in what they can actually achieve. This may be so, but the approach here is to try to marry participants' reported changes in attitude and behaviour with corresponding incidents and accounts, and also to see whether there are commonalities between the responses of different students. None of these add up to objective proof, but together can provide more reliable evidence that something about the short-term intervention approach is having an effect, and make informed suggestions as to what it might be. As a result, the type of case study approach adopted is primarily instrumental rather than intrinsic (Stake, 1998, p.86), as the purpose of the study is to see whether there is something about interventions based on a pedagogy of challenge that is valuable, rather than looking to tell in detail the story of any one particular intervention in its particular context. The value of the study is primarily intended to be in what these courses have in common that is valuable and suggestive for mainstream education.

The study seeks in-depth understanding of participants' reactions and responses to the courses; it is not looking to made definitive points about the participants themselves by looking to reveal much of the wider contexts of their lives (Creswell, 2007, pp.74-

78). A case study approach looking at a group of students participating in two separate interventions cannot provide a dataset which allows generalisations to be made about other similar or different courses in leadership education or about their effect on their participants' dispositions for learning; it can nevertheless provide a basis from which both some common and divergent experiences on these particular courses can be identified. This is why a three interview model was adopted in both studies: to trace the extent to which lessons professedly learned during the intervention are backed up with evidence of changing attitude and behaviour in subsequent months. In trying to do this, however, further problems arise: given that after the intervention students are likely to return to 'normal' education experiences, how can such lessons be applied in a contrasting context, and how can we know that professed changes are not, by the time of the final interview, actually due to experiences after the course? Again, this study presumes that there are no easy answers to these questions, but that these factors must be taken into account in the analysis of the data. The quality of the data, the self-reported conceptual and narrative threads that link together the parts of individual participants' accounts, and the visibility and consistency of similarities arising between participants, underpin the plausibility of the research as a whole.

While both studies have taken an interview-led approach as a way of tracing changes in participants' attitudes and behaviour over time in response to the courses, they have both used other forms of data collection including observation notes from the researcher and supplementary interviews with teachers and course leaders. When using a case study methodology, an eclectic dataset is seen as an advantage as it allows a phenomenon being researched to be viewed from several different perspectives (Creswell, 2007, p.97). Again, the particular types of data gathered for each course will be outlined in the next section.

Finally, although this thesis contains two studies, it is not a comparative analysis of them. Stake points out that comparative analysis has the effect of focusing the enquiry on the few attributes that can be compared at the expense of all those that cannot (Stake, 1998, p.97); comparisons will be drawn where appropriate between the studies, but after independent analyses which look to understand each case in its own right.

5.6 Interview technique

In determining my approach to participant interviews I drew principally on Kvale's (2007) excellent overview. From his list of possible "modes of understanding", I chose to emphasise "description", "specificity", "qualified naïveté" and "positive experience" (Kvale, 2007, p.11). In seeking to elicit descriptive detail and specificity I was looking to focus on key moments from their experiences that had led interviewees to gain new understandings and change their attitudes and approaches. Kvale defines qualified naïveté as being open and sensitive to new and unexpected phenomena arising (*ibid.*); in looking for emergent phenomena that signify change in the context of dialogic space, I both adopted this attitude and looked to encourage it in the participants.

My commitment to the interviews being a positive experience was linked both to their educational contexts, and to Kvale's spectrum of "philosophical dialogue vs. therapeutic interview" (*ibid.*, p.17). Since the focus of this study is on participants' personal qualities and the meaningful experiences that shape them rather than on academic knowledge, it seemed highly likely that some of the interviews would enter therapeutic territory, which Kvale calls "personal, deep and risky" (*ibid.*, p.18). The ethical risks of this are discussed in *Section 5.12* below. This approach was counterbalanced by a more detached, challenging approach, asking students to think about the cause, nature and consequence of those meaningful experiences. Finally, in terms of questioning technique, my intention was to adopt a Rogerian approach as opposed to a Freudian or Skinnerian (*ibid.*, p.55): reflecting back participants' expressed emotions and understandings in an effort to help them expand on and clarify their responses.

5.7 Critical incident analysis

A methodological innovation adopted in the wake of the initial study was to begin interviews by asking participant students the question, "tell me about up to 3 times in the last year when you really felt you learned something" in the case of the first interviews; similarly in the second, it referred to three moments from the course they attended; and in the third, three moments since the course. Interviewees were given 5

minutes before the interview to think about their answers to this and make notes if they wished.

The nearest formally recognised approach in educational contexts is the Critical Incident Analysis technique, originally devised in the context of psychology with military roots to determine and define desirable and undesirable personal attributes in regard to specific tasks, such as flying a plane (J. C. Flanagan, 1954). Early uses of this technique, however, were framed in a behavioural paradigm with witnesses and participants in critical events reporting on the actions of others rather than on their own perceptions and actions. Tripp, however, adapted this approach to educational contexts as a form of self reflection:

Incidents happen, but critical incidents are created by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event. To take something as a critical incident is a value judgement we make, and the basis of that judgement is the significance we attach to the meaning of that incident. (Tripp, 1993, p.8)

This accords with dialogic theory in asserting that new meanings are created in response to new and challenging situations, and that those meanings exist within the dialogue rather than as external, observable facts. Tripp's method, involving keeping a critical incident journal, was designed as a professional development practice for educators; while it would not have been feasible to ask participants in the current research to use this in-depth technique, the adaptation of this approach to shape interview questions is an attempt at a practical compromise. It is designed to elicit accounts of key moments where participants' perceptions were, to their own recollection, challenged and changed.

5.8 Data analysis and coding rationale

A "bricolage" approach to analysing the data (Kvale, 2007 p.115-7) was adopted for all studies as it allows the data be approached from several perspectives and fits in well with the eclectic approach to material common in case study. In all but the first study, however, interviews with student participants were the main source of data, with others acting to elucidate or to contrast those perspectives. Primarily, the interview data was coded using a mixture of theory-led and *in vivo* methods; the aim was to

recognise that the research has been designed, and the interview questions written, with the intention of studying particular factors relevant to the research, which will influence the data that emerges – but that at the same time participants may express ideas that were unseen in the research design, yet appear important to their understanding of issues surrounding the course (Gibbs, 2007 p.45-46).

This approach to analysis of the interview data is not to attempt to approach it without preconception and allow categories to emerge, as proposed in grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990); a dialogic approach rejects the belief that theory is capable of emerging from the data distinct from the influence of the interpreter (Silverman, 1993). It argues that meaning emerges from interaction, and therefore it is from the interaction of the researcher's theoretical assumptions with the data that meaningful interpretations emerge. The approach of this study was to attempt to let the perspectives of the participants be heard, then identify themes within and across these accounts, interpreted through the theoretical perspective laid out above – which at the same time remains responsive to the material. The advantage of this approach is that it affords the researcher the opportunity to be confronted with unexpected ideas and associations, and to adjust interpretations accordingly, rather than looking to the data solely for confirmation of the theory. To aid this process, NVivo computer software was used in the analysis of the interview data, which was coded through several iterations. This helped reflect participants' perspectives from many different angles, helping guard against the tendency simply to interpret the data as confirming initial understandings.

In addition, theory-led coding did not use the precise terminology taken from the literature review and theoretical model; for example, the terms 'dialogic space' and 'pedagogy of challenge' were not used as codes. To have done this would have implied a 'theory-testing' model of analysis, whereas the approaches of the initial and main studies were of theory exploration and development. Thus even the code names that were primarily informed by theory were still influenced by the context in which they were set. Thus, for example, the codes 'challenge' and 'leaders and leadership' (see Table 2 below) were theory-led but informed by students' expression. So, while it was plausible to code some of their statements as referring to having been challenged, it would not have been appropriate to have coded their statements as referring directly

to, say, a pedagogy of challenge; similarly, while some of their comments were plausibly coded under 'leaders and leadership', it would not have been appropriate to have coded them under 'responsible leadership' as that was not a concept that they understood. As a consequence, then, the mapping of codes onto the key terminology drawn from the literature review is something that must happen *post facto* in the findings and discussion chapters.

To illustrate how the balance of theory-led and emergent coding worked in practice, Table 1 and Table 2 below list codes from the initial study, and the mid-level codes from the main study, respectively. Both label the codes as having been: led by theory, led by interview questions, emergent from the course contexts, emergent from the students' comments, or having been led by more than one to the extent that they cannot be distinguished. The far greater incidence of 'course-led' codes in Table 1 reflects the fact that the course in the initial study had far more explicit conceptual input than the course in the main study. Question-led codes related either to direct questions asked in interviews, or to ideas contained in tasks such as the 'diamond nine' activity (*see Appendices G & O*). Ideas in the questions and tasks were generally informed by theory, thus stating key terms explicitly and often receiving them back from students in response; however, they were also sometimes informed by the contexts of the studies. There were more tasks in the main study, explaining the greater number of question-led codes; this is justified in Section 5.10.2. The questions asked in the initial and main studies are listed in *Appendices F & M* respectively.

Where necessary, further contextual detail regarding the naming of codes is then given in the findings chapters under the appropriate section. In *Chapter 7*, some section headings and sub-headings are followed with a note in italics on the provenance of the code; this is when that provenance requires further explanation than the categorisation provided in Table 2. A list of which sub-codes relate to which codes in the main study can be found in Table 3.

The full list of codes defined for the initial and main studies can be found in *Appendices H and Q* respectively. Differences in the coding systems and analysis between the initial and main studies, and how latter developed in response to the former, are discussed further in the following sections.

Table 1: Provenance of codes in initial study

Codes	Provenance
Accountability, responsibility	Theory-led and course-led
Ambitions	Student-led
Changing attitude, behaviour	Theory-led and question-led
Changing context	Student-led
“Comfort zone”	Course-led (<i>in vivo</i>)
Compliments, encouragement	Course-led
Confidence	Question-led and student-led
Determination, resilience	Course-led and student-led
Empathising	Student-led
Enjoyment, satisfaction	Question-led and student-led
Family involvement	Question-led
Formal assessment	Question-led and student-led
Helping others	Student-led
Helping self	Student-led
Inter-cultural relations	Student-led
Knowledge as information	Theory-led
Learning outside classroom	Theory-led
Listening	Theory-led
Multiple perspectives	Theory-led and course-led
Self-expression	Student-led
Self-knowledge	Theory-led and course-led
Teachers’ role	Question-led and student-led
Teamwork	Question-led and course-led
Value of peers	Theory, course, student-led

Table 2: Provenance of codes in main study

Codes	Provenance
Arguing and persuading	Question-led
Arguments, anger	Student-led
Challenge	Theory-led
Newness	Course-led and student-led
Past events, significant	Question-led
Physical activity	Student-led
Prince's Trust course	Course-led and question-led
Residential course	Course-led and question-led
Confidence	Question-led and student-led
Future,	Question-led
Critic	Question-led
Objector	Question-led
Pretender	Question-led
Spectator	Question-led
Volunteer	Question-led
Independence	Student-led
Motivation, effort	Question-led
Proving yourself, achieving	Question-led and student-led
Self, understanding of	Theory-led and student-led
Discussion and planning	Course-led
Ideas	Question-led
Leaders and leadership	Theory-led and question-led
Communication skills	Question-led
Friends and family	Student-led
Groups and teamwork	Question-led and student-led
Listening	Theory-led
Others	Theory-led
Respect	Question-led

5.9 Research design

Sections 5.10 & 5.11 below describe the two studies undertaken, and the refinements of methodological ideas and of methods that occurred between them. A more personal, narrative tone is used to better describe the context, the ways in which my understandings developed, and the practical lessons learned.

5.10 Initial study

5.10.1 Context

The opportunity for the preliminary study arose in a very different working context to the first. In 2009, during the second year of my PhD, my supervisors and I successfully bid for an externally funded short-term pilot project to research the effectiveness of leadership education courses. This pilot project was titled, 'Learning to Lead, Leading to Learn', and was subtitled, 'A pilot study into the effectiveness of leadership education in improving the dispositions for learning and academic performance of teenagers in school'.

This represented a very different type of research opportunity to my pilot study, as described in *Chapter 1.1.3*; I took this opportunity to re-evaluate my conceptual framework and decided that 'leadership' could be a more intelligible and more fruitful concept than 'dispositions for social responsibility'. There was therefore a greater conceptual fit between my theory and the course than in my previous study.

To find an appropriate course to study, I undertook a systematic review of leadership courses for teenagers in UK, which in turn required defining my parameters – these are outlined in *Appendix A*. As a result of this process I selected a course run by the University of the First Age (UFA)^{iv}, designed to a brief originally given by the then National College for School Leadership in 2003, but which soon became independently funded by paying schools. It is based on the six areas laid out by the National Standards for Headteachers^v (DFES, 2004). Originally designed to last up to 18 days with training under each standard lasting for 3 days, it was compressed with the help of student ex-participants to 3-day and 2-day versions more feasible for secondary school timetables. It is based around a series of short, fast-paced challenges for students, usually in small groups, followed by student-led feedback topped up with facilitator feedback where appropriate. Participating students, along with facilitators from among the school staff who had had a day's preparatory training beforehand, were fully off timetable for 2 school days. There were around 60 participants aged 13-18. The sessions took place in school, but in different locations to where participants'

^{iv} www.ufa.org.uk

^v *These are:* Shaping the Future; Leading Learning and Teaching; Developing Self and Working with Others; Managing the Organisation; Securing Accountability; Strengthening Community

classes were usually held. The course was led by one head and two assistant facilitators from UFA, who led whole-group sessions, and by 4 school staff facilitators, who took led small-group sessions with input from the UFA staff. In conversations with lead staff, we agreed that it would be better for me to have a facilitator role rather than just to observe as this would make my presence on the course more authentic and less threatening to the students; my role, therefore was alongside the school staff as a facilitator/observer. I attended the pre-course training and met with the staff and students beforehand.

5.10.2 Method

Given this was to be an interview-led study, it was necessary to limit the number of participants I interviewed. I agreed with the lead teacher that I should interview Year 9 students who were 13 years old; this was because at that time I was investigating the possibility of continuing the study over a three-year period culminating in an analysis of their academic performance at GCSE. I asked to interview six students, of whom five were available at the time of the course and gave me all three interviews (for student consent forms, see *Appendix B*; for parental consent forms, see *Appendix C*). This choice was informed by the fact that I was planning to interview all of them three times each, plus one teacher and one personal tutor interview per student. Combined, I had estimated that this would lead to a total of around twelve hours of interview data; this seemed a maximum for feasible transcription and analysis for a single researcher study as part of a series. In addition, six students seemed enough to represent a diversity of experience of the course without trying to claim that those various experiences could be generalised. The six were chosen by the lead teacher to provide some diversity of gender and ethnicity – but the students chosen were not seen as representing those categories or the ethnic mix of the school as a whole. There were 3 male and three female students. Three students were Afro-Caribbean; two, Eastern European; and one, British Asian. One Eastern European student subsequently did not attend the course, and was therefore not studied.

There were three sources of data: interviews with participating students (for an example of a full interview, see *Appendix D*), interviews with their teachers and personal tutors, and my own observation notes (see *Appendix E*) – with the student

interviews of these being the main source. I interviewed each student three times: first, the week before the course; second, the week after; and for the final time five months later. The length of time before the final interview was due to the fact that the course took place in the last week of term before the summer break; this was not ideal as it raised the possibility that much of the course content and of their experiences on it might have been forgotten by the time of the final interview. I had already decided that a period of three months between first and last interviews would be a good compromise (see p.93); however, I chose to delay as I wanted the participants to have a significant, continuous period of study following the course before the final interview. The extent to which this was a factor is discussed in the next chapter.

The interviews with students were private, one-to-one and semi-structured, consisting of ten questions each (see *Appendix F*). In each round of interviews, the ten questions were designed to mirror those in the previous round to enable lateral comparison across the cohort as well as longitudinal analysis of each participant's responses. They asked the students about: their motivation; sense of power and possibility in the school community; what challenges them the most; when they felt they really learned something recently; whether they felt they could improve their approach to school; and in which particular subjects they felt they could improve. The first round of interviews asked these questions in relation to their recent school experience; the second, their experiences on the course; the third, their experiences since the course. In addition to these questions, they were given a 'diamond nine' exercise, during which they were given nine cards with different potential factors that might motivate them to try hard – for example, their family, getting good grades, and the support of their peers – and asked to rank them from the most to the least important (see *Appendix G*). In the second interview they were presented to them as they had set them in the first, and asked whether they would change any in the light of their recent experiences and, if so, why. Similarly, in the third interview they were presented with their responses from the second.

The aim of interviewing students' personal tutors was to gather data from impartial professionals who had a general overview of their attitude, behaviour and academic performance over the duration of the research period. The subject teacher interviews were designed to be organised in agreement with the students; one of the questions in

the second interview was, 'which of your subject teachers would you like me to talk to about your progress?' The thought behind this was that while their experiences on the course might or might not affect students' attitudes and behaviour across all subjects and elsewhere in their lives, there might be greater improvement in subjects where students felt motivated to make real changes. Another consequence of the timing of the course was that interviews with students' personal tutors were not possible, as the school that year changed all students' personal tutors on transition from Year 9 to Year 10; this meant that a professional perspective on their overall progress was not possible. Furthermore, most interviewees had changed their subject teacher in the new academic year, so at the time of interviewing those teachers they had mostly only taught the student for a few weeks, and had little sense of a baseline against which any progress could be identified. As a result, interviews with teachers were generally short and not very productive; little data from them was used in the analysis. The lack of impartial, knowledgeable perspectives on the participants' progress was unfortunate; the result was an intensification of the study on the perspectives of the students themselves.

As a third strand of data, I made notes throughout and after the course activities. The aim of this was to describe events selected for their relevance to the research whilst trying not to judge or interpret them at that stage. As my role as facilitator / participant was fairly intensive, notes taken at the time were necessarily brief, focusing on perceived key details. Although even the selection of events to describe inevitably some level of interpretation, this approach is designed to allow the greater part of the interpretation to happen at a later stage, in the light of a broader reading of all the data (Angrosino, 2008, p.38). The purpose of these notes in this study is not to make assertions in their name but more to help remind both the researcher and the reader of the contexts to which interview comments refer, and as a way of corroborating or counterbalancing participants' recall and claims about what happened during the course.

The results and discussion of this study are in *Chapter 6*; the research questions are listed below, and a reflection on the methodological lessons learned follows.

Main research question for the initial study:

What influence does the experience of a pedagogy of challenge have on five teenage students' dispositions for learning?

Sub-questions:

1. In what ways are the students challenged on the University of the First Age's leadership course?
2. How do students' dispositions for learning change as a response to their experiences on the leadership course?
3. What are the teachers' and tutors' perceptions of their students' dispositions for learning in the period following the course?
4. Does the leadership course influence the students' academic performance?

5.10.3 Reflection

As explained above, the third and fourth questions could not be answered in the way envisaged when the study was framed due to a lack of interview data from teachers and tutors, and of academic performance data which would have been elicited as part of a longer study. The resulting focus was almost entirely on participants' self-perceptions of the impact their experiences on the course had on them. While this led to integral and useful findings, this raised the issue of how future studies could collect the breadth of data one would expect in a case study – especially in the case of participants perhaps less able to verbalise their reflections and understandings.

The interviews with participants were based around extended one-to-one questioning. Some of the five students were more comfortable talking in this environment than others to the extent that the longest interview was three times the length of the shortest. There were extended periods of eye contact with few external distractions in the interview room, a teacher's office. The students may well have been unused to being asked about their experiences and feelings by an adult so formally and at such length, especially one they did not know well; they may have associated such conversations more with formal assessment or discipline than with personal development. These issues raised several questions about what could be done in

future studies to alleviate the inhibitions and discomfort of those participants. The main lesson taken was to ensure that in future studies interviewees had activities that engaged their hands and eyes, giving them props as tools for thinking as foci of attention. These might help lessen the awkward intimacy of the purely verbal, eye-contact-heavy, one-to-one interview. They would also act as prompts, providing more structure for the conversation and putting less onus on interviewees to 'come up with something'. This also raised the issue of what interviewees didn't say: could other signals or sources of data have been used to interpret students' experiences other than directly and verbally? In the case of these generally able and confident students this was perhaps less of an issue than with a potentially less able or confident group in the future. In such a case a reliance on verbal interviews with participants might not be sufficient.

Another noticeable feature of the interviews was that, although they had been designed to be cross-comparable across questions, the participants often did not answer the question posed – or at least not in the way expected – so that comments seemingly most relevant to one question were often made in response to others. This led to a collapsing of the coding on analysis, meaning that comparability between questions was not studied as a factor. While in retrospect the thematic analysis was not greatly compromised by this, an interview structure that better linked responses to the specific questions would afford another level of analysis, thereby increasing its reliability.

Finally, further subsequent analysis work with other datasets suggested that my coding of this data might have generalised too early in the analytic process as it favoured shorter, more generalised codes instead of more descriptive and specific codes at the first stage (for the full coding tree, see *Appendix H*). The danger of such an approach is too great an influence of the theoretical perspectives of the researcher as the expense of creating the space in which new and surprising interpretations could emerge. As a result a more descriptive base level of coding within a tiered system was adopted in the main study.

5.11 Main study

5.11.1 Lessons from previous course

For this study I looked for a more typical, outdoor-based leadership education course; one that would have high stakes for the participants and place on them a high level of responsibility and challenge.

As described in the introduction, the next course I attended was a 3-day course in the Lake District with Year 8 students which, in regard to what I had been told about it prior to taking part, fitted the criteria for inclusion in the study. After undertaking initial interviews, joining in the course and taking observation notes it was clear to me, however, that it had not lived up to those criteria in practice. This was a personal judgement influenced by the factors below, and in the knowledge that this would have implications for the reliability of the study – also discussed below.

The personal observations that informed my judgement not to continue with the study can be summarised as follows: the length of engagement with outdoor tasks was too short – sometimes less than 2 hours in duration and substantially consisting of preparation and clearing away. This meant that the time spent actually engaging with challenging situations was very short and the participants could thus endure them without having to engage with them. Also, there was no compulsion to engage with them at any particular level, so many participants refused, held back or just moved very slowly, bringing group activities nearly to a halt. This shifted the momentum away from following the course leader and trusting him or her to gauge and direct the level of challenge towards the participants doing only what they felt comfortable with. In addition, this dynamic led to many participants having a casual, non-committal attitude towards the activities; many focused instead on continuing conversations about the hostel, home, school and familiar activities, thereby limiting their engagement with the challenges of the unfamiliar environment. Finally, all cooking, cleaning and other care activities were undertaken by staff, leading to an atmosphere of holiday and entitlement that was not conducive to accepting challenging activities. This was enforced by the way the course has been presented to them as an optional, fun activity for the holiday period at their school prior to departure.

Another key factor in my decision was the judgement of a senior staff member, semi-retired, who had overseen and run many such courses in the past, and was helping out in a less responsible capacity. He told that this particular course was the least effective in terms of bringing about attitudinal change that he'd seen in twenty years of going to that site.

Finally, my PhD study was time limited. I knew that to fully record data and analyse the study would take several months, and that this would effectively preclude me from carrying out another subsequent study.

Militating against abandoning the study was the knowledge that doing so could be construed as rejecting data that didn't appear to support my case, and thus damage its reliability. Continuing with the study might also have provided valuable insight into what does not work in developing dispositions for learning.

Informed by all of the above, my judgement was that my study would be better served by finding another site of study while I still could – one that more fully met my criteria for a pedagogy of challenge. I believed that this course represented not a case of a pedagogy of challenge that didn't work, but a course that didn't work because it didn't challenge at all. My decision to abandon the study could be regarded as rendering this thesis less reliable to the extent that it is judged to be merely expedient or, worse, to deliberately skew the data; it is hoped that this brief account helps put that decision into context, and lends it plausibility.

5.11.2 Context

My next study was of a 5-day residential on Dartmoor for 16-18-year-olds as part of a 12-week Prince's Trust course run by a college in the South West of England. The 12-week Prince's Trust programme is a well-established and successful personal development course based on practical challenges, work experience, teamwork and personal reflection. It is designed for 'people leaving care, young offenders, educational underachievers and the long term unemployed'^{vi}. Participation is voluntary, although participants may have been encouraged to attend as part of their continued reception of unemployment benefit, or because they have been told that

^{vi} http://www.Prince's-trust.org.uk/about_the_trust/what_we_do/programmes/team_programme.aspx

successful completion of the course would help them to be accepted onto college courses or apprenticeships. Many participants were also eligible for £30 per week Educational Maintenance Allowance for the duration of the course.

The residential trip is a key element of the course, typically coming in its third week. This course afforded participants considerable freedom, responsibility and challenge: they had to budget, buy and cook their own food; they were solely responsible for cleaning the hostel during the week; they had to choose and plan for all their activities during the week; they had to navigate their drivers to the correct destinations and were not corrected when they went wrong. The week was given structure through a final activity, to complete which they would need equipment that must be bought with points earned through successful completion of other activities during the week. They would also need to book training to acquire certain skills needed both for point-scoring activities and for the final challenge.

Other motivating factors were also in place: successful completion of the whole 12-week course was dependent on completing this 5-day course, and completion of the whole course led to certification perceived as valuable by colleges and employers; also, the level of camaraderie built up over the first 2 weeks of the course among participants and staff, and in the knowledge of another 10 weeks to come, increased the pressure on participants to push themselves beyond their normal boundaries to achieve shared tasks.

Taken together, the course seemed to represent a more plausible context for the study of a pedagogy of challenge than the previous outdoor setting

5.11.3 Method

The methods employed were similar to that of the initial study: again focused around a series of three interviews with each participant over a three-month period (for consent forms, see *Appendix I*; for an example interview, see *Appendix J*). In addition, there were two interviews with the course leader, one just after the course and one at the end of the research period (for an example, see *Appendix K*). Observation notes were taken throughout the 5-day course (see *Appendix L*), although these were limited by

the nature of the activities, requiring them to be written retrospectively in the evenings.

I was again in the role of a volunteer teacher, taking part in activities when appropriate. In addition, I joined in a day of preliminary activities before the first interview so that they would know me a little in advance. My participation on the whole residential course meant that they knew me well by the time of the second interview; I also participated intermittently throughout the rest of the Prince's Trust course before the third interview to keep the acquaintance fresh. I felt these steps were particularly advisable given the difficult personal histories of some of the participants, which I felt might predispose them to be less trusting and forthcoming than the students in the initial study.

I further anticipated that the potential problems of awkwardness, embarrassment and inability to articulate ideas in the one-to-one interview context might be worse in the case of young people identified as under-achieving, and for whom an interview with a teacher might have disciplinary rather than educational associations. The interviews were semi-structured, similar to the initial study (for the questions, see *Appendix M*), but were redesigned to have a greater practical element, with imaginary scenarios and corresponding answers on cards that the participants would have time to organise in a 'diamond 9' formation (see *Appendix N*), and to use as prompts when subsequently discussing. These were a charity fundraising exercise, and a group roles analysis (see *Appendices O & P*). The aim was to reduce the amount of direct questioning and eye contact, to give them more time to formulate answers, to include physical and visual elements alongside verbal ones, and to discuss personal characteristics with reference to real-life or imagined scenarios rather than in abstract terms. The use of critical event recall for the first question in each interview was a development from the initial study designed to give participants the opportunity to think beforehand and have something prepared, and thus to reduce the pressure on them to think up a meaningful contribution on the spot.

The two research sub-questions below were designed, in response to lessons learned from the initial study, to interrogate the data from different perspectives: the first laterally, looking at the responses of the group of participants as a whole at each of the

three stages; the second longitudinally, looking at the individual participants' changes in understanding between the stages. Since the main unit of data for both questions – quotations from individuals' interviews – is the same, the two approaches are inevitably closely linked; however, the first question also draws on patterns arising from the coding about similarities in response across the group, and the second question draws on the interviews with the course leader about individuals' responses to the course over time.

Main research question:

What influence does the experience of a pedagogy of challenge have on 9 teenage students' dispositions for learning?

Sub-questions:

1. In what ways did the residential course constitute a pedagogy of challenge, and how did it affect the group?
2. Did participants' dispositions for learning change as a result of their taking part on the residential course, and if so, how?

5.11.4 Reflection

Overall, the data collection and analysis process for this study went smoothly. In response to issues raised by the initial study, several changes were made, as described above; these were largely successful.

Firstly, the initial thinking time before the start of the interview for participants to think about meaningful learning moments appeared to help them come up with examples, and importantly helped them to 'break the ice' by having something pre-prepared to say.

Secondly, the prospect of these participants being more wary of an authority figure interviewing them than in the first study was largely countered by their awareness of there being no system of accountability or discipline in place in relation to these interviews, and also perhaps by their greater age. The trust-building measure I undertook may well have helped in this regard also. That said, there were three participants who were refused to be interviewed for one of the three; the reasons for

this were more to do with reluctance to discuss particular issues – these will be discussed in *Chapter 7*.

Thirdly, it was the case as anticipated that participants in the main study were often less forthcoming and less clear in their expression than those in the first. The greater sense of established trust may have helped to some extent, but in the light of this the inclusion of observation notes, and particularly the interviews with the course leader, were of great value in adding to the richness of the data.

In terms of data analysis, a far more extensive coding system was used in response to the concerns arising in the initial study. The first level of coding was highly descriptive, using over 300 codes; this number meant much revision and cross-checking and deletion of redundant codes as the list expanded. These codes were incorporated under a second level of coding, which became the thematic sub-headings of the analysis in *Chapter 7*; on completion of this round of analysis, seven top-level codes were created that subsumed these, and became the main headings of the analysis (See *Appendix R*). In retrospect, as this process took six months, such in-depth coding would not be viable in future studies; it was, however, a valuable personal learning process and one which, it is hoped, gives rigour to this study.

5.12 Research ethics, reflexivity and reciprocity

In terms of meeting the ethical requirements set out in the 2004 BERA revised guidelines, these studies were relatively unproblematic. In the case of each study, potential participants were given the opportunity to volunteer to take part after a face-to-face meeting with the lead researcher, backed up by a short, easily accessible letter directed at either them or, if under 16, their parents as well. In the case of participants under 16, a signature of parental consent was also sought. There was no deception, and the right to withdraw was highlighted up front – and in a couple of instances, exercised. All data has been anonymised and securely held, viewed only by the main researcher and his supervisors. In cases where participants' statements might offer clues as to their identity, they have been edited before being directly quoted; similarly, any direct references to non-participants have been anonymised. Sponsors of

the research have received full reports on the methods and findings of the study, in which the significance and reach of findings were laid out and contextualised.

And yet, although these standard procedures were carried out, a reflexive approach, which realises the inevitable impact of my presence, actions and intentions on the participants and thus on the study itself (O. J. Flanagan, 1981), required that I explore those more thoroughly. An analysis of my relationship to the participants, my research prerogatives, my professional identity as a teacher, and my statutory duties as a research working with children, revealed remaining issues of concern - especially regarding the main study. These participants were all over 16, but their social and educational histories meant that they were classified as vulnerable under the guidelines. Ensuring informed consent is intrinsically difficult as the path of research is uncertain, and the reality – especially of qualitative research – inevitably different from the picture participants have of it when the consent is applied for and before it actually starts. In addition, despite any given assurances of the right to withdraw, the institutional setting of a school or college puts participants under pressure to continue. A further complication is that unlike after the initial study, where the participating school was given a report and asked to disseminate it to participants, in the main study students were due to have left the college by the time the results were analysed – and although they were given contact details for the researcher, the majority are unlikely to follow up the research to see whether they felt they were well represented, and if so to exercise their right to reply. It is not straightforward, therefore, to make a case for their having been fully informed, and to have benefitted from the process.

Also, students with a difficult educational background, and those with a history of social care, have good reason to be suspicious of extended interviews as sites where power can be exercised and important decisions made which can have profound effects on their lives. They may fear that their voices carry less weight, or that they may be misconstrued or unable to articulate their ideas to their satisfaction; indeed, even to share their personal ideas may make them feel vulnerable. Eliciting and responding to voices that escape easy classification and do not make easy sense can be challenging it demands an “attentive, open and reflexive approach” (Mazzei & Jackson, 2009) . In interpreting their words, they warn that:

...presenting their “exact words” as if they are transparent is a move that fails to consider how as researchers we are always already shaping those “exact words” through the unequal power relationships present and by our own exploitative research agendas and timelines (*ibid.*, p.2).

Instead, they urge researchers to ‘tangle ourselves in the layers of voices present and the epistemological assumptions that continue to haunt our methodological practices’ (*ibid.*, p.3). My responses to this challenge have been various. In the interviews I have striven for even-handedness in the posing of questions; subtly encouraged further comment in the face of silence, reluctance or frustration at the inability of participants to express themselves by bringing in their earlier remarks or suggesting different interpretations; acknowledged and accepted their silence or reluctance to discuss certain issues as their right. In the analysis of my main study, my two-fold approach of analysing laterally across the cohort and also narratively for each participant has helped, I suggest, to promote their own personal voice sympathetically and subtly. Most of all, however, was the retention in both interview and analysis of the commitment to the welfare of the participants and to acknowledging the integrity of their perspective – rather than view their works as raw data from which to craft a particular case. The reader is invited to gauge the extent to which I have lived up to this commitment.

In examining ethics in qualitative research, Harrison, MacGibbon and Morton argue that feminist and other approaches can offer new alternatives to traditional and now highly critiqued standards of reliability, accountability and transparency, which do not directly aid research participants but are more focused on protecting the researcher from accusations of exploitation, deception or bias (Harrison, et al., 2001),.. In particular, “reciprocity”, “the give and take of social interactions”, and “trustworthiness” (*ibid.*, p.323) can enrich data by empowering the participants through a praxis of emancipation:

Lincoln (1995) describes these demands as “emerging criteria of quality” that are “relational” (p. 278). In particular, the criterion of reciprocity is a “kind of intense sharing that opens all lives party to the inquiry to examination” (pp. 283-284). (Harrison, et al., 2001, p.324)

The implication is that the ethics of qualitative research can be instantiated more in the process of creating research, rather than in the act of reporting it. Instead of attempting objective, impassive study aimed primarily at influencing theory and policy we can be motivated to “pursue and contribute to the cause of social justice” (*ibid.*, p.325), making clear how our own backgrounds and aims contribute to this motivation and approach. Again, this positing of a ‘relational’ ethics accords with dialogic theory in that it implies that ethical practice cannot just be laid down in code but is also inherent in the process of dialogue between researcher and participants.

Harrison et al.’s examples of the interplay between reciprocity and trust in their research relate to longer-term relationships with participants than those in mine, and which are therefore liable to be deeper and more complex (Harrison, et al., 2001); in addition, as a teacher working with students, issues of hierarchy and power were impossible to neutralise in my research. Nonetheless, I argue that while I cannot ensure that the results of the research will be of direct benefit to the participants, I have tried to ensure that the dialogues with participants are of inherent value by inviting them to take part in an emancipatory form of self-reflection and analysis, asking them to look at their understandings of their own capabilities and how they have been shaped by their experiences. I chose also to focus on expressing an ethical relationship with participants through reciprocity: giving back something of myself in broad exchange for their giving me something of themselves through the data collection process. The principal forms of this expression were through the interview process, with its focus on identifying positive change and creating a space in which relevant issues could be raised and discussed, and also in my relationships with them throughout the courses on which I participated. Through this participation in the role of assistant teacher, but without the conflict of needing to uphold a disciplining role in future contexts, I was able to engage fully with students individually and in groups on activities that were designed to promote the development of their skills and confidence. My background as a teacher and support worker with at-risk children helped me to do this with greater confidence and skill.

This reciprocal approach to situated ethics parallels – it is hoped – Biesta’s discussion of the teacher/student relationship discussed in *Section 2.3*. By this argument, the ethical relationship is pre-existent, and constituted by the unique selfhoods of both

parties within the particular context of their interactions. No checklist or set of guidelines can rule authoritatively on what constitutes ethical behaviour in such circumstances – although common-sense and experience-based generalisations can be usefully made. It is principally through full engagement with the unique individuals on these courses, in the spirit of solidarity (p.x), that I sought to actively demonstrate an ethical approach.

As a final consideration, I did explain to potential participants that this research may make a modest contribution towards altering policy towards subsequent cohorts of students – this must surely be an ethically sound research objective, and one that can act, with the participants' consent, as an alternative to a commitment to benefit them directly.

5.13 Limitations of research

All research is both enabled and limited by its particular approach. As discussed in *Section 5.11* above, at one stage of this PhD a study on a far greater scale with a mixed methods approach was considered and theorised; had this gone ahead, the aim would have been to produce generalisable and transferrable data about link between leadership education and academic performance at GCSE alongside contextual, qualitative data about participants' experiences of those courses and how they shaped their understandings. Instead, this study has mainly focused on two specific leadership courses with very different approaches and clientele, and has used them to inform and develop a theoretical model of responsible leadership which can be tested and further adapted in future research. It makes no truth claims, and its findings cannot be generalised. Instead it attempts to construct a logically consistent, methodologically sound, ethically minded and rhetorically persuasive case for viewing leadership education courses from a particular perspective, and linking that to a broader understanding of the nature of young people's development as positive agents. The test of its success will not be in demonstrating its validity as such, but in inspiring and informing further related research as the basis for a strong challenge to current policy and practice.

6 Initial study: Results

6.1 Introduction

The analysis below looks for changes in students' dispositions over time, and is presented firstly in order of the research questions, and secondly in order of the categories that arose from the thematic analysis. The following background information may be relevant to the interpreting the data:

- 1 The school under study is a multi-ethnic inner-city secondary (94% of students from ethnic minorities) in the West Midlands with a high proportion of students on free school meals. Having previously dipped in performance, the school has improved significantly over recent years, establishing a good reputation. My experience during the study was of a largely harmonious school environment with motivated staff and well-mannered students, albeit facing challenges.
- 2 The students picked for the course were high achievers; the five Year 9 students selected for interview had already been involved on a year-long programme of leadership training within the school – not nearly as intensive as the course, but which had nonetheless given them opportunities to consider and practice leadership within the school and community. The 60 or so participants on the course were being invested in by the school to assume greater responsibility, both formally and informally.
- 3 Three of the five participants cited PE as a subject in which they would be willing to have their teacher interviewed about their progress. The PE department at the school has a distinct leadership focus.
- 4 The school appointed a new Headteacher at the start of the academic year, between the second and third interviews. Several participants noted a distinctly stricter approach in the school, with new priorities and rules.
- 5 The time of the third interviews coincided with an examination period for the Year 10 interviewees; several said that these had altered their priorities, and those of the school.
- 6 Due to deadline restrictions, this project spanned the gap between the summer and autumn terms. The initially envisaged two-month gap between the second

and third interviews was expanded to nearly four to accommodate the summer holidays. This had several unintended consequences: both subject teachers and personal tutors changed for all students, making it difficult for staff to provide a balancing perspective on students' perceived change. In addition, four months is a long time for 13-14-year-olds; they are undergoing rapid personal, physical and emotional development, which must be considered alongside the effects of the course in analysing the final interviews.

Note on terminology: interviewees' quotations are titled anonymised as students A-E, with 'int. x' denoting the first (pre-course), second (5 days post-course) or third interview (4 months later). The researcher's comments are prefixed "I:". Words in square brackets denote interjections from the other speaker.

6.2 In what ways are students challenged on the leadership course?

Rather than provide an inventory and description of the activities on the University of the First Age's leadership course, this section uses the participants' stories, largely from the interviews directly after the courses, alongside the researcher's observation notes to highlight those aspects which were most memorable and important to them.

6.2.1 "Outside your Comfort Zone"

At the start, the course facilitator asked all participants to spend as much time as they dared outside their "comfort zone" – they were told that this raises the adrenaline and the level of challenge, leading to 'powerful' learning. This was a frequently repeated, central metaphor for the course, and one which was widely appropriated by the interviewees in both the second and third interviews:

Mmhmm, because before... I think most... since that two day course I think all of us have actually come out of our comfort zone. Every single one of us, we talk to each other more now. I've talked to people I don't even know before, so I think that was a really good thing about the course. *Student E, int.2*

I'd probably say it's kinda stuck there, become more real. Mainly the 'out of your comfort zone' thing that become the main part. *Student C, int.3*

While all the students recognised this as a good thing after the event, one noted that it had often been challenging, even scary, at the time:

Yeah. I came out of my comfort zone and it did feel kind of weird. Like not going with [student] and [student], it's like, separated from the group, getting on with what we needed to do... The activities, like... when we were told to do the activity I'm not used to someone telling me to do this – I felt really like, scared... I didn't know how other people would react to it. *Student A, int.2*

Student A suggests that the different nature of the activities from what they usually do in the classroom was in itself disconcerting; it made her self-conscious because she did not know what to expect, calling on her to respond differently, deliberately. Being asked to work with people outside her friendship group had a similar effect. These two ways in which the students felt challenged to leave their “comfort zone”, by activities and discourses on the course, are explored further below.

6.2.2 Working outside year and friendship groups

We learned now to communicate with people we don't know. Before we would just look at a person but we don't really go to him. But now it's easier to break the line and go to him. *Student D, int.3*

During the course, some sessions were whole group (around 60), and some in breakout groups of around 15 participants. Most sessions contained several activities, including short ‘ice-breakers’, which called for the participants to form different groups; an example of one designed to break down barriers between students was asking them to organise themselves in a line chronologically by birthday – without speaking – which caused a flurry of animated gesticulation. At the start and throughout, the course leader encouraged them to take the initiative themselves to form groups with people of different ages, ethnicities and backgrounds; when asked as a whole group to come up with ‘house rules’, several related to showing respect for others regardless of ethnicity or religious difference. The course leader also asked them to keep working with different people in each activity. There was some initial reluctance – some of the 6th form boys and some younger girls preferred at first to stay in friendship groups, or split as pairs or threes – but after a few activities the groups became heterogeneous. All interviewees cited this demand as a valuable experience –

for several, the most valuable – that they gained from the course, even if it was challenging for some at first. A frequently mentioned aspect of this was working with older students:

I: How did you find working with people who weren't your own age?

I think that was quite good as well, because the variety of age, they sort of like, had different understandings of the things you had, and you could like, take those understandings and apply them to your understanding. With two different understandings you can find a mutual understanding of something, or if it's just like, you didn't know what it was you could, ask - they'd tell you and they'd help you sort of... improve. Like kind of an improved learning... environment. *Student C, int.2*

When all of us had to mix up with different genders from a different year, and we were like, is there going to be friends, and learning to talk with older kids or even years below us, like – all of us mixing together, people I don't really know, and sometimes I don't know what to say to them because I don't know what their reaction is going to be towards me saying something towards them, so... when I say something to them, they quite respond to me quite good so I came out of my comfort zone and said, 'actually, this is not that bad'. *Student A, int.2*

Here Student B mirrors Student A's reflection above that working with people she did not know exposed her to the possibility of unforeseen responses; she is used to working with the same students in predictable classroom scenarios, which can lead to predictable, codified social relations and interactions (Biesta, 2006, p.68). Student C describes an "improved learning... environment" in which new perspectives can enrich his own and help him "improve". This sense of vulnerability and fear of ridicule, followed by excitement, satisfaction and a sense of a space of growth, is the process of interruptive pedagogy at work (see *Section 2.3* above): the students recognised themselves moving out of their comfort zone in order to communicate meaningfully with people they did not know – at the risk of appearing foolish. The *action* of entering into open dialogues with new people and realising that they could learn from them, rather than the content of those discussions *per se*, was an empowering experience which engendered trust and confidence.

6.2.3 Tough questioning and being critical

An activity regarded as memorable by several students was one in which they were first asked to bid for £250 for a community activity in groups of five or six. They were then asked to switch roles and act as a board choosing between different bids, and to give feedback to an unsuccessful bidding group, acted by 1 or 2 facilitators. Two students refer to this as a key moment on the course:

When we had to do the bid [oh yeah?]. And like, we were sitting there... and I wanted to say something but I couldn't – no words were able to come out until they were like saying that he hadn't got the bid. And I thought, 'Oh God, they're going to start... start moaning or something'. And I thought, 'Oh God, I can't do this'. *Student A, int.2*

Even though this was a role play, this student felt genuine apprehension at the thought of giving critical feedback, and froze; this may have been exacerbated by the thought of any form of confrontation with adults, even in role. In a discussion of the activity afterwards, the facilitators said that they did not feel they had received a straight answer from the students, nor received useful feedback on their bids, and that they had felt that some comments were hostile in tone. Some students said that they had found the activity genuinely uncomfortable, not wanting to disappoint the bidders and thereby skirting around the issue – and even attacking the bid in an attempt to justify the rejection before it was given.

I: Are there any other moments from that course that stand out for you?

I'd probably say choosing and making the decision of the.... the bids for grant money. ...

I: ... What was the lesson you got from it?

It was more like helping you to make fair decisions, and if you like, disappoint someone, how to feel that... I think it sort of simulated, like a real-life situation, it seemed like something that would happen in the real world, because in the real world you have to make decisions, and most of the time decisions benefit one party, but disappoint other, more parties, like, than they help. So you'd have to... explain to them why and how, and give them improvements and things like that. *Student C, int.2*

Despite the challenging nature of the activity, Student C reflects positively on it, recognising that both the 'real-life' element and the requirement of trying to gauge others' thoughts, reactions and feelings were valuable to him. Even though this was a simulation, he recognises that this was a tricky ethical situation that called for insight, tact and judgement – and as such he identified the use of practicing such responses in preparation for real-life situations outside school. This short exercise may or may not in itself prepared him better to give critical feedback; he nonetheless demonstrates and awareness of the learning potential of such situations. In terms of Perkins' definition of dispositions for learning, he appears at least to be better prepared to identify relevant learning opportunities in future and willing to apply his experience (Perkins & Tishman, 2001).

6.3 How do students' dispositions for learning change?

This section looks at how the students' dispositions for learning change as a response to their experiences on the leadership course. It focuses upon change across time, comparing individual students' comments between the three interviews and looking for incidences of students' changes in understanding, approach and action as a result of their participation on the course. Particular attention is paid to whether changes students demonstrate straight after the course are still evident four months later.

The particular dispositions discussed below emerged through cross-referencing the interview data for recurrent themes on the one hand, and assessing relevance to the leadership course's themes and activities on the other. Although the researcher's theoretical perspective must inevitably influence these choices, a genuine attempt was made to reflect the students' understandings rather than work towards a predetermined list of dispositions.

It is worth restating that all five interviewees were, at the time of the first, pre-course interview, outstanding students who demonstrate qualities we would associate with good leadership skills. The focus of the interviews was therefore on asking them to describe where and how they thought the course had helped develop their skills and performance.

6.3.1 Confidence

All the students talked about having grown in confidence as a result of the course, and about that confidence having made a demonstrable impact on them over the subsequent months – either in their academic work, or in their wider lives, or often both. For some, this was the most valuable lesson they felt they had learned.

Student B suggests in the first interview that she needs others to draw her out to improve her learning, but lacks confidence take the initiative:

I: ...when do you think you learn best?

When people ask me questions.

I: ... What do you think that does for you, being in conversation with someone or having people ask you questions?

It helps me to speak out louder in class.

I: Is it because normally you wouldn't speak?

I'll just get on with my work by myself. *Student B, int.1*

By the second interview, she demonstrates a new willingness to show initiative and belief in herself:

I: What was your impression of the course over the last couple of days?

I think it was fun working with people I had never talked to before, and it gave me more confidence to speak out loud.

I: Do you think you will act differently in the school community as a result of the course?

Yeah – I think I'll speak more and talk to people I don't usually talk to.

I: And why will you do that?

Because I'm gonna be confident and meet new people. *Student B, int.2*

This determination seems to have borne results by the time of the third interview:

I: How would you say that your approach has changed or your understanding has changed?

Cause like, now I put my hand up in class.

I: Right, and why didn't you do that before?

I don't think I was that confident.

I: OK, and what difference has it made, asking questions in class?

It makes me feel open.

I: That's interesting – can you explain that a little more?

Like... I've got control over myself. *Student B, int.3*

This sequence of quotations suggests that not only has Student B determined to be more confident, and through doing so helped bring about the sort of classroom dialogue which she believes will help her learn, but that she also has a greater sense of her own agency: she has “control over herself”. Not only has she grown in confidence, but she recognises that she has done so.

In the case of Student A, who stated that she felt confident before the course started, there is still evidence of a shift in attitude from what seems to be a defensive assertion of her right to be heard towards more open and tolerant self-expression. In the first interview she talks about telling another student how much they can contribute towards a group project – as long as “you're not changing any basic level”. This fear of her opinions being challenged was confronted on the course (as shown in *Section 6.2.1* above), but in both the second and third interview she suggests a more respectful and open stance towards others: “the course has made me listen to people, and like, understand what they're going through” (Int. 3).

For all the students, the challenging experiences of the course were remembered as watersheds: marking a perceived shift from more cautious, defensive habits towards open, confident engagement with others.

6.3.2 Valuing peers as partners in learning

All five students rated ‘other students and friends’ as more important in either the second or third interview than in the first. In no cases did it drop in perceived importance in the third interview. This, supported by the examples below, suggests that students took on board a central theme of the course: respecting colleagues and working in partnership to achieve shared goals.

For example, Student D cites other students as a motivating factor in a competitive sense:

So, good lessons, like, motivate you, and friends and students, they also, like, you see your best friend is doing badly in P.E., and he's helping you, or even not, you try to be on, like, his level or even higher – that motivates you.... If you're the lowest of the class you know you have to keep up with them, and you try harder and harder. That way you do your job properly. *Student D, int.1*

By the third interview, this perspective appears to have changed:

I think I would put 'trips' back a bit, and 'other students' up – because we talk to them and we motivate each other. So friends are really important, even if you're not quite doing well they still can help you or talk to you or cheer you up if you don't feel good. And I think if you feel better because you've been cheered up by friends you've got really more motivated and do the work more. *Student D, int.3*

While he remains focused on academic achievement as his key priority, Student D's shift in language to referring to other students in the second person, including them as colleagues in a shared project of doing well in class, suggests that he now sees them as having intrinsic value – rather than seeing them principally as markers against which to judge his own progress. Communication and cooperation are also important to him:

I'm not now afraid if someone asks a question and I don't know. Before, for example, I couldn't ask someone to do something for me if I didn't know that person. Now I just ask them politely and see if they do or not, and I'm not really afraid if they say no, because I can ask other people as well.

Student D, int.3

As with Student A above, this quotation also suggests a new-found confidence: moving from a defensive, cautious stance towards recognising peers' value and a willingness to engage with and learn from them for mutual benefit. In the same pragmatic spirit, Student D also recognises the wider potential benefits of learning to work with others:

The part where we had to go out of our comfort zone – we could be with friends, but that was not the point of the activity, to be with friends. Just go to people you don't know and try to work with them. And even if you get a job you have to work with people you don't know – even people you don't like – but in a job you have to do it, you've got no choice whatever. *Student D, int.3*

There is a comparable shift in perspective from Student E, who in the first interview represents her learning as standing in isolation from other students, of whom she says: “I can’t share my education with you, you can’t share yours with me”. As with Student D, she gives the impression of an environment in which cooperation is of limited use, and may even be a sign of weakness. After the course, however, Student E suggests a more cooperative approach: “...sometimes I’m trying to figure it out on my own, but as a group my friends are always there... to help each other” (Int 2). Pragmatically, both these students also state in the final interview that they have come to see their friends as a potential source of distraction as well as help in class, and that they have chosen not to sit next to them, instead spending time together outside lessons – a choice which both say has improved their concentration. Both these students’ statements suggest that their experiences during and since the course have left them feeling empowered in the classroom, able to distinguish between genuine collaboration and distraction.

6.3.3 Learning from multiple perspectives

Another point of agreement among all students interviewed was that during the course they had come to appreciate the value of a range of points of view, especially from people outside their normal friendship groups, in forming their own opinions and making joint decisions. This reflects a central theme of the leadership course, which encouraged the formation of diverse groups for all joint activities and reiterated the importance of allowing all voices in those groups to be heard. Student A, when talking about bringing in outside perspectives to her learning in the first interview, answers:

I can understand that whatever you learn in the classroom, there’s always somebody with a different information – that’s the same information, but in different views. *Student A, int.1*

There is a formal acceptance of the importance of outside perspectives here, but it lacks authenticity; as shown above, she is wary of taking other people’s ideas on board in case they challenge her own. In the second interview, however, her belief in the importance of others’ perspectives is firmly grounded in experience:

I've started listening to people, taking their opinions down, feeding back, with lots of people, and really just trying to get myself in to groups where I can say my word and what the school needs, and how we're going to change it.

Student A, int.2

And while the positivity – even zealotry – of this statement directly after the course is tempered a little by the time of the third interview, four months of accepting others' perspectives seems to have been something of a humbling experience:

...because when we're doing teamwork it's easier to talk to them rather than sitting back and not talking to anybody.

I: So you can learn from their opinions and perspectives?

Definitely – their views.

I: And before you didn't really think that?

No.

I: What did you think before?

My opinions rule everybody's opinions!

I think it was the course that helped me a bit - instead of pushing for the front, pushing from the back. And... being a bit more open to people. *Student A, int.3*

This is suggestive not only of her awareness of the importance of taking on other ideas, but of a growing maturity and recognition of personal development as a result of applying the learning from the course over the subsequent months.

By contrast, Student B admits in the first interview that she often lacks the confidence to initiate and participate in discussion, even though she knows it helps her to learn. Furthermore, when asked how she intends to improve her performance in Maths, which she struggles to understand, her response is to pledge to "do more work at home" – even though hers is an issue of more of comprehension than of application. Her comments in the second and third interviews, however suggest a more active approach to seeking others' views: "I think I learn better in a group of people, because you give ideas, and you can like, combine ideas and get a new idea" (Int.3). Gaining the confidence through the course to ask for others' perspectives has allowed her to find new ways to overcome difficulties in her work as they arise, rather than always wrestling with them alone.

Student D states in the first interview that he believes that learning in the classroom is a partnership between the teacher and the individual student; his third interview, however, suggests a change of emphasis:

I think I've acted a bit differently because before I would stick with a few friends and just hang around with them - but now I just go and talk to different people I never knew...

I: And do you feel that you've gained from that? To speak with a wider group of people?

Yes, because you can share ideas, knowledge... and you can get different interests... difference motivates you, so...

I: OK that's interesting. So the very fact that people think differently, act differently or believe differently, that itself makes you interested?

Yes. Every human is not the same. Everyone's got different points of view. I like to see everyone's points of view and then make a judgement. *Student D, int.3*

Here he describes actively seeking others' opinions – not just to benefit his own work but also for his own interest and development. The idea of listening to other ideas so he can “make a judgement” suggests a higher order of learning than getting help understanding the question from someone else, or sharing right answers. Instead, he now finds the contrast of others' different views against his own to be intrinsically motivating; he has come to appreciate a pedagogy of challenge as one that will contribute to his overall development of character rather than looking only to build on his subject-based knowledge.

Together, these comments suggest that the students on this course have learned to seek out and make use of a range of perspectives both their academic and personal development; furthermore, through this process they have developed, in line with the ethos of the leadership course, a more consistent ethical stance in favour of diversity and open communication. They both suggest dialogic thinking, with the ethical stance it implies:

I really enjoyed the course, because it gave me a clearer idea in my mind as to how working with different people, different cultures, different races – it really helped me to see... we could work with different people no matter what colour they are because we are all equal. *Student E, int.2*

6.3.4 *Listening skills*

The leadership course focused explicitly on the skills of listening to others, trying to understand others' perspectives and encouraging others to share and follow through with their ideas – which, it was argued, enable a team to get the most out of its members. In the second interviews, students demonstrated having taken on this message; in the third interviews, however, it is reflected less strongly.

On several occasions, course participants were asked to discuss plans and presentations, and to come to decisions, as equals in their groups. Student C demonstrates below how he saw these practical opportunities as developing his personal skills:

Because like, in our group, there was quite a lot of debating and arguing over the ideas and which bid to go for and things like that. And I was more like saying, 'what if we do this, and add his ideas to this, and mix them together - then you'd get a better idea out of both'...

I: And can you think how, before the course, how might have you been differently in that situation?

Before the course I probably would have just added my idea to the argument, and then people would have stood their ground – and it might have got out of control.

I: ... So the simulation of what might happen in real life was useful for you [yeah]. And what did you take from that simulation? What was the learning, do you think?

Kind of like, see it from their point of how you'd feel, and then explain your reasons and apply it with them, sort of like empathy - be empathetic.

Student C, int.2

The language here reflects his personal engagement with others and a new-found sensitivity to their thoughts and feelings; he also suggests that he believes these skills will be useful to him in real-life situations. In his third interview, however, he focuses on what he has learned about himself and his plans for the future, making little mention of other students. This tendency to talk less about listening and empathising in the third interview was pronounced among all the students, with the exception of

Student A, as demonstrated in *Section 6.3.3* above. It may be that Student C's discernment of opportunities to develop these skills on the course did not transfer strongly into subsequent classroom experience; it may also be that a return to a regular classroom routine had not provided him with such clear and memorable opportunities as arose on the course; or, as Student E's comments below suggest, they may not see those skills as directly relevant to their immediate academic objectives.

I: OK. You were talking earlier on about how you feel you can learn a lot more from different people from different backgrounds and cultures [yeah]. Does that affect the way that you learn at all...?

No, not to do with my learning, not really. Because it's not really to do with my learning, but I would like to know more about different cultures and that, yeah.

Student E, int.3

Here she suggests that there is much to learn from listening, but as a personal interest outside formal learning. It is nonetheless something she has come to regard as important since the course:

Before I never used to realise how making ... like how we had to get into groups and stuff like that, I've learned to spend time with lots of different people now I've become a young leader. People come to me and ask me things and that makes me feel a bit more... better in myself. People will come to me and ask me something about giving them... a long response, yeah.

Student E, int.3

Student E here portrays herself as better prepared to adopt a role of responsibility as a result of the course; she sees herself as someone who knows how to listen, who gives the impression of being sympathetic, encouraging others to confide in her, and who can respond sensitively. This, for her, is as a friend and mentor rather than as a co-learner in the classroom. Taken together the students interviewed seem to have recognised the utility of these skills in completing the challenges set during the course, and have expressed a feeling of excitement through having done so; however, the final interviews suggest that they have not retained a sense of these skills as vital to their academic learning, but rather as having contributed more broadly to their personal development and wider roles outside the classroom.

6.3.5 *Impact beyond the classroom*

Another central message of the leadership course was that leadership skills should be applied in different areas of life: home, school and community. In the previous section it was argued that some students felt that they could not easily apply all the skills they learned through the course within the classroom context; all, however, attest to some change in their personal and social lives outside of the classroom as a result of the course. For Student A, the greatest change is in her personal life:

I: How would you sum up what leadership means to you now?

Erm... I think it's like helping others, not just to help yourself.

I: And do you think that will make any difference on your life outside school?

*Yeah 'cause, now since the last 2 courses, from Monday night, I came in the house and ran straight upstairs and sat in my room, thinking about the activities and my mum thought something was wrong with me. I went, 'naa, I'm just thinking to myself'. On like, the Tuesday, talked to mum, showed her my certificate, and told her what I'd been doing over the last couple of days, and she said, 'that's why you were so quiet'. Even my uncle, I went up to my uncle's house on Monday, and like as well he said, 'I've seen a completely different change from you.' *Student A, int.2**

Here she suggests that she has transferred lessons learned on the course significantly into her family relations; this change in approach seems to have had an impact over the subsequent months:

I: So how have you been differently with your family and home life since the course?

*Talked to them a bit more, started going out with them rather than just staying at home and ignoring them. *Student A, int.3**

All four other students, in their final interviews, talk about having joined more after-school and outside-school clubs in the months after the course. Two of these said they were now in at least five different clubs. While Student B says she thinks her increased club attendance might be coincidental to going on the course, she nonetheless cites increased confidence in talking to people as her key lesson from it; a point also made by Student C just before the following comments:

I: OK - so it's talking to different people in different contexts [mmm] and gaining stuff from that, learning stuff from that.

Yeah, cause before I only went to one club every two weeks - and now I go to about five.

I: Wow! What would you say that you get from all of that?

Just, like, different experiences, different people, just... a variety of lifestyle.

Student C, int.3

At a period of life where young people are prone to rapid social and personal development, the course may not have been the direct cause all of this increased extra-curricular activity; nonetheless, the extent of its growth over the research period is remarkable. These comments reflect a desire for wider life experience in addition to academic learning – one which the breadth of activities and interactions on the course seems to have stimulated.

6.3.6 Accountability / responsibility

A theme reiterated throughout the course was that of taking responsibility for one's actions. Several students responded to this directly in their second interviews, but by the third interview none took up the theme directly.

The course's emphasis on responsibility was reinforced in several ways: for example, participants and facilitators alike were asked to let the students run activities with minimum intervention from adults such as chairing discussions and setting their own rules. In addition, participants were invited to think about how they might be held accountable for their performance in course activities, their academic work and in their roles within the school. Student B reflects this theme when asked about what she finds challenging in school:

I: ... I was wondering if you'd had any new thoughts about what the challenges are now?

Needing to keep a good reputation.

I: Is that something you've thought about more, something that's come out of the course [yeah]. Can you tell me a little bit more about what you understand by what's the importance of keeping a good reputation?

Like if I do something wrong I can own up to it - I can take responsibility.

Student B, int.2

Although her comments are characteristically brief, they suggest significant personal reflection on her role within the school and self-understanding as a result of the course. Student C also reflects on his school role:

... the training, it helps you with your skills and meeting new people and things like that. So if there's a new student and you see them and they look kind of lonely or lost, it would be easier to go up to them and talk to them.

I: And is that because you would want to do that, or is that because it's kind of your role or job?

I think it's kind of both in a way. But more, like, want to do it.

I: More because you'd want to. And so what have made you not do it before?

I'd probably say, like, because I was sort of shy before. *Student C, int.2*

Both talk of their standing among other students and a desire to act as a role model. These ideas, however, are largely absent from the final interviews with all the students; across the third interviews, there is a shift in language away from school roles and group activity towards personal lessons learned through the course and how these may enhance their school learning and personal lives. A possible explanation is that the students have not recognised themselves as having been given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for matters wider than their personal learning since the course, and that this lesson has been lost; further evidence for this is discussed in the next section.

6.3.7 Response to pressure of examinations

When asked by the researcher what most motivated them in their learning, all students put 'good grades' as either their first or second most important factor in all three interviews; in addition, every student, when asked in the first interview what they thought was the purpose of school, replied that getting good grades was the key factor alongside helping shape their future career. The desire and perceived need to do well in exams is evident throughout the rest of the first interviews:

Most challenging thing about school life is probably doing exams, and kind of being a part in it because that just... the main thing in school: exams. You learn and then you do your exams. You learn and then you do your exams.

Student E, int.1

Yes, because what I'm at now, I'm just collecting everything I need now to get me into Year 10, to get me into Year 11, to get me into college and get myself to university. That's all I'm into right about right now. *Student A, int.1*

None of the second interviews, by contrast, mentioned exams; this may well be due to the recent vivid of the experience of the course on the one hand, and by the timing: the penultimate week of the school year on the other, in which Year 9 students had neither had recent exams, nor did they have any coming up soon. Students in these interviews talk far more about the importance of working as a team and of learning from others' perspectives. However, as noted above, the third interviews took place when these students were preparing for, or had just had, GCSE exams. Student D, when asked what he had done in the school community as a result of the leadership training since the course, replied:

I think we didn't do quite much as we have to prepare for our GCSE tests, which were quite hard... we didn't really have time to do that much – but I think we organised – never did it, but we planned – the leadership workshop for Year 7 who just came. And a fundraising organisation for – I think it was called Tsunami, something like that. *Student D, int.3*

Student B suggests a similar pressure of time:

I: Has it changed the young leaders programme, or anything like that?

Yeah, because now we've got exams we don't have much time for that.

I: How do the exams change things?

More time revising. *Student B, int.3*

Both these statements suggest that participants on the course had been able to do less than they would have liked within the school community subsequently. In addition, there is evidence that in class time students were unable to use the cooperative, communicative approaches to learning they developed on the course. Student D's science teacher, when asked how well he was communicating with others in lessons,

admitted that the syllabus content of the triple-science course he was undertaking placed such demands on the students' time that opportunities for cooperative activities were very limited. This is reinforced by Student E's observation when asked about applying her leadership skills in the classroom:

I communicate with everyone, but because this year has become harder because we're doing GCSEs, I try to concentrate as much as I can instead of talking and that... *Student E, int.3*

However, Student B's comments suggest that she has applied her experience on the course to approach the exams more positively. Having said in the first interview that exams were the most challenging aspect of school, and that she was afraid of letting herself down in them, she says in the third that she was feeling "prepared" and 'confident'; a view reflected also by Student D.

While the students are prepared to accept the examinations both as a challenge to be met positively and an opportunity to secure distinction for themselves, they recognise that they require of them a substantially different approach from the one they took on the course. Given the high stakes involved, there is a clear shift between the second and third interviews from cooperative, community-focused activity towards individual, examination-focused activity.

6.4 What are the teachers' and tutors' perceptions?

Due to the practical difficulties outlined in *Section 6.1* relating to the change of year between the second and third interviews the researcher was unable to interview students' tutors, and some of the teachers in the subjects nominated by students had only been teaching them for a few weeks this year, and never before the course. This makes it impossible to provide a substantial answer to the question, "What are the teachers and tutors' perceptions of their students' dispositions for learning in the period following the course?" Instead, the data gained from teacher interviews has been used where relevant in the previous section to broaden the perspective on students' comments.

6.5 Does the leadership course influence the students' academic performance?

The nature of the data in this pilot study does not allow a causal link to be drawn between the students' learning from the leadership course and their academic performance; this would only be possible over a longer period with access to performance data, and with a much larger cohort of students. However, there is strong anecdotal evidence within the data to suggest that students feel that their academic performance has improved, or will do so, as a result of their experiences on the course. All five students said that the course had made a difference to their academic performance; three cited specific subjects in which they felt they had improved, while two cited skills and habits they have learned which allow them to work better across the board.

The clearest example of perceived progress in a difficult subject comes from Student C, who in the first interview demonstrates that his real effort in English that is met by frustration:

I: OK what about English, then? What is it about English that's tricky for you? Wording, like, how you word things, 'cause that's quite important. 'Cause if you don't word it right, you might give the wrong impression and come across wrong, and then that can lose you marks and grades and things like that. So it's not really that it's difficult, it's more the wording on how to answer things.

I: Right. Is that because... there isn't a clear answer, as it were?

No – there's a clear answer – it's just I can't find how to put it.

I: It doesn't come naturally [yeah]. Does it seem a bit awkward?

Yeah, 'cause I put a word down and read the sentence back and it doesn't feel like I was to get what I was saying – so I change the words... but that still doesn't feel right. *Student C, int.2*

Student C, who as earlier shown gains satisfaction from solving puzzles and finding the 'right' answer, seems to struggle in a subject in which clarity of argument, rather than finding the correct solution, is required. After the course, he acknowledges the value of sharing perspectives as potentially beneficial to him in this respect:

I think the fact that you're doing the tasks with other people, I think that's going to help slightly in English, because in English when you do literature and

things like that you have to know different points of view, take them into consideration and things like that if you have a debate or a report or things like that. You need to take how other people see something... during the tasks, you had lots of different opinions, lots of different views, and you had to understand those to complete the task and collaborate with one idea. And I think the course would help me with that. *Student C, int.2*

When asked in the third interview whether his change of perspective regarding English had led to any lasting change of approach, he replied:

Yeah, probably in English I've been trying harder to understand, like, different terms and how to put them into essays....

I: Do you think it's led to any improvement in your performance?

Yeah. Before I struggled to write a paragraph, but now it just flows out... I'm struggling to fit it into a paragraph. *Student C, int.3*

This final extract suggests a significant, liberating sense of progress – but it does not link neatly with Student C's new-found appreciation of multiple perspectives and teamwork in interview 2. However, when the medium of assessment is essay-writing such collaboration is more difficult, even forbidden. Nonetheless, he demonstrates having deliberately attempted to improve his English, and having found a way which uses his facility to solve problems – using the 'tools' of technical terminology to provide productive new perspectives on the material, thereby creating an internal dialogue. In addition, it suggests increased resilience and innovation in the face of challenge; in the first interview he stated that he did not think he could further improve his academic performance, even in the subjects like English where he was struggling.

Student A took a more direct approach to improving her attitude in PE and Maths, in which she said she struggled in the first interview, following the course:

Yeah, like PE and maths now... I was sitting down with my teacher this morning in form time, and I asked them to explain to me, what is maths about? So I think I've taken a liking to maths now since that talk this morning because, it's not just numbers that you're learning about, it's other stuff as well. And with PE, in trampolining as well in first period, Miss told me yeah, that if you

like a subject it's like what you like actually inside the subject – that you can't just say that you hate PE It's like, you have to give an individual answer to what you dislike about it. But now, the subjects like, tap into the stuff in PE that I do love, so I can't say that I dislike PE altogether. *Student A, int.2*

Here Student A has adopted the 'challenge' approach of the course, seeking to understand and change her own negative opinion of these subjects through dialogue with her teachers so as to gain new motivation and interest. This is borne out in the third interview:

I: Has your approach to P.E. changed, or has it stayed the same?

It's different because there's all different areas to it.

I: So are you saying you've come to see it differently [yeah]? Can you explain a bit more?

Right, you don't just go... put your P.E. kit on and go do a sport outside – you can do different areas... and that it's easier to understand when you're doing the practical than just the teacher talking to you. *Student A, int.3*

Her openness to the different activities within PE has persisted, and her attitude has changed. In English and maths she suggests that it is her new-found confidence in working with groups that has helped her to improve her attitude:

I: So, can you think of any changes in approach to any of your other subjects after the course, or is it largely the same?

Basically, my English and my Maths – I think I listen to my teachers more than I used to instead of doodling on a piece of paper....

I: OK – so you feel like you can concentrate more [yeah]. Why do you think you can concentrate more now?

Because I've, like... done it and seen it and I've practiced it over the couple of terms we've had.

I: When you say you've done it and practiced it, what... is this the lessons you've learned from the course [yeah]? So what have you done and practiced that you learned from the course?

In my groups, like, instead of sitting back and letting them talk about it I'd like, get in and start talking about the subject and what we're doing. *Student A, int.3*

Student A's move from relative isolation in the classroom to focused teamwork has helped her to remain on-task; she has also acknowledged the need to change and consciously practice new habits of learning. Similarly to Student C, this suggests both resilience and the ability to approach learning reflectively in order to improve performance. Both have learned to see the subject they find more difficult as a challenge to their approach to learning rather than as an impasse, and have found a new way forward on the basis of their strengths.

As well as progress in specific subjects, students talk about broader changes in approach and behaviour which have impacted on their academic performance. As shown in *Section 6.3.2* above, Students D and E feel they have improved through learning to separate themselves from their friends in the classroom and avoiding distraction. Student D also found he was able to gain from the support and perspectives of students he had not previously known. Similarly, Student B suggests that her deliberate change of approach of looking to engage through questioning has made a significant impact on her performance:

*I: I think when we spoke before you said it helps when people ask you questions. So is that something that's happened more since the course?
Yeah....*

I: ... OK. So do you think you might do better in your exams as a result or do you think it won't make such difference?

I think I'll do better. Student B, int.3

It is difficult for students to assess the perceived impact of the broad range of skills and dispositions developed through the course on themselves and their academic performance; the skills and working methods required of them in the classroom and examination hall are markedly different. Furthermore, the leadership course contains little or no information content which is of direct relevance to their academic studies. Indeed, two of the students interviewed were cautious about attesting to any direct change in approach to their studies in the light of their experiences on the course. However, when drawn upon to describe their experiences in the classroom in the second and third interviews, all revealed significant changes in attitude and approach to their studies which they acknowledged had brought about significant improvement.

How significant this perceived improvement might prove in terms of higher grades in tests warrants further exploration.

6.6 Summary

These results suggest that these five students' were increasingly willing to communicate, to value others' opinions, to contribute to shared activity, and to participate in school and community life. In addition, there is also a sense of that their perceived self-knowledge has increased, and that these lessons have been reinforced through their subsequent experience. Taken together, the results suggest significant development in the students' dispositions for learning as a result of the leadership course. They internalised concepts such as 'working outside your comfort zone' and applied them productively to situations they had found difficult before, both inside and outside the classroom. There is even significant evidence of perceived personal and moral development as a result of their experiences during and following the course. These are the main foci of professional leadership development programmes; they are also essential elements in building 'character' in young people, preparing them to face future challenges intelligently, ethically and with confidence. Additionally, the students clearly believed that their academic performance had or would improve as a result of the steps they had taken following their experiences on the course. In contrast, there was also evidence of a lack of subsequent opportunities for students to practice their newfound skills and to continue to develop their dispositions for learning through practical opportunities for action.

The students' descriptions of their attitudinal change – such as having the confidence to ask questions, seeking and incorporating others' perspectives into their thinking, relishing working with students very different to themselves, and looking for new ways to appreciate and approach their academic work – appear to support the definition of dispositions for learning as forms of openness, rather than as a set of distinct and discrete qualities.

These results suggest that the key to the course's success was its focus on challenge: it was the students' memories of difficult situations they were placed in, and their resolution, that were strongest, and which they understood as having precipitated

changes in their understanding. This was partly due to the unfamiliar activities undertaken, and partly due to their unfamiliar environment. Students found that working with people they did not know exposed them to the possibility of unforeseen responses – they were used to working with the same students in predictable classroom scenarios. By contrast, they were called upon to find unique solutions drawing on a range of perspectives – a process they found surprising and liberating.

Finally, these results suggest that students can demonstrate responsible leadership when given enough support in building the appropriate skills and habits for learning, and space for their dispositions for learning to develop. On the other hand, these results draw attention to the limiting factors of a school context still ruled by accountability to examination performance. A limitation of the methodology was that there was no way of gauging whether skills developed on the course but not subsequently used had been retained. While these students claim to have retained many personal insights and habits they gained on the course, they can only continue to demonstrate responsible leadership in their learning and in their wider communities when offered continuing opportunities and support for meaningful action.

A further discussion of how these findings relate to the main research questions of the thesis is in *Chapter 8*.

7.1 Introduction

The findings in this chapter are dense and detailed, so several measures have been taken to help to navigate them. Firstly, a summary of findings has been provided in *Table 1* below. Next, quotations considered important but not essential to the argument have been annotated and included in *Appendix Q*; these excisions are indicated by endnote numbers. Each of the eight main sub-sections of 7.2 has a summary. There is also a short review at the end (7.4) of how these findings respond to the research questions, and a final brief conclusion (7.5).

Two different approaches are taken to answering the research questions. Primarily the data is analysed laterally, looking at all participants' responses as a whole to emergent themes in each interview in turn, and therefore looking at changes in the group across time. This focuses on the participants' interviews, with occasional reference to the researcher's observation notes. Secondly the data is addressed narratively, focusing on each participant in turn to illuminate their changes in understanding, attitude and behaviour over the research period. This draws on the interviews with participants and with the Prince's Trust course leader. These two approaches are designed to be distinct but not discrete. Any repetition between them will, it is hoped, be compensated by a greater depth of insight.

Table 1: summary of findings from the lateral analysis in the main study

Themes and sub-themes	Summary
<p>Challenge and difference</p> <p><i>Challenge</i></p> <p><i>Newness</i></p> <p><i>Significant past events</i></p> <p><i>Physical activity</i></p> <p><i>Prince's Trust course</i></p> <p><i>Residential course</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong link emerged between students' senses of challenge and of meaningful learning • The cooperation, novelty, fear and excitement of outdoor education contributed to this, and were in strong contrast to their previous school experiences • The residential entailed open-ended tasks allowing for experiment, risk, error and conflict • Students increasingly valued the challenging elements of the residential over time and with hindsight saw how they had influenced them, especially in valuing different perspectives • Challenging activities and social scenarios led to watershed moments which for students were significant, meaningful and lasting
<p>Arguments, conflict and conciliation</p> <p><i>Arguing and persuading</i></p> <p><i>Arguments, anger</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students understood and experienced the negotiations of differences and challenges on the residential primarily as interpersonal arguments • These led to conflict and, at times, hurt and resentment • However, they saw great value in these arguments in that they had forced them to sort out their differences and reach new levels of understanding and mutual respect • Over time they downplayed their importance and focussed on the sense of team identity and shared achievement they had gained • Generally, students did not relate to arguments as propositions, nor did they separate the conflict of ideas from personal conflict • This was a possible limitation in terms of the development of habits and dispositions for learning in future contexts
<p>Relating to others</p> <p><i>Friends and family</i></p> <p><i>Groups and teamwork</i></p> <p><i>Others</i></p> <p><i>Respect</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenging, high-pressure environment of the residential promoted strong group bonding, which significantly boosted their self-esteem and confidence • However, it did not promote students' discursive reflection on the transferrable skills they'd gained; instead, they limited their sense of achievement in interpersonal skills to the group alone • However, their underlying dispositions towards working with others may well still have been enhanced • There was a strong sense of students' acceptance of the <i>otherness</i> of others – and of the practical and intrinsic value of that fact – which was forged through shared experiences of challenges
<p>Leading and decision-making</p> <p><i>Discussion and planning</i></p> <p><i>Leaders and leadership</i></p> <p><i>Ideas</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The residential was a powerful generator of leadership opportunities – in contrast to their previous school experiences or of the Prince's Trust course subsequently • Initial caution about adopting leadership roles was maintained, although some were proud of moments when they took a lead on the residential • Students learned to appreciate others' leadership, and the value of the concept itself – especially in regard to allowing the team to

	<p>choose between different and competing ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a lack of practical knowledge about leadership and decision making, such as chairing, delegation and cumulation, which led them to over-identify leadership with personal authority and ownership of ideas • Over time they downplayed moments of leadership in favour of identifying the team as a whole of having achieved the desired result
<p>Following, abstaining, dissenting</p> <p><i>Critic</i></p> <p><i>Objector</i></p> <p><i>Pretender</i></p> <p><i>Spectator</i></p> <p><i>Volunteer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' understandings of different roles within groups developed substantially over time • In Interview A responses were formulaic and unsupported • In Interview B responses were more passionate and example-focused • In Interview C students were more nuanced, multi-faceted and sympathetic in their understandings, moving away from a focus on individuals to the dynamics and well-being of the group • This suggests an 'incubation effect' whereby students had continued to consider, and learn from, their experiences well after the residential course • There was little assertion of perceived personal change in terms of transferrable skills in group roles
<p>Identity and motivation</p> <p><i>Independence</i></p> <p><i>Motivation, effort</i></p> <p><i>Proving yourself, achieving</i></p> <p><i>Understanding of self</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students changed from seeing motivation as a quantity they would like more of towards seeing it as something related to things of value in their lives • They saw the environment and context of the residential as strongly motivating in contrast to their previous school experiences • They reflected strongly on their perceived weaknesses as revealed through the challenges on the course – but did so positively, seeing possibility for improvement • This was stronger than their unqualified sense of personal achievement arising from those challenges, although this was also in evidence • Students professed important insights into their identities and directions, but struggled to express them clearly
<p>Confidence and the future</p> <p><i>Confidence</i></p> <p><i>Thoughts about the future</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students professed to an increase in self-confidence; as a whole they also saw a clear link between this and their possibilities for achieving future goals • This was boosted in some cases by watershed activities on the residential like abseiling or taking a leadership role on a group task; subsequently, it was also boosted by successful work placements • Most participants were cautious in confining their sense of increased confidence to within the particular group; this does not imply that they would not have gained confidence when working with future groups

7.2 Lateral analysis

The sections below represent the seven key themes arising from the coding and thematic analysis of the participant interviews as described in *Chapter 5*. The headings represent the top level of coding, with the incorporated middle level codes listed afterwards. Their order represents an attempt to present these themes coherently; it does not reflect their relative frequency or importance.

References to the interview series in bold (i.e. **Interview A**) mark a shift in the analysis to looking at the responses to the code in question solely from those interviews. This is to emphasise the lateral focus of this analysis on commonalities and differences within the cohort at each interview stage, as opposed to tracking personal changes over time, as in *Section 7.3*.

In the early sections of this analysis, several observations are made but their significance is not fully analysed at the time; instead, the reader is asked to bear these in mind until these themes emerge in different contexts in which they will be discussed more fully.

Finally, this analysis contains a few short comments from the researcher that arose from the cited quotations but did not fit neatly into the coding scheme. These are presented as roman numeral footnotes to distinguish them from the endnotes, and from the main argument.

7.2.1 Challenge and difference

(inc. 'challenge', 'newness', 'significant past events', 'physical activity', 'Prince's Trust course', 'residential course')

7.2.1.1 Initial fears about the course

In **Interview A**, participants on the whole expressed trepidation at the prospect of going on a five-day residential course somewhere most had never been to, and with people they barely knew. Four spoke of their fear of spending time with new people, and four of their fear of new environments:

I: So how do you feel about the course that's coming up in a couple of weeks –

the residential up on Dartmoor?

George: Well, erm... I wouldn't mind it, it's just that I don't like going away from all my family and friends and that too long. I've never really liked going away for a week with new people I haven't met.

I: OK, so you're a bit anxious (yeah, yeah) about... have you done anything like this before?

George: No.

For both George and James¹ their trepidation seems to stem from a lack of experience: of spending time with new people and in new places respectively. Never having left Exeter, James finds the prospect of the wilderness of Dartmoor intimidating; the sense of difference that he acknowledges is magnified by his lack of experience in adjusting to different locations at all. Similarly, the prospect to George of being separated from the security of family and friends brings anxiety to a situation that he says he wouldn't otherwise mind. These responses were similar to those observed in practice in the abandoned study (p.104), where the students sought refuge from the strangeness of the environment by staying tightly in friendship groups and surrounding themselves with conversation about the familiar. Others on this course, however, were trying to focus on the benefits:

I: So, how are you feeling about this week away on Dartmoor?

Holly: Erm... kind of nervous because I don't really like staying away from home, but again that'll help me doing stuff like when it come to me living on my own in the future.

I: So it's part of the learning curve, but nervous (yeah) is the main thing you're feeling at the moment (yeah).^{vii}

^{vii} *Researcher's note:* The above quotation reflects my sense as interviewer of a refreshing honesty from all of the participants in the first interview. They were willing to admit to perceived failings and fears with little attempt at disguise or caution. This came as a pleasant surprise given that this very personal interview process was also unfamiliar to them except, perhaps, in disciplinary contexts; it suggested that the strategy of spending time with the group as a participant / facilitator beforehand, and frequently throughout the subsequent three month period of the study, had helped them to be relaxed and open. This initial openness became somewhat more complex in subsequent interviews, with some disclosing more and others becoming more circumspect; this will be discussed later.

Both Holly and Dan tried to look beyond their current feelings of anxiety towards the potential rewards – an ideal disposition towards challenge within the framework of this study. The two participants who expressed no fear, Jake and Martin, said that they'd done similar things as part of the Army and the Cadets respectively, and that they were therefore looking forward both to getting away and the range of activities they'd be doing. Later quotations will show that this prior experience, however, didn't prevent the course challenging both of them profoundly in other ways.

Despite most feeling cautious or fearful about the course beforehand, none of the participants gave any indication in subsequent interviews that their fears had been justified. Some of their reports of how they'd found the course in the B interviews were wholly positive and some were mixed, but none mentioned the issues they'd previously raised. As we shall see below, participants were challenged in ways they hadn't anticipated; by the time of the C interview, however, none remembered the course with mixed feelings. Instead, they either recalled parts of it that stood out for them or said that they'd enjoyed all of it – albeit that Martin and Carla didn't give a C interview, and would have been those most likely to disagree. This increasingly positive recall of the course over time is a theme that will recur, and will be explored further.

7.2.1.2 Referring to past experiences / challenges

Note: These two codes have been written up together because, as will be argued below, participants' recollection of past learning experiences was almost exclusively of moments of challenge or difference. In a sense this is unsurprising as critical incident recall, which tends to highlight unusual or outstanding moments rather than steady processes, was central to the methodological approach of this study. However, nowhere else in the interviews did participants mention cases of steady directed learning of a body of knowledge. Because of its length this section is subdivided into interview stages for clarity of argument.

7.2.1.2.1 Past experiences/challenges: Interview A

In the first interview, no participants could think, as requested, of three moments when they'd really learned something in the last year, although three of them thought of two. It should be noted, however, that this is a hard question to ask of anyone; nonetheless, there were common themes among the moments they did recall. Carla and Bron both referred to the 'New Leaf' course they had recently completed:

Carla: It was like... it was a 12 week course I think it was, and it was just doing working in a team and doing things like outdoor education stuff, so we did rock climbing and things like that.

I: So quite similar to this [Prince's Trust] course in a way?

Carla: Yeah.

I: Great. And what stands out from that for you? Why do you remember it?

Carla: I remember it because before I went there I wasn't confident at all, I wouldn't speak to anyone, but being in a team made me more confident and learn to, like, make friends.

The New Leaf course was in many ways similar to the Prince's Trust course of which the residential week was a part: 12 weeks in total in a single team, outdoor education, teambuilding exercises, working towards a certificate of accreditation and with an orientation towards future work and study. This last quotation to some extent prefigures participants' reflections on the residential week as a whole. Bron was the only exception referred to above in that he mentioned having learned from the study of subject knowledge. He is Polish and his family had recently moved to Exeter. His response to the first question was, 'I am still learning... English language'; throughout the 3 interviews he referred to English as 'difficult', and gave no impression that he felt he had progressed significantly.

Both Holly and Carla² referred to their experiences of having to learn to live away from their parents, either alone or in care:

I: Tell me about 3 moments in the last year where you really felt you learned something.

Holly: Well, I've got 2. One's where I sort of, went into care – because basically rather than going into your normal care home I was put into supported living. So I've had to learn to do a lot for myself, do all my own stuff, to

become more independent.

For both of these teenagers, leaving home had forced them to adapt, and as a result of which they believed they had become stronger and more independent. While neither of these experiences was momentary, they were nonetheless challenging. Despite their expressed positivity, such ongoing challenges as occur in everyday life can be traumatic and can remain unresolved and debilitating. Challenge as a pedagogical tool, by contrast, should be focused and of limited duration to allow a turnaround of experience, feedback and learning – and always in the context of a sense of responsibility and trust between teachers and students to prevent unnecessary suffering.

Jake and George mentioned learning through challenging experiences at school, but in both cases these weren't directly related to the content:

I: So you were saying you've completed your GCSE coursework?

George: Yeah, I'd fallen quite far behind, and I always had to stay behind at lunchtimes, after school, every day just complete it all until I'd done it.

I: Was there, like, a tipping point when you realised that you needed to get it done (yeah, yeah), or was it the fact that you were literally getting held back in lunch and break and all of that and you realised that you had to get on with it (yeah, yeah)? How was it?

George: It was a bit annoying missing out on my lunch and not going home at the right time, but I got it all done, good.

I: So it gave you a push in the end (yeah, yeah), and you finished it off. How do you feel now it's done?

George: Yeah, I feel quite proud.

While only Jake's³ example is of a moment of realisation, both refer to their having been challenged by authority to do work they weren't doing, backed up by the threat of punishment. Both report a change in attitude, but not in relation to the subjects they were learning (neither mentioned which). Again, the learning is a behavioural response to outside pressure rather than taking on new knowledge.

Interestingly, George's second example was a much more active and positive one:

George: Erm, well, I'm doing Tae-Kwando. I achieved a black belt in that – so I'm really pleased with that (brilliant)...

I: And why does it feel good to have the black belt – is it just the status, or...?

George: Yeah, yeah, having the belt round you, walking round with it...

I: That's excellent. Has that made a difference? Is it a nice feeling, or has it made a difference for you in any other way?

George: Yeah, I've got more confident meeting with other people and that, working with others...

This is an example of formal learning, but completely outside the school – and one that has had a marked impact on George's confidence and self-esteem; the environment of martial-arts training with its visible status and rituals of passage has benefitted him in ways school, which also involves working with others within specific disciplines, has not. The suggestion that this may be related to the sense of physical achievement will be supported by later quotations in this section. Finally, this has similarities with Holly's⁴ recent experience of using her training to give an injured dog first aid, which again was a critical moment where her practical knowledge enabled to her act with confidence and made her feel good about herself.

Citations of powerful learning in Interview A have all referred to challenging situations, and most to particular moments when this experience was crystallised. Participants intuitively took the question phrase '...really meant something' to mean an experience that significantly changed their understanding of themselves; for none of them did this resonate with any of their experiences in school lessons.

7.2.1.2.2 Past experiences/challenges: Interview B

All eight participants in Interview B had much to say in answer to the first question, all referring to the week-long residential course they had just attended. There were five references coded for 'referring to past experiences' in A, twenty-two in B and nine in C. A wide variety of challenging experiences were mentioned in B, but a few of those most frequently mentioned were: abseiling, the final challenge, rock climbing, bridge-building and the search task. As these were all planned activities this supports the quality of pedagogy of the course; others mentioned, such as incidents while cooking

communal meals, weren't part of the outdoor programme but were just as integral to the course's socially challenging design. Others that didn't refer to specific tasks related to arguments between participants, which will be analysed in *Section 7.2.2* below.

The most popular code with regard to challenge was 'challenging experience pays off'. The observation notes refer to many incidents of participants' anger, frustration, discomfort and, at times, dejection; also, all participants refer in the B interviews to moments they didn't enjoy and most to activities that for them didn't work well. However, there were no cases of participants recalling challenging activities that they wished they hadn't done. Instead, George gives an example of helping to carry an 'injured' man (played by myself) to the summit of a hill as part of the Final Challenge:

I: Anything else where you pushed yourself a bit or did what you didn't think you'd do?

George: The final challenge, maybe.

I: How did... where on the final challenge did you push yourself a bit, maybe?

George: Erm... probably when we went to get you up the hill.

I: Yeah, I'm not getting any lighter these days! And did you enjoy it or did it just hurt?

George: Erm... it was fun, but it hurt a bit!

I: And how did you feel when everyone was at the top – just in time, wasn't it (yeah) 5 minutes to go...

George: Relieved that we'd done it all on time.

In this context, for George, who was generally shy and reluctant to volunteer for group activities, the pain was worth it in order not to let down the team. Bron's⁵ words on the subject were both characteristically brief and typical of this attitude. He makes reference to the different habits, behaviours and activities the course required of him, and to the discomfort they caused at times – yet he asserts that he enjoyed the whole week, as did three others. This is surprising given the extent of the difficulties and arguments the group experienced. Ged, the Prince's Trust course leader, later said of this group that these students were among the least positive and cooperative of the many he had led (see p.249). That all bar Martin were positive or highly positive about their experience of the week reflects the striking ability of this course to take

participants through a process of challenge, completion and a sense of achievement. Abseiling was the activity that in its own right seemed to have the most powerful effect in this regard:

Carla: I thought it was really good.

I: What was it – the height, or?

Carla: Because I overcame my fear of heights.

I: Did it? Did you have a fear of heights?

Carla: Yeah, only a little bit of a fear of heights.

I: I thought the most difficult bit was... getting over the rail was a bit weird, wasn't it (mmm, yeah), and then the bit when you got to the bottom of the bricks...

Carla: Yeah, and you had to let your feet go.

I: And why do you remember that moment particularly as number one?

Carla: Because it was... the best part of the whole week!

While Carla's experience was of overcoming a personal barrier and getting a sense of elation from it, for Steve⁶, the experience of helping others to overcome their fear was more rewarding than his experience of the abseil itself; he took pride in both his achievement and that of others. Whereas Steve reflected a focus on the group above himself throughout the course, this was not the case with Kat, especially early on (see Personal Study: Kat). However, her response was similar to another abseiling task in which participants had greater personal responsibility for the group:

I: Were there any particular parts of the course that really made you want to try hard?

Kat: In the beginning, like, the rock climbing – when we abseiled off the rock face – like, not everyone wanted to do it, and me and Carla were listening, and we had to lower two more people down, and like, there was someone skipping [with the rope] with the rest of them to listen, and I just went that 'you can all work together in the end'.

I: That's interesting – so the thing that motivated you was a moment when other people were a bit scared or in need of support (yeah) and you stepped in when others weren't (yeah), cause you wanted to help the

others out.

Kat: Yeah. At the end of the day if it was me at the top I wouldn't like it.

While Kat's description of her experience of doing the abseil herself was very similar to Carla's above, here she recalls a moment when another participant's lack of responsibility for others' safety stirred her into action. What is also notable here is her explicit reference to imagining herself in another's place: a key ability in developing both empathy and understanding, and central to an ethics of dialogue. The sense of responsibility towards others, especially at moments when something serious is at stake, is a challenge to which most of the participants responded to at some time on the course. For Dan, these situations were generally not during tasks but in the discussions afterwards, or in the social situations in the evenings:

I: OK. What bits didn't you enjoy?

Dan: Erm... trying to think... The one time that I.. throughout the week, it takes a lot to tick me off really, but there was this one time that I'd just had enough. It was when we were on the bus, and there were supposed to be two team leaders and they both dropped out, and they just said, "we can't be bothered", and nobody else wanted to do it and they were all arguing over it – and that was just... what annoyed me.

I: So was it the fact that the group was arguing, or was it the fact that people weren't bothered?

Dan: It was the way everybody was talking about it... they were just acting like children and just... it was just irritating... it was just the way people were acting and it wasn't a hard thing to do. Just step up and...

I: So you wanted to take the activities reasonably seriously, did you?

Dan: Yeah, well, it was one of the last tasks that needed to be done, and we needed to do it alright... and it just all fell apart and people were just moaning about things and... it was just kind of irritated me at that moment – cause it had been going on all week but that was just the point...

I: Right. And how did you respond to that?

Dan: I just kind of snapped at everybody and just told them to grow up and things like that, and I just went... I said I'd prefer being one of the leaders.

Here Dan, who was generally quiet and self-contained, was spurred to respond to the situation by his irritation at others' behaviour due to his belief in the importance of what they were trying to achieve together on the course. While on the surface this could be interpreted as his assertion of his will upon the group for his own benefit, deeper acquaintance with Dan suggested that he had no personal desire to lead (see Personal Study: Dan). Instead, he was spurred by the situation to challenge their 'childish' behaviour and attempted to set a better example. There are several other incidents mentioned in Interview B where participants responded to suggestions from staff or the requirements of tasks to do something they would not normally do – such as Kat's participation in the abseiling and George's carrying in the Final Challenge – and to which they then responded favourably. These are also indicators of the ethics of dialogue in place on the residential course: trusting in others enough to let them influence your attitude and behaviour, and demonstrating responsibility towards others, even when you don't have to and don't know how they might respond. (see p.24).

7.2.1.2.3 Past experiences/challenges: Interview C

This round of interviews, 3 months after the B round, was patchy in terms of quality and attendance: only 7 of the 9 participants gave a C interview, and two of them – Bron's and Jake's – were of poor quality (for reasons discussed in their personal studies). That said, several participants spoke freely and thoughtfully in this interview – George and Kat, for example. In Holly's case, she didn't give a B interview (again, this will be discussed later), so in her C interview recalled her experiences from the residential as well as those subsequently. As noted above, there were far fewer recollections of past experiences in this round than in B – understandably, these were also less vivid:

Holly: Well, I thought the last day on the residential, because that's the day if everyone started working as a team, and since then everyone got on loads better rather than arguing all the time.

I: Do you think it was anything about that day, or was it about the whole week before?

Holly: I don't know, but everyone just seemed to get on a lot better – it might have been because everyone thought, "the quicker we get this done the quicker we'll all go home!" [Laughs]

I: Are you thinking like, in the morning before everyone left, or you thinking in the actual challenge...?

Holly: In the challenge everyone worked better as a team, so...

I: Any particular moments from that that stick in your head?

Holly: When we finished it...

I: When we got the flagpole up?

Holly: Yeah.

Here Holly remembers the sense of teamwork and group achievement on the last day but can't really say why it seemed so strong at the time; her memory of the Final Challenge activity itself also seems sketchy. This was also the case with Dan⁷; although he didn't remember the specific night he's thinking of and what exactly they did, he also remembered the sense of teamwork that they felt. While Dan also recalled having had a similar sense in some of the activities on the Prince's Trust course since the residential, his recollection was similarly hazy. Significantly, he couldn't remember having since demonstrated the quality of getting others engaged with group tasks that he did on the residential. Holly's two other memories in the C Interview were from the residential course, not anything subsequent.

Kat's⁸ recollection of the Final Challenge activity was also short on detail; her sense of the teamwork in the group on the Final Challenge was stronger than her memory of what exactly they did. It is interesting that in Interview C there was only one reference to the abseiling (see p.157 below) – even in response to the question, 'looking back on the Dartmoor course, what do you remember best?'; whereas the abseiling had been for some an immediate, powerful and transforming experience, when further removed in time from the course participants tended to remember the group experiences more and in a universally positive light. There is not enough evidence in the data to do more than speculate as to why, but one interpretation I will explore in the next chapter is that the participants came to develop a shared 'lore' of the Dartmoor course, where they saw themselves as having bonded through the challenging activities and felt proud of their contribution to that shared experience.

The only vivid memories from any of the participants regarding their experiences on the Prince's Trust course subsequent to their week in Dartmoor are those from their work experience week and from the Castle Drogo challenge, where the participants had to build an outdoor maze in a stately home open to the public:

Steve: I've got... I remember it because if anyone got bored of doing the same job, we all changed jobs at break times, and that's what everyone agreed on – and as soon as we got a break, after it finished, everyone would switch jobs. So some would carry on, another team would do the maze, another would do planting... and that was it.

I: So it was flexible (yeah). Great. And again, why does that stick out particularly?

Steve: It worked pretty well, actually. Because not many people wanted to do, like, planting and stuff -- so most people just sat around the fire. But when we all agreed to do it, everyone got more involved, so them in the group went to do matey's and another went to do the planting, then as soon as break time came we changed around, and we all tipped back in again.

In describing a situation the group found challenging, again Steve chose to accentuate the positive. He refers to their boredom and the fact that at times most of the group sat round the fire and didn't work, but concentrates mostly on how this was resolved and led them to make progress. The other part of the Prince's Trust course that engendered strong memories was the work experience week. The outcomes of this were varied with some participants not attending or giving it up almost straight away; for others like Kat, talking here about her ideas for future work, it was inspiring:

Kat: Hairdressing... catering... youth worker, or something to do with childcare.

I: And are those things something you've come to think about recently?

Kat: No, I did hairdressing for 2 years, I did catering for 2 years... and I was going to a youth centre [as work experience] where, like everyone went – and, like, being around the people, listening to their ideas, I just wanted to be around the workers so that everyone could, like, talk to me and I could just help everyone get things done.

Kat says here that her one week's experience at a youth centre has opened up her

ideas for what she might do with her future beyond the traditional vocational training routes offered in college. She suggests that it was the sense of difference – of people and their ideas – that made her imagine working there. Holly's⁹ experience was comparable: she was inspired by a week's work at a care home to consider health and social care instead of animal care; a brief exposure to a different environment was enough to consider turning away from the career path she'd been pursuing up until then. Both Holly and Kat had powerful realisations about where they would like to work after a brief exposure to something different to their college courses; this is analogous to the impact of the residential course in that a brief exposure to different experiences and environments had a profound impact.

Although Dan's¹⁰ work experience was less positive – he only completed four days of his two weeks – he also asserted that his engagement with difference was beneficial. He felt let down that two of his Prince's Trust colleagues left after the first day and subsequently struggled with motivation – but as with the residential course he was determined to see the positive in his experience. These extracts do lend weight to the idea that young people place inherent value in their experience of significantly different, even difficult, situations.

From the relative paucity of vivid experiences recalled in Interview C we can infer that, in comparison to the residential and (for some) the work experience elements, the rest of the Prince's Trust course did not challenge and engage the participants as strongly. One possible factor is that the course had a significant number of paperwork-based elements such as collating a portfolio of evidence in support of a qualification and providing evidence of looking for subsequent work, both of which were largely procedural and unchallenging and were treated much like school work by participants. Another factor may be the physicality and immediacy of those more challenging experiences, as explored below.

7.2.1.3 *Physical activity*

Five participants in **Interview B** talked about physical activities, especially abseiling and climbing, as having been “scary in a good way”, “exciting”, “fun”, and giving a “big adrenaline rush”. Others like Jake, who said that he'd done abseiling “a million times”, was more blasé but still said he enjoyed it. While the sense of physical challenge and

excitement was mentioned by all participants, Kat¹¹ and Carla both saw it as having helped conquer their fears. For Bron, who had done nothing like abseiling or climbing before, the impact was more profound:

I: Are there any other moments from the course that stick in your memory?

Bron: Erm... Thursday, when we climbed on the rocks – it was pretty cool.

I: And you said that that was new to you, that you'd never done anything like that.

Bron: Yeah, it was exciting.

I: You said it was exciting (yeah)? OK.

Bron: I felt... not scared, but... I love dangerous...

I: You love dangerous activities (yeah). So that really appealed to you (yeah). And was the abseiling quite dangerous as well?

Bron: Yes, a little bit! It was quite high. We had safety stuff, so...

These were among the most extensive comments that Bron, whose spoken English was limited, made – reflecting his level of excitement. In Interview C he still remembered being 'really impressed' by these activities. They appealed to a part of his nature that school never had: "I really don't like to be motion[less] – sitting in the classroom... so boring". This sentiment was backed up explicitly by Dan, Martin and Jake in **Interview A**. Kat recognised another benefit of practical activities in learning, describing a warm-up activity done at the very start of the Prince's Trust course before the residential course:

Kat: I know it sounds a bit stupid, but we had to fit, like 4 people through a piece of paper. It actually gets you like, thinking quite a lot, and when you come to thinking, when someone shows you it's like, really easy, but it's... a brain teaser, if you know what I mean.

I: And do those... but you think that motivates you somehow?

Kat: Yeah, because you've got to get moving and stuff, and like, find a way how to do it.

For Kat, activities including a physical element are also intrinsically motivating. A third motivating element is that these activities are usually undertaken in groups – as Jake noted in describing a previous Outdoor Education course he had participated on:

- I: ...And so is it the being out there that makes that difference in understanding, or?
- Jake: Yeah, and also you're working as a team doing certain tasks, it's a bit more hands on and stuff like that.
- I: So when you're working on a joint task as a team, that's a better, what, atmosphere or something for people to understand each other?
- Jake: Yeah, and also you're all in the same position – you've all been there and done the stuff and you all understand each other.

Here Jake emphasises the bonding nature of physical group tasks: the shared experiences and cooperation help build mutual understanding. This is in strong contrast to the sense of alienation and isolation he says he experienced in school (see Personal study: Jake).

A more sobering description comes from George, who in **Interview C** suggests that he found the residential course a hard act to follow:

- I: ... So the memory of it [the residential] is quite fresh, is it?
- George: Yeah.
- I: And if you had to pick out one favourite moment from it, what would it be?
- George: From the residential? Abseiling off the bridge, and all of the rock climbing.
- I: So both things for a bit scary (yeah, yeah), but you did anyway (yeah).
Excellent. What have you enjoyed most since the residential?
- George: Don't know, really.

The question posed by courses such as this is how we tap into the same level of engagement, excitement and challenge in contexts relating to education, training and work. The experiences of Kat and Holly in work experience above suggests that practical, physical involvement can be a good start – although the failure of three of the participants' placements at the bicycle shop is a reminder that the working world can seem mundane and demotivating in comparison.

7.2.1.4 *Residential course*

As discussed above, all participants referred to having enjoyed the outdoor activities: the abseiling in particular in Interview B, and more often the final challenge in

Interview C. While these were a highlight for the participants, they made roughly equal mention of the social activities in the hut in the evenings. Despite some participants' initial fears about spending time in a new environment with people they didn't know, all talked about having enjoyed the social time, especially the evenings. I had assumed that the lack of a television, computer games, mobile phone reception etc. might be difficult, especially given that at least 3 of the boys had told me that they played computer games extensively. The participants, however, suggested otherwise, especially in **Interview B**:

Martin: Like... in the house when we all like... socialised together, done stuff, mixed with each other and stuff.

I: How was it, like, without a TV, or radio or Xbox or anything like that?

Martin: Oh, it was alright, because there were loads of us all just having a laugh and that.

I: So that was one of the bits you enjoyed most, was it, just the hanging out?

Martin: Yeah, and getting to know everyone more and stuff, and being in the comfort zone, just relaxed.

Four other participants particularly mentioned hanging out and playing traditional board games as among their best memories of the course. The marked exception to this sense of ease was the poor mobile phone reception, which was a major issue for Martin and Kat especially, leading both to come close to quitting the course (see their personal studies). However, taken together these reports represent a single but strong counter-example to my observation that the participants' best remembered experiences were ones they found both different and challenging. Here the situation was very different to what they were used to, but they found it very easy to get along and enjoy themselves. However, they referred to the evenings in response to the question about what they'd enjoyed on the course rather than when they felt they'd really learned something, with the exception of Dan (see below). For Dan and Kat especially, the evenings were the highlight of the whole course; as I will demonstrate later, these two participants were the ones most keenly attuned to the mood of the group and who talked most about having learned to value others' opinions, citing the evenings as well as the activities as times that they'd learnt this:

Dan: It was the morning when somebody was supposed to be cooking breakfast but they didn't get up, so I decided to do it, and I just helped... that morning, I don't know what happened but I just felt I was more determined in tasks, just able and focused. And also, because people were kind of helping me as well I just felt more confident around in the kitchen because before I've never really had a chance to do anything in that sense. But I just felt like, more... independent in that type of way because recently I've just started doing... cooking and things like that, so it just kind of helped.

I: So you stepped in (yeah) when you didn't have to (yeah), and how did you feel about that afterwards?

Dan: Erm... quite pleased with myself.

I: Yeah, great. And how did people respond to you for stepping in there?

Dan: I'm not totally sure, but I just personally felt...

I: ...It was more in yourself that it mattered (yeah). That's great. And has that has made a difference since? You say you've been cooking at home more.

Dan: Yeah. And it's just made me more independent, I suppose – just being able to... know how to do things.

Here Dan describes stepping up to the challenge of cooking breakfast in response to others' failure to do so (see *Section 7.4*). He presents this as a watershed moment which has had subsequent impact on his confidence and his sense of ability and belonging (also discussed later); he suggests that being given the opportunity to take responsibility for others and to perform new tasks – even relatively simple ones – had a profound effect. Furthermore, it was the open-ended nature of the situation, where nothing was expected of him, which made this possible.

Bron and Steve, on the other hand, refused to differentiate between the outdoor and indoor activities, repeatedly stating that they had enjoyed all of it. While the observation notes suggest that Steve in particular had very difficult moments (see *Personal study: Steve*), this is perhaps indicative of their sense of value and loyalty towards the course, the group and their experience. The large number of arguments and conflicts between participants are little referred to in their discussions of the experience of the course as a whole; the reasons for this will be explored in the next section. Only Jake in Interview B admitted to the course being "... alright – a good

laugh. A bit crap at times, but....”

7.2.1.5 *Summary*

The evidence of this section demonstrates a remarkable uniformity in participants’ linking their sense of learning with challenge, and of linking that challenge to outdoor activity – and that it was the qualities of difference, fear and excitement, visible achievement and cooperation that contributed to this. Dan’s case just above was an interesting and powerful exception to this which will be explored further. Participants’ initial fears of difference and newness were never subsequently mentioned; they took it in their stride and enjoyed it, both in response to the outdoor activities and to the socialising. There was a marked contrast between participants’ experiences in school and college previously (and to a lesser extent on the rest of the Prince’s Trust course) – to which they referred little – and the intensity of memorable experiences from the residential course.

After factoring in the bias inherent in the choice of critical event recall as a research method, these findings still provides powerful support for a pedagogy of challenge. The remarkable lack of negative comments about the many difficulties they encountered suggests that participants, especially with hindsight in Interview C, came to understand and value the need for difficult moments in order to create opportunities to reach new understandings and to achieve things they didn’t previously think they could do; it suggests that difficulty, confusion, disagreement and even conflict are – within limits – to be welcomed rather than avoided in helping young people to work together and develop personally. It further suggests that, when intelligently planned and managed, bounded risk in education can lead to rewards, and that those rewards are sometimes only realised and recognised later.

In this extra-curricular educational context these findings also suggests both that explicit teaching is not always necessary, and that the deliberate opening up of choices and allowing of risk and error have enabled participants to discover for themselves important concepts and principles in relation to self-understanding and communicating with others. However, this course was not constrained by the need to work towards particular (and often valuable) knowledge-based objectives as in school subjects. This raises the question, then, of whether and to what extent this *laissez-faire*

approach of letting participants make mistakes, get lost and confused, and enter into conflict with each other (up to limits of safety judged in context by the course staff) could be translated to the physically constrained and conceptually focused context of a classroom lesson. This is not a question this research can answer. However, the findings above do suggest a final point: that a pedagogy of challenge can significantly change participants' self-perceptions and attitudes towards others in a short period of time by providing the right conditions for difficult, watershed moments to occur that remain long in the memory. The attitudinal change evidenced above of taking responsibility for others and valuing challenging shared activity strongly reflect Alexander's first three characteristics of classroom dialogue – 'collective', 'reciprocal' and 'supportive' (Alexander, 2008a, p.185). How they did this is explored in detail in the next section.

7.2.2 Arguments, conflict and conciliation

(inc. 'arguing and persuading', 'arguments, anger')

Note: The 'arguing and persuading' code arose from the 'diamond 9' card-sorting task (see p.103), and is taken in turn from the set of genres defined for English Language in the National Curriculum. It is meant to denote a useful set of skills for dispassionate debate and for formal and personal advocacy. However, participants did not recognise either the genre as such or its utility; instead they associated it with having personal arguments – which is the second category in this section. It will be shown below that participants responded negatively to the former category in an abstract sense when asked to rate its importance to them against other personal skills, but that their feelings towards the arguments they had on the course were mixed, and overall even positive.

7.2.2.1 'Arguing and persuading'

In **Interview A**, all participants rated this skill as either 'not so important' or 'the least important'. Seven of them backed this up by saying why they felt it was not a positive skill. Holly's response was typical of these in presuming that argument was a type of force rather than persuasion:

Holly: And with 'arguing your point of view and persuading others' you know,

what you necessarily think isn't necessarily the right thing, and it's a good idea to listen to other people rather than just saying 'this is my idea and this is what we're going to do'.

Dan and Kat¹² disagreed, however, not rating the skill highly among others but valuing it nonetheless; both understood the importance of getting ideas across to the group rather than insisting on your way.

In **Interview B**, however, all participants who moved this card did so downwards with the exception of Martin – who thought that he should get his arguments across more as he felt he hadn't been listened to. The reason given in all cases was their realisation of the importance of listening to others more – expressed more plainly by Jake:

I: So you've got the listening ones first, and the persuading ones lower down.

Jake: Yeah, it's best to listen before you start opening your mouth.

I: Is that... do you feel that you did that more on the course, or is that a thought that's come out of it?

Jake: A little bit near the end, yeah. I wouldn't say so at the beginning.

Dan still saw the value of persuasion but felt he had to move it down to move others up; Kim's change, though, was the most stark:

Kim: Cause your point of view isn't always right – you can't persuade other people to, like, do your idea if it ain't going to work.

This statement seems an exact opposite of her one in Interview A – a very literal example of her having seen the point from the other side. Both are true and compatible, but represent a significant change of emphasis towards valuing others' perspectives.

Only Steve added to his position in **Interview C**:

Steve: Erm... I don't really need to argue no more, because everyone... just gets on a bit now, cause we've bonded more as a... family more than a team really. And we don't need to argue about your point of view any more.

I: And the idea of persuading people that you've got the best idea, that doesn't seem very important anymore?

Steve: No, that doesn't seem important because everyone gives their ideas now.

Here again Steve emphasises group solidarity without recognising the value for disagreement, just the aggregation of ideas. This is in-keeping with his outlying response to the 'arguments' below and will be discussed further in his Personal Study.

7.2.2.2 *Arguments, anger*

This was one of the most common codes, all examples of which come from Interviews B and C, detailing participants' experiences of arguments and anger on the course. As suggested above, participants' assessments of the overall impact of these arguments was overwhelmingly positive; the following quote from the observation notes helps put this into context:

At one point 4 boys disappear out of sight, contrary to instructions, to smoke. This leads to a loss of 'beans'^{viii} taking the group into the negative. Citing injustice, Carla and Kat leave towards the end in different direction. For 10 mins they wait for the whole group to come to them. Eventually they come back with beckoning. Fractious atmosphere. At bus, Kat loses temper as Stan (staff) tries to lead review but she wants the door unlocked so she can get her lunch. In bus rings friend and calls everyone else 'wankers' within earshot. Their laughter provokes worse language. Lunch in bus. On return to base Kat and Kyle zone out and refuse to participate in next activity, planning. Kyle lies along bench and keeps asking what the point is and why they should work for no money; he compares it to school^{ix}.

This is cited to provide some insight into the level of disagreement, bad temper and immature behaviour that were frequently displayed during the residential course – making their positive assessment of the arguments all the more surprising. In **Interview B** participants' memories of the difficulties of these moments was still fresh, and were described in some detail. Interestingly, the great majority of these were

^{viii} *Researcher's note:* 'beans' were the currency of the course, earned by successfully completing activities, and earning equipment for the final challenge at the end of the course. They were also, as here, deducted at times for breaking rules.

^{ix} *Researcher's note:* Kyle was an infrequent participant on the Prince's Trust course. He attended the residential week but was not present for any of the interviews. After the residential his attendances were very infrequent. On the course he was perhaps the most disruptive influence.

related to a sense that others in the group were either not listening or not participating. Dan expressed this clearly in his description of the argument on the bus (see p.154 above). This sense of a challenging situation leading to a new response was discussed in the previous section; what is relevant here is the description of the emotional pressure, having built up over the week, leading to a breaking point. The relative freedom and license allowed by the course, and its challenging nature, led to immature behaviour – which was in turn rejected and reacted against by key members of the group who then, as did Jake (see v2, p.54), try to turn the situation around. This sort of ‘righteous anger’ is notoriously difficult to get right, (see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics II.1109a34*) but can have powerful and positive consequences for the whole group. In this case, Dan continues:

I: Great. And did things go a bit better after that?

Dan: The team I was on... (was this the reservoir task?) Yeah. We all went well, we got on, we just... carried on trying to do it. I don't know what happened on the other side – apparently things didn't go too well – but our side was pretty good.

I: So you felt that after that low moment things came together a little bit that day (yeah).

For Dan, this was a remarkable intervention – and for him, a valuable one. Not everyone responded positively in the face of their anger, however. Carla¹³ was unwilling to dwell on her responses, but suggests that her anger at others drew her away from the group. She didn't want to explore this in her B interview – and declined to give a final one. Although she gives oblique hints, she was the least explicit in endorsing the value of arguments on the course. Some reasons for this will be explored in her Personal Study.

George's¹⁴ approach was also to withdraw from arguments rather than engage, but less in anger as in self-protection and resignation. Holly also expressed her dislike of the arguing on several occasions, but when asked directly about their value she replied:

Holly: I didn't really like the arguing so much [laughs].

I: No – nobody does. Do you think there was any point all of those arguments?

Holly: I don't know really. In fact, I think it probably did, because come to think of it we got all the arguing out of the way, which meant we worked better from the end of it.

This response was mirrored by others who saw the arguments as in some sense inevitable, like Steve and Jake¹⁵. Steve's comment on this appears dismissive and resigned. The sense here that conflict is unavoidable may reflect to some extent the backgrounds of the participants, since no such sense arose from participants in the initial study. However, Jake's second reference to arguments in this interview showed deeper insight:

I: Did you spot any times when you felt that those arguments were productive, or at least what came out of it was productive?

Jake: Yeah, because some people didn't say some stuff they had to... it'd be a bit... it didn't feel... you know... like, some of the trust comes up, people don't like it – that's when you slow down...

I: When the trust... comes up, people don't like it (yeah)? You mean when it gets shown that...

Jake: Yeah, that's what really happening, behind the closed doors.

Jake here argues that arguments can reveal people's prejudice, animosity, and resentment – but also the seeds of truth, the insight into others, that helped form these negative impressions and that they wouldn't normally share. This can lead to volatile but ultimately cathartic situations which can dispel tensions and lead to a sense of trust and solidarity. Kat expressed both the difficulty and hurt of some of these situations and the conciliation that followed:

I: You enjoyed the whole thing?

Kat: Apart from the arguments.

I: How do you feel about those? Were they necessary, or –

Kat: Yeah, cause if we didn't have arguments we wouldn't have got as far as we did in the end.

I: OK – so you didn't enjoy them but you thought they were useful?

Kat: Yeah, cause everyone got everything off their chest, and everything actually come out and, like, people started to change...

I: That's interesting. Can you think of any examples of that?

Kat: Like when it happened with Holly. She actually said, like, what she felt on the minibus... and then... Kyle and that lot stopped picking on her, really. They stopped picking on her and stopped acting so immature.

I: OK. So even though that was something you didn't enjoy, you thought it was something valuable for the group.

Kat: Yeah, for everyone.

Kat here doesn't try to analyse how or why people took on board angry criticism, or at least tempered their behaviour in response to it, but merely notes that in the aftermath of several of these encounters the group were happier and more cooperative, and that personal animosities were at least tempered if not resolved. The incident Kat describes above (and which will be described in more detail in Holly's Personal Study) was a very difficult one – a teacher's nightmare – in which there was verbal abuse, standoff, passive aggression, and group acrimony. Yet finally the participants resolved the situation with careful oversight but minimal intervention from course staff, and all who mentioned it in interview felt that the outcome had been positive. None of the participants admitted in interview that they had had unjust negative opinions about another that had been challenged, or that they had been in the wrong, yet the quotations above suggest significant shifts in personal attitudes and behaviour among some of the participants. This is not to say that the arguments, especially those that were heated and personal, were not painful and even damaging to some extent; however, in the participants' opinions the positives greatly outweighed the negatives.

In **Interview C**, participants' descriptions of arguments on the course were much less vivid, and mentions much less frequent.

Steve: I put... yes it has, we all stayed as a team and we won't split as a team, hopefully, over anything.

I: That's great. And the development of that team you think it was down to what happened on Dartmoor, or was it mostly down to what happened since...?

Steve: It's probably what happened through everything, really, because we all had tiffs, we've all got over it, and worked as a team... we've had problems,

we've all spoken it out... we've had job problems, we've all spoken, sussed it out, and got sorted out – and it all went amazingly.

Steve here mirrors Kat and Holly's positions that arguments are inevitable between people who don't know each other, that airing them and working together are part of the process of getting closer – and that for all of them that process was very positive. None spoke of any remaining tensions or resentments.

7.2.2.3 *Summary*

The power of participants' statements and the level of their consensus about the benefits of arguments on the course is an unexpected finding, but one which relates closely to the findings and discussion around challenge and difficulty in *Section 7.2.1*. Conflict with others led to anger and to temporary hurt and resentment – but also to honesty, insight, new solutions, solidarity and teamwork. To involve young people in situations and activities where this is likely to happen is a pedagogical approach many would not consider appropriate. The participants' perspectives and responses towards anger and argument may to an extent have been formed by their backgrounds, which were in general more troubled than average; that they nonetheless rose above them and transformed them into positive experiences is a tribute to course, its leader, and the participants themselves.

Most participants' lack of recognition of the value of 'arguing and persuading', and their shifting associations of it with anger and argument, suggest a lack of dispassionate criticality which can be useful in diffusing the personal aspects of conflict. Instead, most of the conflicts on the course were taken as personal, and the outcome was seen as being a working out of these and increasing personal bonds. From a dialogic perspective, an end to argument is not a valuable goal; instead, one should aim to identify with the argument and not with one's personal position. There was no support for this subtle and advanced position in these interviews, however; for these participants, to have survived these cathartic releases, got closer and have learned something was progress enough.

7.2.3 Relating to others

(inc. 'friends and family', 'groups and teamwork', 'others', 'respect')

7.2.3.1 *Communication skills*

This category arose in response to a theory-led perception that improving ‘communication skills’ was one of the main aims of leadership courses. As such it appeared to be a borrowed term that students had heard and repeated rather than internalised. The only further topic to fall under this category in **Interview A** was participants’ views on the importance of ‘writing clearly and powerfully’ in the diamond 9 exercise. All rated it ‘not as important’ or ‘least important’ – the lowest of all the 9 skills – and were almost wholly dismissive, as George exemplified¹⁶. No further mention was made of this skill in any subsequent interview, suggesting the course had no bearing on their low opinion of communicating via writing whatsoever.

In **Interview B**, only Jake specifically mentioned communication skills in the context of his having improved through teamwork. Instead, George, Dan and Steve spoke in terms of talking more freely with other people on the course – all three elsewhere talk about how they can struggle to talk to and get to know new people, especially George¹⁷. These three saw their achievement in terms of being able to open up to and engage with new people at all, regardless of the context.

7.2.3.2 *Others*

Note: This code originated in the underlying dialogic theory and the concept of the ethical response to the other, and with the diamond 9 exercise skill ‘working well with others’; it then became a catch-all for participants’ remarks about their relationships with others on the course as individuals as apart from any group or activity role.

In **Interview A** the participants rated ‘working well with others’ highly, with 5 rating it as ‘very important’, one as ‘the most important’, one as ‘quite as important and one as ‘not as important’. 6 of them supported their rating with further positive comments.

Martin summed this up:

Martin: Generally, really, I prefer to be working with others than on my own. Cause they can help me and I can help them (OK). Better for the both of us, or the group of us.

Others’ comments were similar in their generality, pragmatism and unequivocality.

Only Holly¹⁸ differed, suggesting that working alone is fine, too. Although she didn't revise her low rating in subsequent interviews, this is interesting in light of her comments later on her ideas for jobs (see *Section 7.2.7* below).

In **Interview B**, 4 revised their ratings upwards, each by one place. Only Bron chose to justify why specifically:

I: You've swapped 'working well with other people' with 'getting good grades in your courses and exams'. Why did you swap those two around?

Bron: Because I was working with people for a week, and that's why I've swapped these.

I: And doing that made you feel that this was more important to you?

Bron: Yes.

I: How well do you think you did work with other people during that week?

Bron: Really well.

Bron here was strongly influenced by his immediate experiences, as were several participants in the initial study in their appreciation of working with others; however as he didn't address the diamond 9 task in his C interview there is no evidence to suggest whether this change persisted. Similarly to the 'communication skills' category above, only one participant addressed it directly in light of experience of the course; other participants, by contrast, referred to working with others in more oblique, personal and context-specific ways. Dan, Kat and Steve all referred to more than one situation in which they felt their relation to others had changed:

I: Can you tell me about one of those moments on Dartmoor when you felt you really learnt something?

Dan: Erm... During one of the evenings, everybody was downstairs... everyone was relaxed and everything, I was just able to open up and talk to people freely about things I don't usually talk about to people.

I: OK, downstairs around the fire sort of thing?

Dan: Yeah... just opened up and I just felt more confident around people and that.

Having expressed concerns about getting on with others in Interview A, Dan at this moment seems to have felt liberated by a sense of belonging within the group; the fact that he classes this as a learning experience rather than as a nice feeling suggests its

wider impact on him. Other important themes for Dan in this interview were learning what annoys others, and therefore to avoid doing so, and helping others – which is related to his stance of openness and engagement with others¹⁹. For Kat, the course seemed to change profoundly her response to others' difficulties and negativity:

I: What about [objector]?

Kat: It's up to them – obviously there was something wrong with them that day for them to feel, 'I just don't want to do it', so I'd just leave them be.

I: Cause I think you said at the beginning that sometimes that made you a bit cross, but you're also saying that you've got to understand where they are that day, how they're feeling?

Kat: Yeah.

I: And you think that's acceptable?

Kat: Yeah, they need time on their own just to think – and if they're just sat there on their own, like, thought for a bit, they might actually change their mind and say, 'yeah, I might be feeling down but at least I, like, stick in and help you for a bit'.

I: Can you think of any examples where that happened?

Kat: A couple, but I don't want to say.

Kat's empathetic responses, highly in contrast with some of her actions on the course (see personal study: Kat), are given in response to situations of outright objection and non-cooperation by other group members – which takes some emotional maturity. Like Dan, she wants to look beneath the surface and try to understand others' difficulties. The genuineness of this is supported by her loyalty in not wanting to cite examples, even where doing so might make her look good. For Steve, loyalty and standing up for others in difficulty – especially Holly – was his main theme:

I: Can you think about when someone was being a critic?

Steve: I think that was Holly. Yeah, that was probably Holly cause she did have some great answers in the planning, but everyone just kept on ignoring her, but when I was sat next to her and she was like, explaining the plan, I thought it was actually a good idea to try it. So I told Naomi, and like, Naomi explained to the group what Holly said.

I: That's interesting – so you acted as... someone in the middle (yeah) to help

that idea...

Steve: Well at first they didn't bother listening in, and Naomi kept telling them and telling them, telling them – and after, like 10 minutes everyone was like 'what we doing? What's the point starting this thing when we don't even know what we're doing?' And then I just stood up and said, 'well Holly had a good idea but you lot just blanked her'.

This is consistent with Steve's determination throughout that all should be treated fairly and that anyone being singled out should be defended. His idea of 'others' focused on acceptance and belonging rather than on learning from difference.

The same participants contributed further on this topic in **Interview C**. In Kat and Dan's cases both look back on the residential as a time when they could really get to know and understand people in depth:

I: And you got 'understanding other people's ideas' as quite high. If you think back to the course and what's happened since, can you think of any examples of how since that course you've been able to understand people's ideas better?

Kat: It's like when you're away for a week or something with someone, you have to listen to what they've got to say. You've got to live with them for the whole week, so you have to make them feel comfortable as well.

I: OK. Do you think you've done that better since you've been back, on the rest of this course?

Kat: Yeah.

Here Kim's recollections, as generally the case in Interview C, are less vivid – but also more thoughtful and generalised, with an implicit reference to other possible contexts, seeming thus to have 'bedded down' as dispositional change. Again, it is the discrete and immersive experience of the week away that she identifies as crucial – as does Dan²⁰. Both Kim and Dan demonstrate here a desire for deeper connections with others, which the course provided in a way that nothing else has since. In both cases and in different ways this overturns their previous inclinations and fears. Of all the participants, as will be demonstrated throughout, these two had perhaps the most profound experiences of the course.

7.2.3.3 *Listening*

Note: This code originated in the diamond 9 category 'listening carefully'; while not extensively referred to by participants in that regard, it was used with more general discussions of listening emerging from events on the course.

In **Interview A**, 5 participants rated 'listening carefully' as 'quite important', and one each as 'the most important', 'very important', and 'not as important'. While most participants did not expand on this, Kat and Holly's²¹ responses had a common theme:

I: Why would you say those are more important?

Kat: Because if you don't listen to what people are telling you, if they're giving you instructions, you can get it wrong – and if you get it wrong then sometimes it can... be a serious matter, then you could just get it wrong and everything else could go wrong.

In both of these responses, listening is portrayed as a defence against error and misunderstanding. Both used examples of the need to respond appropriately to authority, as did Steve. Only Jake, referring to his Army background, talked about listening as part of a team. For George, listening is a precursor to speaking:

I: So you're saying you'd start off, maybe, by taking the role of spectator – why would you do that?

George: See what other people think we should do, then if I've got any more ideas, I'd say like... see what everyone else wants to do first.

I: OK, so you're more comfortable hearing from other people first before you step in with your own ideas (yeah).

In his case, however, his identification with the role of 'spectator' suggests that often his listening is not followed by contributing, suggesting listening as a form of passivity – as with the submission to authority above. In **Interview B**, Steve chooses the same response:

I: So, 'listen to what others say and keep quiet'.

Steve: Yeah, that's what I did do at first, but then eventually I started getting involved more and started asking other people... which charities they

support. And I did suggest several plans, and everyone just looked and gave their opinion on it.

Here Steve blends seamlessly between the theoretical task at hand and his memories of participating in real discussions on the course, suggesting the influence it has already had on his thinking. For Steve, listening is no longer passive but an active elicitation of ideas. For Jake, it is the basis of teamwork:

Jake: I think the first day we got there and we had to find that key up in the field, I felt we learned to come together as a team a bit more – we worked a bit more as a team a bit more on that, kind of, challenge.

I: Was it that way from the start, or what happened that made you think, ‘actually, this is working now?’

Jake: It was control at the time – everyone thought it through and everyone listened.

I: ‘Cause I remember at the beginning people wandered off in the wrong direction, in different directions – but did they go back to the gate or something?

Jake: We all went back, and then we actually got some team leaders, everyone actually listened, and we planned it out before we done it, and then we done it.

While Jake’s comments on listening in Interview A were positive but brief, this powerful argument from experience suggests that he has come to understand listening not just as a taking on board but as a form of thinking and as a space from which planning and action can emerge.

In **Interview C**, Dan echoes George’s point above about being a spectator at times:

Dan: But sometimes I just listen and just wait to see what other people have got to say first, and then give my opinions, and just like... see what other people think of them, really.

I: But you recognise that you do sometimes just sit back and listen (yeah) and keep quiet, but that's not necessarily a bad thing?

Dan: No, because you get to hear what other people have to say, and sometimes

other people get frustrated if other people keep talking over them or keep, like, putting them... and I just, like, see what other people have to say because they might, like, have a good idea or something, or have similar ideas to you. And then you can listen to they've got to say and maybe add points to the build...

Dan's²² subsequent comments suggest a less passive interpretation, with him acting positively through listening to promote group cohesion.

Although not discussed often and in depth, these findings as a whole suggests a subtle shift in participants' understanding of the importance of listening in the light of their group experiences on the course towards being an active and valuable contribution to group activity – rather than primarily a means to avoid getting in trouble.

7.2.3.4 *Groups and teamwork*

Note: This code – one of the largest – does not relate specifically to a diamond 9 category, although some discussions from that exercise fell into it. Mostly, however, these codes arose from discussion of the many team activities participants took part in on the residential course, and also from the interactions of the group in less formal activities on and after the course. While these were two separate codes at first, it became apparent during preliminary analysis that no clear distinction could be made between 'groups' and 'teamwork' in respect of the participants' responses. Very few codes were from Interview A.

In **Interview A**, three main themes emerged: negative associations with classroom culture, positive experiences of group work in other non-academic settings, and positivity about possible improvement of team skills through the course. For Jake in particular, the school classroom was a cliquish and isolating place:

I: OK, and that feels very different from a regular classroom, does it (yeah)?
You don't think that helps you to understand each other in the same way?

Jake: No, cause you've got different people there from different little... bits.
Certain people understand certain people...

I: Different little bits? Do you mean different groups?

Jake: Yeah, kind of...

I: Or people say cliques, don't they – there's little, like, friendship groups (yeah) in a class, and some people don't all...

Jake: No, don't always connect. They blank half the people out.

I: OK, that's interesting, so normally in the classroom there's only a small number of people maybe that you felt comfortable communicating with.

Jake: Yeah, that I could talk to.

Jake's portrait of his classroom is a place where social relations were ossified and social differences between people prevented communication. For Kat, a migratory past made the classroom a forbidding place, as she didn't know people already and found it hard to make new friends in that environment. These both suggest that social affiliations that determine who can freely talk to whom can be made outside the classroom and not be challenged through classroom activity.

However, 5 participants, including Jake, expressed optimism about increasing their teamwork skills through the course – either for its own sake or to meet future employment needs. Holly talked about how after only a couple of days on the Prince's Trust course she recognised the difference from school:

Holly: Yeah. Because a lot of places I've been like in school, I've had people judge me for the way I look or the way I act, and it's actually quite annoying because a lot of the time they haven't actually spoken to you or like, met you properly to see what you're like. Whereas here nobody seems to be like that, they sort of, like, come and talk to you, and everyone gets on well with each other, so...

I: Any ideas why that is?

Holly: It think it's probably because we're all in a similar sort of situation maybe, tried to get into college but couldn't, or... something like that, so...

I: So it feels like there's something a bit in common there (yeah).

This theme of acceptance rather than judgement in the group emerges much more strongly below in Interviews B and C – though at this point Holly puts it down to a sense of similarity through common 'failure' in the eyes of the system. For Jake, his outdoor education course at school was a marked contrast to the classroom, where it was the hands-on group activity and sense of shared purpose that helped them feel as

sense of belonging. A theme this shares with Carla²³ and George is their preference for teams of equals over being told what to do. Carla was the only one in Interview A to make reference to specific team roles, saying she was generally happy to switch between them – although this is a problematic claim in light of the observation notes quoted on p.163. Taken with the other quotations above, this suggests a disjunction between participants' theoretical understandings of the skills presented in the diamond 9 exercise, and their relation to them in the light of their real-life experiences on the course. Simply put, they came to understand teamwork much better.

In **Interview B** there were 35 significant references to groups and teams, among which the most popular code was 'feeling solidarity with participants', where 'solidarity' meant a sense of all being in it together – as Jake had with his Outdoor Education classes at school (see p.160 above). In the B interviews participants sought to describe this in different ways, of whom Jake was again a good example:

Jake: Probably the final challenge. On that, everyone wanted to... everyone got stuck in, just to get it done, and like, it was alright because everyone was taking part in it, so...

I: So it felt like the group was working pretty well together (yeah).

He returned to the theme of the final challenge later in the interview:

I: And the last thing, you also said the final challenge motivated you. You said that you wanted to go home on a good note.

Jake: I just think the moment everyone woke up, everyone was happy.

I: That's interesting, because everyone had to get up early that morning, didn't they, and clean up and get ready and all of that...

Jake: Yeah, that was like... major teamwork there as well – really, it was just done. Food was done, the night before, really nice... everyone just amazingly got on really happily that day.

Jake's amazement in the second quotation is not surprising given the prior levels of conflict and difficulty on the course; it was no small claim, then, to say that 'everyone got stuck in'. Yet despite all participants having to get up even earlier on the final morning and spend an hour cleaning before heading off on a wet, cold morning for a

long walk carrying equipment, they seemed happy. Jake's use of the passive ('it was just done') and of the collective nouns 'team' and 'group' – and no referential use of 'I' at all – suggests that he and others were swept up in a sense of collective belonging and purpose. Jake's surprise at this is also mirrored by Kim²⁴; George²⁵ and Steve²⁶ also attested to the same feeling in the group. Dan said that he found the week stressful at times, but that they had 'bonded as a group'.

Together these quotations raise several recurrent themes for the participants: the importance of the Final Challenge activity as an engaging collective task and as a microcosm of the skills, communication and shared intent that they had developed throughout the course; the sense of the group coming together through the activities and a strong sense of identification and loyalty with it; the sense of the ability of the group to work and achieve objectives together; and the sense of change and progress that enabled this to happen. Finally – and critically – none mention that they feel their own personal skills have improved, describing everything in terms of the group or team instead.

The next most common codes in the B interviews were 'getting on well as a group' and 'recognising that the team is working well'; these largely overlap with the previous code, highlighting similar themes. One distinct point, however, was made by Dan, who recognised that it wasn't just the team activities but the informal time that helped to bond the group:

I: So what did you enjoy most about the week?

Dan: For me it was probably the evenings, because on a few of the nights it was quite relaxed, we all had a laugh and things like that... it was just... I thought it was quite nice to do that.

The evidence suggests that the participants made little distinction between the ideas of 'group' and 'team', where 'group' would generally refer to all the participants on the course while 'team' would signify those working together to complete a particular task. The terms are used interchangeably in the B interviews with most opting for 'group' except when responding to contexts where the term 'team' was used. This suggests that the participants saw the whole course as a group challenge rather than a set of distinct ones. It also led to a crossover between leisure and learning activities:

Jake: ...I'd say starting between Thursday and Friday, when we had a little chat at night, like.

I: At night?

Jake: Yeah, we had that big chat at night.

In this chat, of which Jake's substitution of 'big' for 'little' suggests its significance, the boys talked about the arguments and problems that had arisen so far, and about how they wanted things to improve. This is in contrast to their behaviour on the first night, when – as the observation notes attest – they were up until 2am running around the lodge and playing loud music and poker until finally asked to be quiet by the course leader. This change suggests an increasing value of the course as a whole.

There were a few negative comments in relation to the group and team performance – but in each case these were described as being followed by improvements in relations or, in Martin's case, admitting (to an extent) his own failings:

I: OK. You've put this up quite high from being quite low before, 'arguing your point of view'. Why's that?

Martin: 'Cause no-one listened to my ideas (right). That's why some of the things didn't go right.

I: OK, but you putting that up there, does that mean that you think it was partly your fault, if you like...

M: In a way, yeah...

This reflected Martin's feeling of isolation from the group – he was the one participant who didn't see himself as belonging to it. Finally, Dan was the only participant who explicitly mentioned an aspect of teamwork that came up several times in the initial study: the ability to work with people different from oneself:

I: That's great. And do you feel like you participated in that planning process?

Dan: Yeah. I realised that teamwork helped a lot.

I: And again, has that made any difference since? Has that endured at all?

Dan: Yeah, within planning as a group I think, and just being able to bond with other people in the group that I don't usually work well with.

Dan is alone here is abstracting the teamwork skills he developed in the course from that context and seeing them as a personal development. By contrast, Carla refers to her general sense of being better able to get on with the group as a personal advance – but for her, as for Kat, George and Holly, this is due in her perception to her specific knowledge of this group of people rather than improved skills as such:

Carla: I reckon I can better on with the team a lot better now because I know how each person kinda works and stuff.

This caution in transferring team skills to other imagined contexts was also seen with George, and will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

In **Interview C** there were even more references to groups and teamwork (45) than in Interview B, despite fewer and generally shorter interviews. The largest number (11) came under ‘getting on well as a group’, with 6 under ‘working well as a team’.

Similarly to other themes, these references tended to be less specific and descriptive, looking instead to sum up their experiences or the mood of the course as a whole.

Several participants again took up the theme of their sense of group belonging and teamwork being specific to this group, such as Kat:

I: OK. Do you think you’ve... has there been any difference in the group since that course in terms of how people have got on...?

Kat: Yeah, they’ve got along better. Everyone knows now how differently each other reacts, and... it’s easier.

I: Because you understand how each other works best, sort of thing (yeah). So you know what you can get away with and what you can’t!

Kat: Yep!

I: OK. Do you think that’s useful just for getting to know this group, or do you think that if you were put in a different situation with different people, do you think it would be just the same or would it be different?

Kat: Don’t know – different, I reckon.

I: So is there anything that you think that you got out of it personally in terms of working with others?

Kat: Don’t know, because you can sit there watching people, like... how differently they will react, and how they take things, so I don’t know...

I: So you did some of that, did you (yeah)? And you learned a bit about them, so do you reckon in a different situation you might do that a bit better (yeah), spot it a bit quicker?

K: Mmhmm.

Kat here shows caution in considering whether she might have got better at working with others in an abstract sense, even though she is describing the skills she has gained to do so. Like George, Carla and Jake, she was adamant that she would have to 'wait and see' how she'd get on with a different group. This hardening of attitude may be related to the fact that they had spend most of the last 10 weeks between the B and C interviews working together, thereby making the thought of working with any other group feel remote; it also, however, raises the possibility of the outcomes of the course being limited by a sense of group insularity and a lack of ability to put their experiences and achievements in a wider context.

As examples of getting on well as a group and as teams, Holly and Steve referred specifically still to the Final Challenge; Dan and Steve refer also to the Castle Drogo project as the main time since after the residential when there was a strong feeling of group togetherness:

Steve: ... Castle Drogo, because we all had ideas and everyone had a job to do, and I've never seen the team work as amazingly.

I: Okay, so you thought that everyone had jobs and they did them (yeah). Great, and what did you get out of that?

Steve: I got a lot of experience out of that, because I didn't think our team could work so great together -- but out of the blue, I don't know what happened, everyone got on with it and I was quite amazed at that.

This statement parallels Jake's above (p.177) strongly – both powerful and affirmative, but also not being able to identify why the team worked well and being surprised by the fact. This again suggests a lack of success, or ability, in reflecting on this, or in seeing the links between individuals' actions and attitudes and the performance of the group.

In relation to specific teamwork skills, Steve²⁷ described how he came to see the value of offering support and encouragement to others on the team, both for himself and them. Here as elsewhere, he described taking pleasure in supporting others rather than just taking the lead, and can see the link to other contexts in his life; he later put this in stronger terms:

I: And before this whole course started, do you think you would have said that you were a good team player?

Steve: Erm... before it started I wouldn't say I was... I didn't think I was a team player, but now I've done this I feel yeah, I could work in a team now.

Bron similarly expressed a belief that his teamwork skills have improved, but couldn't say how.

Finally, as a contrast to these positive views about teamwork, Dan talked in Interview C about how he felt when two of his group who were supposed to be doing the same two-week work placement as him left after the first day:

Dan: It wasn't confidence based, it was more, like, motivation based.... I'm not too sure how to... I suppose, like, after the first couple of days I was... completely drained because of the amount of work I'd done, and I just... those two, I didn't think they were coming back, and I just felt... what was important, really.

I: You felt a bit let down?

Dan: yeah.

This was a powerful example of a situation where the sense of solidarity and teamwork from the course did not translate into subsequent teamwork – with significantly harmful effects on Dan. Anecdotally, this reflects the tendency above for the sense of group solidarity developed in the unique context of the residential course not to be translated to other contexts.

7.2.3.5 *Respect*

This code arose from a specific question about feeling respected by staff and students on the Prince's Trust course that was asked in each interview. Generally, it did not provoke extended responses, but there were a few interesting exceptions.

In **Interview A**, participants responded on the basis of only a couple of days' knowledge of each other. 7 of them responded positively, with 2 saying it was too early to say whether they felt respected or not. Holly was the most positive, talking about the marked difference from school (see p.178 above). For Steve, 'respect and friendship' were the things he wanted most from the course at this stage.

In **Interview B**, only 4 chose to expand slightly on a very brief affirmative response; Jake was a little more equivocal, stating that people on the course had wound him up at times, but that still, generally, he had felt respected. Martin was the only detractor:

I: So by and large, thinking about the teachers and the students, do you feel that you were shown respect?

Martin: ... mmm... not really – 'cause I didn't really show much respect neither. So I can kind of understand why.

I: So you think people were perhaps a bit disrespectful towards you because...?

Martin: Because I was just... this as well towards them.

I: OK, and you kind of felt that, did you?

Martin: Yeah.

I: And was there a bit of... hostility there, or?

Martin: A little bit.

I: Yeah. Was that fair?

Martin: Yeah.

-Martin's honesty here was refreshing; however the sense of a lack of remorse or desire to change also comes across – this will be explored further in his personal case study.

The issue of respect was more strongly elaborated on in **Interview C**. George, Jake, Kat and Holly all said they felt more respected now than at the start of the course –

something no participant had said in Interview B. Kat put this down to knowing each other better, while for Holly it was the arguments that helped this to happen:

I: By and large, on this course, do you feel that you've been well respected by the staff and the students?

Holly: Yeah, yeah.

I: Has that got better, or worse, or stayed the same?

Holly: I think it got better because of, like, towards the residential and stuff people were arguing a lot and saying, "oh, well, fuck you" sort of thing. And now we kind of get on and there isn't so much of that.

I: If people have been respectful towards you, is that because they've sharpened up their act a bit, or have you earned it?

Holly: I think it's mainly because everyone has shut up and respect each other more than they did at the beginning, rather than it just being me, so...

I: And has that come about because people have... you think all the clashing at the start helped that?

Holly: I think so because we got it all out of the way, kind of thing, like, "well I don't like you for this, this and this", and then it was all out of the way.

Here Holly suggests the inevitable conflicts lead to reconciliation, better understanding, and thus mutual respect; a pragmatic, if not optimistic, viewpoint. She also cheerfully acknowledges her active role in this rather than just being the victim of other's disrespect; Kat's²⁸ view on this was similar if more benign. Interestingly, however, none refer to increased respect as having been earned through praiseworthy action, only through mutual understanding and accommodation.

Two participants, however – George and Dan – express significant doubts about the levels of respect in the group. In doing so, George makes one of his most extended contributions of the whole interview series:

I: So, by and large, how well respected you feel by the teachers and the students on this course? Do you feel that you've been treated well?

George: Yeah.

I: ...and has that got better or worse?

George: It's kind of like... groups. People, like, I don't know... all seemed to go off in

groups, so like... in one big group, there was like... I don't know...

I: Are you saying there are times when you're like one big group, but also times when you break off into...?

George: Yeah, like at lunchtime and that, a few people go off somewhere and another lot will go somewhere else... yeah.

I: And did that feel awkward or tense sometimes, or is that just...?

George: No it's just... the way people are, like, if they're the same kind of person, like the same sorts of things then that's the sort of person they want to be with.

I: But when you do get together to do things as a group, do you think that that still works then?

George: It's like two opposites really, because like... I don't know... there are some who were like, really good, and others who are like, naughty.... I don't know – I can't really explain it. Just different.

I: So, sometimes those differences get in the way (yeah). But you think that you're able to work with those differences sometimes, but you're able to get something done even if they wouldn't normally be your friend?

George: ... I don't know. I haven't really seen that.

This frank description of the group dynamic after the residential is reminiscent of Jake's description of the school classroom (p.175) It expresses frustration, sadness and resignation – perhaps that the spirit generated in the pressure of the residential course did not continue. This resignation is echoed by Dan. That these two, who were among the most sensitive to the mood of the group, were equivocal or negative, suggests that at least in some senses the sense of positive group identity developed on the course was fragile – that traditional self-perceptions, roles and group identities re-emerged in the subsequent classroom-based course activities, which were perhaps learned in many previous years of schooling.

That said, the balance of comments remained positive. The weight of participants who sensed greater respect within the group in Interview C rather than in B suggests that this issue was one that developed over time in participants' minds rather than instantly after the experience of the residential course.

7.2.3.6 *Conclusion*

Given participants' past experiences at school and elsewhere, the residential course's placing of them in a pressure-cooker of continuous, high-challenge, high-responsibility interaction with near strangers was always going to prove difficult – and did lead at times to genuine tensions and the near-exclusion of Martin from membership of the group, at least in retrospect. The strong focus on group bonding, on shared achievement and common identity among participants came somewhat at the expense of identification with team roles and focus on developing personal skills, and also militated against them imagining how they could transfer their newfound knowledge and skills into future group contexts. Instead, they mostly professed to the value of knowing the particular individuals they are working with well. This sense of group identity and success, however, was a genuine achievement in the face of the genuine tensions and difficulties they encountered, and was a significant boost to their self-esteem and confidence, as will be explored in *Section 7.2.7* below. The bond developed between participants here continued into subsequent activities on the Prince's Trust course in the following months, even if only a few activities such as the Castle Drogo project further fed those bonds with powerful experiences; the detracting comments, however, suggested that perhaps this positivity could have been better consolidated.

In relation to the theory of learning as a dialogue across difference, there was little explicit evidence for participants' learning to value each other's differences intrinsically; rather, those differences were to be worked around and overcome. However, their repeated claims that learning to listen to others' ideas had benefited them both socially and in relation to the successful completion of tasks does provide more indirect support for the theory. That said, as shown in *Section 7.2.2*, genuine dialogue was not easy in this group, falling instead into a pattern of argument and reconciliation. What does emerge, however, is a genuine sense of participants' acceptance of, and even appreciation of, the otherness of others rather than a resort to labelling, stigmatisation or cliquishness. This, it seems, was forged through the shared challenges of the residential course.

7.2.4 Leading and decision-making

(inc. 'discussion and planning', 'leaders and leadership', 'ideas')

Note: the inclusion of 'leaders and leadership' and 'ideas' under the same top code was because of the closeness of identification between these concepts among the participants – as will be shown below – rather than in relation to a theoretical standpoint. In this sense it is similar to the inclusion of 'challenge' with 'significant past events' in Section 7.2.1 above.

7.2.4.1 Discussion and planning

Note: This was a purely emergent code, not linked to any of the diamond 9 categories. Given the emphasis on both discussion and planning in the course, it was bound to arise in participants' accounts; that said, it was still little used.

In **Interview A**, only Martin and Kat talked specifically about discussion in decision-making:

I: And you said you think of yourself as an ideas person?

Martin: Yeah... I like people to contribute, help out and stuff.

I: What if that person's ideas don't necessarily meet with your own?

Martin: Well then we'll discuss... see which is best out of the team, and then we'll change it.

I: Do you want to win in that situation? Do your ideas want to...

Martin: Not really. If I think their idea's better than mine, then I'll say: 'yeah, your idea's better than mine'. It's not all about me.

This abstracted description is similar to responses to other codes we have seen so far in Interview A: it reads like the 'right' answer rather than one borne of personal experience. In Martin's case, the contrast between this and his responses in Interview B following his experiences of group work is stark (see p.194). However, it also picks up on an enduring theme that we will explore below: the association of discussion with the comparison and competition of different people's ideas to see which one is the best. The other theme that arose in Interview A was the mention by Bron and Jake²⁹ of voting to make decisions. Again, both cite voting as if it were the 'right' answer – yet no incidents of voting to make decisions were observed or mentioned by participants in subsequent interviews, even though Jake had a strong influence in group

discussions. As with so many skills raised in the diamond 9 exercise, participants' initial views bore little relation to their subsequent practice as a team.

In **Interview B** there were few mentions of the decision-making process – and those were unspecific, such as Dan's:

Dan: Yeah. I think it was the searching. I just felt... cause things just before then were rocky... and all of a sudden we got together as a group and decided how we were going to do this and just kind of clicked together as a team and did the task really well...

As we saw in the previous section, Dan here again describes decision-making in terms of group cohesion and identity, with 'clicking' representing the moment of decision. There is no recollection here or anywhere else of the content or dynamic of discussions. The other theme to arise in Interview B was planning, which none of the participants seemed to enjoy – although only Martin and Carla described this in any detail:

Carla: Yeah... I just didn't like in the planning the way a lot of people didn't put their input in, that's all.

I: So what did you do as a result of that when people weren't putting their input in?

Carla: Nothing. I asked them to... I shouted at them!

I: Did you? To put their bloody input in (yeah!)? And how much work did you do as a result with all the planning?

Carla: I reckon I did quite a lot.

I: Yeah? OK. So that wasn't something you particularly enjoyed, but you did it because other people weren't.

Carla: Yeah.

This planning had been presented as vital to the course and written into both structure of the day and the system of rewards and recognition. The observation notes contain several examples of morning and evening planning sessions being fractious and half-hearted; they seemed to regard it as extra work landing in their free time. Often a small group would end up planning while the others sat in the wings or just left

altogether, leading to arguments. Carla was one who took a lead, while Martin tended to opt out.

In **Interview C** no participants made specific mention of decision-making at all, either in relation to the residential course or to subsequent activities on the course. This suggests that these were not topics of interest or perceived importance to the group, and perhaps also that they were not dwelt on by the course leader or during subsequent activities.

7.2.4.2 *Leaders and leadership*

Note: This code draws on participants' responses to the 'leader' card in the 'team roles' activity, and also on descriptions of leadership during the residential course.

In **Interview A** all responses were in relation to the 'leader' card, and were mixed. Only Carla and Kat identified themselves with the role, both saying that they'd accept the role if needed rather than seeking it. Holly, Jake, Kat and Martin all stated the importance of the role within a team; Holly, Jake and Steve³⁰, however, also expressed caution. The perceived need for motivation and organisation within the team, then, was offset by wariness of individual authoritarianism. This was best expressed by Jake as he also set out an alternative view of leadership from any of the other participants:

Jake: Yeah. And these two here... like I said, everyone should be the leader.

I: And if there's someone who thinks that... they individually need to take control a bit and try to direct the group, how do you get on with them?

Jake: Yeah that's good, because they're steering them a bit more, but then like I said if that person's just going on a weirdo one, everyone should have their piece and like, 'alright, come on'. And someone else should... bump up.

I: So you would say something or try and encourage other people to...

Jake: Yeah, kind of, change that person's ideas.

Jake's view of leadership within a team as shared responsibility and as a checking mechanism is much more like 'distributed leadership'; his background in the Army meant that he was the only participant who had had experience of explicit leadership training.

In **Interview B**, however, Jake gives a very different account:

I: You said you see yourself as an ideas person, and if necessary you might take a leadership role – and that you don't much identify with the rest of these.

Jake: [...] and I would probably just end up spectating a lot, but that's just me – that just the way I am. A lot of... slightly anger issues in that situation, but I'd say that all my life I've pretty much been a leader. I've just got that loud mouthed attitude...

I: Is that what a leader needs?

Jake: Yeah, just sits like, you know, always confident, just going to get into it, so...

I: So there's something about a leader, you've got to be quite loud...

Jake: Yeah, all of my life that's like... the role I always play. It's just one of the people I am.

This seemingly honest and reflective account clashes with Jake's more abstract previous account of leadership: he acknowledges the personal impact and charisma that he has in a group context, and that it naturally puts him in an authority role; however, he also attempts to distance himself from this a role he plays among others, denigrating it somewhat as a "loud mouthed attitude". In the observation notes there are examples both of him taking a leadership role and of him acting irresponsibly at times when others were looking to him to do so. The most remarkable example was in the minibus in response to the acrimony following the failure of the Thursday afternoon signalling activity (v2, p.54). Jake picked the whole group up with an impromptu speech about wanting to end the course on a 'good note' (p.177), which helped set the scene for a successful final challenge on Friday. This dual perspective will be addressed further in his Personal Study. In any case, the experiences of the course seem to have provoked this honest reflection as he recognised that his formal assessment in Interview A did not entirely match his actions.

Across the group there was no trend in changing attitudes towards leaders, yet all participants' responses on the subject were backed up by examples or summaries of their experiences on the course. Kat, for example, became less keen on taking a leadership role – despite admitting that she had done so on a couple of occasions, she put it in terms of 'helping out'; Carla, having been recognised and complimented by

Steve and others as having taken a lead on many activities, did not mention having done so. Steve, on the other hand, felt a shift in his potential to take a leadership role through his experiences during the raft-building activity:

Steve: I done it on a few, but... but now I just know I can do it [take a leadership role] from now on. Cause the final challenge, I didn't really do anything on that one, and I did the raft building one, and that one I did do my best on.

I: So you did your best... you contributed ideas (yeah), or you were helping to organise the group, or... what happened on the raft building one – do you remember?

Steve: When we built it, it fell to pieces – I pretty much tried my best to get it all straightened out.

I: OK, I seem to remember people flopped the bridge over and it didn't reach all the way, so you did a sort of acrobatic jump across (yeah). And did you discuss that with everyone or did you just decide that, 'right, someone needs to do something here or this all goes...'

Steve: Yeah, that's what I did. I just thought, 'right I'd better get on and actually try to get that back up the right way'.

Unlike the abstract discussions of leadership in Interview A, Steve showed leadership here by taking the initiative at a time when the group couldn't verbally agree on a strategy. Bron³¹, without acknowledging it himself, did something similar during a search and rescue activity; he was able to take a lead despite his difficulties in explaining his ideas verbally to others by simply getting on with it and letting others follow – a strategy that was recognised and valued by the group. Elsewhere, however, he, like George, said that he was happy with how others took a lead on the course and wouldn't have wanted to do so himself. Finally, Dan³² also described two moments when he took a lead, but like others, said that he only did so when there appeared to be no alternative – such as during the reservoir task referred to previously where the group fell into argument.

Despite most participants having taken distinct leadership roles at some point, then, only Steve embraced this as something he saw as a positive addition to his teamwork skills; others remained either modest, ambivalent or portrayed themselves as having little choice about casting themselves in that role.

Only Martin, having just praised Dan for his leadership, made negative comments about others:

I: How did you respond to people who took on a leadership role? It might have been different in different circumstances – what do you think?

Martin: Like I said last time, it depends what they're being a leader for. If they're in it for themselves, then...

I: Can you think of examples when people were more in it for themselves than for the group?

Martin: Quite a few. I'm not going to say any.

I: No – that's fine. But when they were, how did you respond?

Martin: Pretty annoyed about it – and a lot of people thought the same as well, because it wasn't just me who saw it.

I: And would people then say anything about it, or would they just shut up and get angry?

Martin: We just kept it to ourselves.

Martin suggests that this opinion was more widespread, but no others refer to it; this may be because they didn't share Martin's opinion at the time as he thought, or because they may have, but in retrospect came to respect the other participants' overall contributions to the group. The latter would be in-keeping with the relative paucity of references to incidents of conflict in the group and their tendency instead to stress group unity – which Martin did not share. A final theme to emerge strongly from the B interviews was the perceived connection between leadership and ideas, which will be explored in the next section.

In **Interview C**, there were no examples of participants describing moments when they had taken a lead either on the residential course or since; indeed, no moments of leadership were mentioned from any time during the subsequent months of the Prince's Trust course. Instead, they made shorter statements in which there was a marked shift towards talking about happily letting others take a lead (Holly, George, Steve, Kat, Jake), and not identifying personally with the leadership role (Dan, Holly, George, Kat). Steve, who felt so empowered by taking a lead on the course, put it this way:

I: When people try to be a leader in the group recently, how have you got on with that?

Steve: I've got on pretty well, because if someone asks me to do something I'll just get straight on with it. I don't mind having a leader.

As with other themes so far, there is a shift in the C interviews towards identifying less with personal roles and more to towards group identity and trust.

7.2.4.3 Ideas

Note: This category arose initially from the 'ideas person' card in the group role exercise, the fundraising exercise, and the 'understanding others' ideas' skill in the diamond 9 exercise – and was expanded by participants' discussions around ideas during activities on the residential course. It was one of the most frequently arising codes.

In **Interview A**, 7 of the 9 participants identified themselves as an 'ideas person', often implicitly or explicitly in contrast to a more practical role:

I: So why have you chosen Ideas Person?

Holly: Basically because I think I'm quite good at coming up with ideas of ways you can raise money that other people would be interested in, so then they'd, like, be attracted to what you're doing, come and have a look...

I: And are you more drawn to coming up with ideas (yeah) than the nitty-gritty of getting on with making phone calls or whatever (yeah, yeah), writing publicity stuff, or whatever needs to be done (yeah)?

While Holly had to be drawn on what she was less keen on, she and others implied that being an 'ideas person' was good because it was higher status and less work – this will be taken up further in *Section 7.2.5* below. Holly, Jake, Steve, George and Kat also expressed the value of other 'ideas people' in a group for the different contributions they can make. Furthermore, Martin, Steve, Holly, Jake and Dan all made specific reference to the value of others' ideas in adding to their own:

Dan: Also you've got to take on other people's ideas as well because they might help your own. And their idea might be more productive and more helpful than your own.

This example comes closest among all the others to a dialogic statement: a sense that others' ideas might help build one's own. However it also then suggests, as all the other participants did, that the value of others' ideas is that they might supplant one's own as better. Dan³³, Jake, Martin and Kat made statements equating clashes of ideas with personal clashes that might lead to conflict, suggesting that the best idea for the group must win out competitively. Carla, however suggested that even from this perspective cooperation is still possible:

Carla: With the Ideas Person, if they're really good and useful I'd make them, like, team them up with the leader and put their ideas together.

There was also in Interview A some dissent from the idea that understanding others' ideas was crucial: Carla put it in the middle, while Kat categorised it as 'the least important':

I: And at the bottom you've got 'understanding other people's ideas'.

Kat: You can understand them, but you don't have to... it's not, like the most important because yeah, you can understand them but you don't want to have to do, like, nothing with their ideas.

Kat here is wary of the implication that understanding others means you might have to change your mind or actions. All of these interpretations of the role of ideas in teamwork suggests that ideas are personal, and sharing them means putting something at stake.

In **Interview B**, Carla drew on her experiences on the course, to present leadership as largely synonymous with possessing the winning idea:

I: You said you'd see yourself as an ideas person... and you could also imagine yourself acting as a leader or a volunteer. So... do you still think the same way (yeah)? Or do you think you sometimes adopt any of these roles in a group?

Carla: No, I reckon most of the time I did try and take control of the group (OK) – I did put my ideas across quite a lot.

I: So when you say take control of the group, do you mean just in terms of your ideas, or do you mean that you took leadership roles in the group.

Carla: I reckon I took leadership roles.

I: So you did that quite often (yeah). And is that the same as just having the ideas, or is it something else?

Carla: Well I kind of put my ideas across, and then see what everyone else thought.

Carla's elision of leadership and ideas is put more bluntly by Jake³⁴, for whom a leader is only as good as his or her ideas. Kat's position, however, markedly shifted in Interview B; she moved 'understanding others' ideas' from the bottom to the middle. She made several comments on listening to and valuing others' ideas, for example:

Kat: Yeah, I'd listen to their ideas and like, try it – but if it didn't go right and they wanted to stick by it, I'd be like, 'no, cause it's not going right, so we've got to try someone else's idea'.

Here Kat presents a more democratic approach where participants take turns to try their ideas – yet the association of ideas with individuals remains, as does the belief that an idea is either right or wrong, and if proved wrong must be discarded. No participants in this interview cited examples of building on ideas, or described them as detached from their 'owners'.

For Dan and George, both of whom were reluctant to adopt leadership roles, the key lesson to come from the residential regarding ideas was the importance of listening to others:

Dan: Erm... cause I think during the week away that was the main reason people were arguing ... just, I think, you get along with people a lot better if you understand and listen properly to what they want, what they're saying and take that across. Cause a couple of people in our group were arguing about that fact and some people just get a bit ticked off if you're not listening or not taking their point seriously.

Both highlighted the descent into personal conflict that went with the personal association with ideas, and the keenness to promote one's own that goes with it. Martin³⁵ was the one who felt most strongly this sense of competition and personal rejection, suggesting the group were unable to engage in genuine dialogue, and portraying decision-making instead as a bidding war of ideas. Despite this continuing

perception of discrete ideas in conflict, however, the experiences of the course led many participants – George, Carla, Dan, Jake, Bron, Holly and Kat – to talk about having taken away from the course a renewed belief in the importance of understanding others' ideas. Even if the ideal of dialogue was not achieved, most of them took away a sense that things could and should have been otherwise.

In **Interview C**, as with other themes, participants made far fewer references to conflict, focusing instead on the positive aspects of others giving their ideas. Kat, Jake, Steve, George, Holly and Dan all specifically talked about the value of those ideas, especially to the completion of team tasks:

I: You say you're a bit of an ideas person (yeah) -- how you get on with other people... who want to contribute to the decision-making process?

Holly: I suppose listen to them and respect what their ideas that they have. And then, kind of, when everyone's given their ideas you think about which one is going to work the best.

I: On the course, or on the residential, when people have been discussing their ideas for activities, and you were well with other people's ideas -- or have you thought, "no -- my idea is better!"

Holly: ... A bit of both, I suppose. Sometimes I think, "no, actually, your idea is better than mine," and sometimes, "no, actually, I like mine! I want to do that! So screw what you're thinking!"

Here Holly, like Steve, sees others' ideas as broadening the choice but still sees ideas as separate and belonging to individuals – they use the concept of 'best fit'. In George's and Dan's³⁶ responses, however, are more dialogic notions:

I: That's great. And how do you respond to people who are full of ideas?

Jake: Yeah I like people with a lot of ideas, because you can expand on it and that.

Both responses suggest building on others' responses towards a common solution that combines perspectives and approaches; they also suggest starting by listening to others' ideas rather than comparing one of their own with that of others. Both suggestions move away from personal identification with, and ownership of, ideas and suggest an increased identification with the process of discussion itself. Dan also expresses his frustration with those who are more interested in getting their idea

across than listening to others; he implies that some are too attached to their personal ideas to build on others'. While Steve³⁷ still saw ideas as personal possessions, he nonetheless suggested that he was less attached to them than previously as he comments on the need for criticality in discussing ideas.

7.2.4.4 *Summary*

Overall these quotations suggest that the residential was a powerful generator of leadership opportunities; by contrast, participants recalled few opportunities for leadership before or after. Their initial ambivalence about people in leadership roles was generally challenged by their experiences of themselves and others taking those roles; the great majority were positive about the leadership offered by group members, and many recounted with some pride the moments when they had taken a lead. However, most were reluctant by the end to identify themselves as having leadership skills, suggesting instead that they had only taken those roles reactively when it was necessary for the group due to lack of progress or social tension.

There was little discussion before or after the residential course of the processes of leadership and decision-making, suggesting a lack of familiarity with, and commitment to, the concepts and procedures of leadership. For example, no-one talked about leaders as taking a chairing role or looking to collate different people's ideas, or about delegating tasks. Instead, there a general move towards portraying leadership as something inherent within the group itself. On the one hand, this quality – along with participants' suggestions that they took a lead responsively in context rather than through role identification or allocation – could be seen as strategies of distributed leadership which were argued above (p.69) to be appropriate and effective within a school environment. On the other, there was paucity in participants' accounts of analysis and evaluation of decision-making and of team relationships and activities. They seemed to lack a sufficient framework to abstract their understanding of leadership, discussion and decision-making in such a way that they could take it across to other contexts. Instead, especially by the final interview, these qualities were portrayed somewhat fuzzily as existing within the group as a whole. While this reflected well on the group's sense of loyalty and shared achievement, it did not suggest a significant increase in critical awareness. More positively, however, there

was recognition of the value of leadership through decisive action – which for some was a liberating experience.

While participants' strong association of leadership with ideas was also perhaps indicative of a lack of critical vocabulary and concepts, there was nonetheless a significant move among most participants towards increasingly valuing others' ideas. For most this remained an essentially competitive process where ideas, associated strongly with the person who put them forward, competed in the discussion for dominance; for some, however, the dialogic sense of cumulative discussion was more apparent by the final interview. In addition, there was a lessening sense among those, and some others, that ideas were irrevocably linked to their creators – this made it more possible for them to identify with the dialogue itself. In either case, the strong shift towards openness to others' ideas, often marked by recall of significant moments on the course – and the association of this with listening and respect – represents a substantial achievement for the course and a benefit to participants.

These findings suggest that a question for the course could be how it helps to draw distinctions between friendships, groups and teams; people and roles; and concepts and their application, with regard to leadership and team skills. Group loyalty and identification can help boost confidence, but can be limited in its transferability to future contexts without more formal vocabularies and external perspectives.

7.2.5 Following, abstaining and dissenting

(inc. 'critic', 'objector', 'pretender', 'spectator', 'volunteer')

Note: all these codes derived from the group roles exercises, representing all bar 'leader' and 'ideas person' which were addressed in the previous section.

7.2.5.1 Critic

The majority of responses to the role of critic in **Interview A** were cautious or hostile; the most common response was anger:

Holly: With the critic I'd probably get quite annoyed with them, saying, 'Oh why are you doing this? That's rubbish' and whatever, so I don't think I'd probably get on with them too well, to be honest.

Dan and Kat also saw the potential for being angry with a critic, as did Steve³⁸ who, however, felt a more temperate response was best. Both Holly and Bron assumed that the critic was a wholly negative role; others like Carla, Martin and Steve were unsure how they'd respond:

Martin: Critic – erm... I don't like asking questions like that. And if someone asks questions like that to me it would get me all nervous and stuff.

I: Put you on the spot?

Martin: On the spot. And pressure.

I: 'So you might act... how towards them?

Martin: Differently. I wouldn't be as fluent in what I'm doing.

I: OK so you might be a bit cautious and even a bit self-conscious (yeah)?

Martin's response is interesting in that instead of focusing on his external response to the critic he thinks about how he might feel and how it might affect him – the 'symptoms' described are those of being challenged when you're not used to it or not sure of yourself. Dan, Holly and Kat³⁹, however, said they'd look to respond in kind in retaliation. Common to all these responses was a negative sense of the critic (at least potentially) as aggressor, blurring the distinction between critiquing ideas and ad hominem attacks. This was also so of Bron, whose approach was to attempt to ignore and to disengage from the critic. On the other side, however, Steve and George both cautiously identified themselves with the role of critic – at least at times:

I: OK, so they're all equal (yeah). So one of the roles you'd be happy in, then, is 'critic' (yeah). So why have you chosen that?

Jake: Erm... cause I'd ask tough questions to see if they're up to it. Because people might struggle a bit of what they're supposed to be doing, so I'd ask a couple of tough questions to see if they know or not.

I: Right, OK. So you'd be happy testing...

Jake: Yeah, a little bit of testing, yeah.

Noticeably here Steve suggests testing people's knowledge rather than the ideas themselves; Dan is the only one to separate people from their ideas in suggesting the value of the critic's role – in line with common teaching in the area of teamwork and argumentation:

I: Do you think there's anything positive about that role?

Dan: I suppose there could be because you're always asking why – and that might make other people think, and it might be good for them because something might be wrong with what they're doing, and could change it, make it come out more positive.

In **Interview B**, despite the great numbers of disagreements and arguments on the course, there were fewer expanded references to criticism or critics – and overall the balance was considerably less negative. Whereas in Interview A four participants said that critics made them angry, in Interview B only Carla did – and only in response to a specific incident:

Carla: Like when we were building a bridge and some people and someone was going, 'oh, why are you doing that, why are you doing this? It's not going to work, it's not going to work,' I got annoyed because they kept saying 'it's not going to work'.

I: OK, so it was the negative bit (yeah) that really got you, when people were just being negative rather than... (yeah) challenging the ideas as such (yep).

Here Carla, when further questioned, seemed to separate the challenging of ideas from sheer negativity. While she did suggest that there were other incidents where she was angry, and that others got angry at critics also during the course, she also suggested that this was in the process of trying to listen to others' ideas, not just dismissing them. Jake similarly referred to other participants as being critical for its own sake rather than in the cause of a task; he also suggested that praising critics might surprise them and help bring them onside. Bron also suggested that adopting a critical stance in the group had been common on the course – including himself:

I: What about... did you come across this, when people asked lots of difficult questions?

Bron: Hmm... I tried!

I: You tried – that's interesting. And did anyone else ask tough questions?

Bron: Yeah – everyone!

I: And how did you feel when people said, 'well, what if this happens?', and, 'what if this doesn't work?'

Bron: Erm... normal [laughs].

I: Yeah, that's OK to you (yeah). You think it's OK for people to ask tough questions (yeah).

This is a long way from his refusal to countenance challenging others' ideas in the first interview – both personally and in terms of his valuing the role. Kat and Steve also said they successfully took on the role of critic; they did not give details, but Steve said he believes that his critical questioning helped out in the activity planning process. Kat, however, also said in B that if someone is pointing out the opposite of her idea, her response is to ignore them. The most powerful support for the role of critic came from Steve's description of Holly's contribution to planning (see p.173 above). He describes how her minority opinion confronted and challenged the rest of the group – and was ignored until he stood up for it. His implication is that because the challenge came from her certain participants chose to ignore it – this again suggests a persisting elision of criticising ideas and the person within the group.

In **Interview C** there were a broad range of responses to the critic role, but the two key trends were towards recognising the value of the role, and away from seeing themselves in it. Dan, George, Jake, Holly and Kat all argued for the role's value, as several did in Interview A. However, this time the tone and insights were very different:

Kat: You've got to make sure you're actually right... or like, 50% more than they are, so you don't look stupid. Because you're also risking annoying people, aren't you?

I: Yeah. Because at the end of the day you could be wrong and they could be right, but you probably said, 'no, you're wrong'.

Kat: Yeah, OK. So do you think that reflects in some way the confidence you're talking about...?

I: Yeah, you've got to have the confidence to do it.

Kat: Do you think you're happy in this role with this group, or do you think you could do it maybe with people you didn't know so well?

I: Not with people I don't know, because I don't know what their reactions are going to be like.

Here Kat describes a delicate balance between standing up for what you think might be right or wrong and the risk of annoying others by doing so; she also recognises that this takes confidence and trust in others. It also reinforces a point we have seen elsewhere that she and other participants are reluctant to see their abilities or insights as extending beyond this particular group. This is a much more subtle position than those in A; Holly also suggests a significant shift in perspectives, even if in a more forthright way:

I: Have you seen much of this: people asking tough questions?

Holly: I suppose yeah, kind of. Because a lot of people said things like, "well I'm not sure about doing this" and "what if this happens and what if it goes wrong?" ...

I: And how have you responded to that sort of thing?

Holly: ... you sort of like, listen to them and you think, "well, yeah, it could go wrong" and sometimes you think, "yeah, you're talking a load of bollocks -- shut up!" kind of thing.

I: So you're prepared to listen and think about it (yeah) and then decide whether it's a load of bollocks or not.

Holly: Yeah! That's my way of putting it.

Despite the polarity of Holly's judgements (which were more diplomatically put in practice), she talks about being prepared to listen first before making up her mind. While she also gives an example of an unhelpful critic during the bridge-building exercise, she also tempers this by saying that she can be like that sometimes. Her increased sympathy and willingness to listen was a position also shared by Dan and George, who frame it in terms of critics providing opportunities for the team to be more successful.

However, several participants suggested that some of their initial caution towards critics remained. Jake⁴⁰ again grudgingly admitted that criticism could be useful, but was minded to see it usually as personal negativity. Instead, he placed criticism within the same narrative as arguments – as something that had subsided over time. Steve retained a sense of the personal difficulty of responding to critics:

I: What about when someone's a critic? How do you get on with that?

Steve: Not too well, because some people don't really... how can I say... don't really know... what, how to answer them properly.

I: What, so they don't know how to answer people who ask them tough questions (yeah)? And why is that a tricky thing?

Steve: Because some questions really are tough and you can't really put your finger on it... how to answer.

This is an honest recognition of the fact that it isn't often easy to take criticism and separate it from the personalities involved; at the same time, Steve here doesn't say that the critic is wrong for raising problems. Collectively, their responses suggested a significant shift towards recognising the value of critics and criticism in teamwork. This shift is much more pronounced in C than in B, suggesting that, like with other themes such as 'valuing others' ideas', experience and time for reflection were crucial to this change in attitude. Just as significant as the overall trajectory was the increasing depth and subtlety of participants' insights, recognising the tensions inherent in the role and recognising different personal strategies both for offering and responding to criticism rather than the more generic responses in Interview A.

7.2.5.2 *Objector*

In **Interview A**, two opposite responses to an 'objector' were equally common. George, Steve⁴¹ and Kat were all clear that they had no problem with anyone objecting to take part in a task, and that they either admired their honesty or respected their right to take that stance. However, for Carla, Holly and Jake the emphasis was on persuading them to take part:

Jake: ['Objector']. I've seen people like that before, and I've seen them come around. You've just got to keep persuading them, like, 'come on', you know, 'we're all doing this, we're all stuck, you know, we're all on the same boat here – come on, let's just get it done'.

The only other positions were those of Martin, who said he had no time for people in that role and 'wasn't best pleased' by them; and Dan, who thought the best tactic was to ignore them.

In **Interview B**, fewer participants expanded on the objector role. In the light of events

on the course, however, those responses were very different. George, Carla and Steve were unimpressed but unwilling to confront the objector:

Jake: A lot of people did that one.

I: A few people were objectors (yeah)? And what did you think when people flatly said, "I don't want to do this"?

Jake: Not good – saying they didn't want to do it, couldn't be bothered and that. Just letting the team down.

I: You felt a little bit cross (yeah) or something like that. Did you do or say anything?

Jake: No, just let people get on with their own problems.

I: OK.

However, despite their lack of tolerance for objectors in A, both Martin and Jake identified themselves as having been objectors – once in Jake's case and often in Martin's⁴². Also, Kat felt that objectors should be respected for having their reasons:

I: What about [objector]?

Kat: It's up to them – obviously there was something wrong with them that day for them to feel, 'I just don't want to do it', so I'd just leave them be.

I: 'Cause I think you said at the beginning that sometimes that made you a bit cross, but you're also saying that you've got to understand where they are that day, how they're feeling?

Kat: Yeah.

I: And you think that's acceptable?

Kat: Yeah, they need time on their own just to think – and if they're just sat there on their own, like, thought for a bit, they might actually change their mind and say, 'yeah, I might be feeling down but at least I, like, stick in and help you for a bit'.

Kat's response may have been influenced by the fact that others identified her as having opted out of some activities, especially earlier in the residential course; however, her sympathetic viewpoint also fits into a broader picture so far that shows her taking a far greater interest in understanding others' perspectives and not judging.

By **Interview C**, participants' views had changed little. George, Steve and Holly were

still frustrated by people adopting this role but were reluctant to challenge it, with George seeing it as 'not his job'. Jake was self-deprecating, both disapproving of it in others but saying that he did so himself at times. As will be discussed further in his personal study, however, it is unclear whether his responses in this final interview were wholly characteristic. Only Dan stood up, modestly, for attempting to engage with objectors:

I: Can you think of times when people said, "I'm not doing it"? How have you responded to that?

Dan: ... I suppose most of the time you just try to ignore them. Sometimes, it depends how... I suppose, bad they're being. But sometimes you just try to help them to get involved and see if they can contribute in any way. But most of the time if you can't, then you just get on.

However, he couldn't cite any examples of having done so either on the course or subsequently – nor did any of the other participants.

There was no clear pattern in the participants' changing attitude towards this role, except that those who said that they would challenge objectors did not do so – and that by the final interview no-one expressed being comfortable with or respectful towards objectors. Perhaps the experiences on the course of how disruptive this could be changed their minds; in any case, they discussed from several perspectives how difficult it was at times to deal with people in this role.

7.2.5.3 *Pretender*

Note: this role emerged from conversation with a colleague who had observed disaffected students in classroom scenarios feigning interest in tasks, but whose subsequent behaviour had suggested that they were more concerned with fitting in or not causing trouble. I decided it would be an interesting option to include. While it did promote some interesting responses, it was not greatly commented on by participants after Interview A.

In **Interview A**, Holly and Martin were the only ones who responded negatively to the role. For both, the perceived lack of honesty would grate:

Holly: Erm... with the Pretender, again I'd probably be quite annoyed, because it's sort of like, well, if you don't want to do it you can say and I'm pretty sure no-one would really mind. But obviously when you lie to people that makes people get quite annoyed, and people could say, 'well, why didn't you just say in the first place?'

I: OK, that's interesting. Could you understand why someone would be like that?

Holly: Yeah... because you get those kind of people who just want to make other people happy, so they're doing it to make other people happy rather than themselves.

I: But you'd still find that a bit frustrating (yeah) and you might get a bit, sort of, cross after a while (yeah).

This contrasts strongly with the responses in Interview C to the 'objector' role above: clearly after the course participants did mind when others didn't contribute, and would have preferred them to help out even if not interested. Bron and Jake both identified themselves in this role for others' sake or as a precursor to genuine involvement:

I: Have you been in this position before? Why would you pretend that you were interested in something even if you weren't?

Bron: To help other people, yes. That's why I put this one....

I: So with this one, you'd say even if you're not immediately interested you'd tell yourself, 'well, this is a good cause' (mmm), maybe I should just get on with it.

Bron: It's a good thing.

Jake describes it as 'mind over matter': if you think you're going to be interested then eventually you will be. It's therefore the personal responsibility of each person to get involved in the team effort. Similarly, Kat and Martin argue that the effort is more important than the attitude, and while Carla admits that someone pretending to be interested isn't ideal, it's better than them opting out.

In **Interview B**, none of the participants talk about accepting 'pretenders', nor about being frustrated by them as in A. Instead, George talked about being one at times:

- I:* So actually, you'd get involved even if you weren't sure you were interested?
- Jake: Yeah.
- I:* Any why did you do that?
- Jake: Don't know. Sometimes I couldn't be bothered to do it.
- I:* Sometimes you couldn't be bothered – but I guess you wanted to help the group out a bit (yeah) so you tried to be involved even if you didn't want to be.
- Jake: Mmhmm.

By **Interview C**, again views had changed little. Both George and Steve said that at times they had been 'pretenders', but that this was preferable to letting the group down. Dan again expressed the idea that someone pretending interest wasn't ideal but better than objecting:

- Dan: Yeah... I suppose you've kind of got to get along [with 'pretenders'], because they're trying to get along and do it. Because not everybody is going to enjoy what they're doing, but at least they're not complaining about it, just... you got kind of get along with a little at times.
- I:* So that's potentially a positive thing?
- Dan: Yeah. I know sometimes it could probably be better, but in those sorts of cases you've got to ignore them really...

In each case participants' responses move from a more theoretical stance in Interview A on the rightness or wrongness of pretending interest in a task towards a more pragmatic acceptance of it in B and C, where the benefit of the group is the main consideration. It is interesting to see that most participants did not take this role to be pejorative – as they did with both 'critic' and 'argument'. Instead, several saw feigning interest as a precursor to genuine engagement.

7.2.5.4 *Spectator*

In **Interview A**, the most common response to the role of 'spectator' in group tasks was frustration:

- I:* That's great. What about someone that just sits back and watches?

Bron: No. Nothing special.

I: Does that mean that you're not bothered? Or do they make you a bit... angry, or...?

Bron: Angry, yes.

I: Because you're thinking, well, why...

Bron: Yes here I am trying to do something, and they don't say much.

Jake and Martin were similarly unimpressed by the thought of working on behalf of the group while others did not. Holly, along with Steve, Kat and Carla, said she'd try to convince a spectator to take part – but that she'd then be frustrated if they didn't. Only George had a positive response to the role, seeing it as a precursor to more thoughtful engagement:

I: So you're saying you'd start off, maybe, by taking the role of spectator – why would you do that?

George: See what other people think we should do, then if I've got any more ideas, I'd say like... see what everyone else wants to do first.

In **Interview B**, both Martin and Kat described themselves as having been spectators at time during the residential course – in Martin's⁴³ case, he said later that his mind was elsewhere, but that didn't change who he thought he'd normally be in group tasks. Kat⁴⁴ similarly was missing loved ones and found it difficult – especially at the start – to engage with group tasks; she also, however, found others' adopting the spectator role to be frustrating and selfish. Both Steve and Carla cited Martin in particular as a spectator in tasks and expressed their frustration at him on the team's behalf. However, Jake took a more nuanced approach:

Jake: Spectator, on the course kind of... sometimes it was, 'oh, just leave it', and sometimes try to drag them through – like Martin, 'I'm not crossing the lake', and it's just, like, 'come on and do it'.

I: So sometimes you'd get involved and try to persuade them?

Jake: Yeah, depends if that person's just going to be ignorant and just say, 'no I'm not doing it'.

I: But some people you would try...?

Jake: Some people are better than what they think they are and they can do it,

so...

I: OK. So whether you – same with this one as well [objector] – it depends whether you think they're capable or not and whether....

Jake: Depends how physical and like... cause if they're just not confident they've got to build up their confidence, so...

I: OK. So it depends on what you think of them and your understanding of them whether you try to encourage them or just leave them to it (yeah)?

Jake's mention of some people needing confidence to participate, particularly his insight that – “some people are better than what they think they are”, suggests a genuine effort to try to understand others from their own perspective and to contrast this with his own experience. His response is empathetic and ultimately pragmatic; as we have seen already, Jake was capable at times of raising others' confidence and encouraging participation by appealing to joint achievements and the prospect of feeling good about themselves.

In **Interview C**, Dan comes to agree with George that being a spectator – at least at first – can be valuable as a way of listening and learning from the rest of the group.

I: It's interesting, because you just identified yourself sometimes in that role [spectator]. Has that made you feel any differently about when other people are sitting back and don't appear to be doing much?

Dan: ... I don't know.... I suppose in some ways you just want to try to get them involved, really. Just by... I suppose I kind of ask, because I know that kind of do it. Most of the time I just sit there and try to... think of things, really... some people they just, like, just blurt ideas out loud straight away without thinking about it. But I just, sort of, sit back for a while and think about what I'm can say before I say it, really.

Dan here gives the impression of having been provoked by events on the course into genuine, open-ended self-reflection – like elsewhere above he expresses his increasing value for listening, silence and taking time to think. Both he and George redefine 'spectator' to some extent to reflect this: from impassive observer to active listener.

Overall, the generalised 'appropriate' responses in A gave way to more experiential anger and frustration or pragmatic ignoring in B – as well as some acknowledging

they'd adopted the role – while in C there was more thoughtful reflection on what it is or must be like from the inside to be a spectator in a group context.

7.2.5.5 *Volunteer*

In **Interview A**, all the participants expressed their approval of people in this role in some way; the majority praised it in others, while the minority saw themselves as willing volunteers themselves. For Bron and Dan⁴⁵, volunteering is a good thing that they believe they do in groups themselves; others like Kat, Carla, Steve and George were all broadly appreciative of volunteers but didn't see themselves in that role. Jake and Holly, however, presumed that anyone volunteering was not getting their own ideas across and needed encouragement to do so:

Holly: Erm... with the Volunteer I think it'd be quite good because obviously they're quite happy to do what you want to do, but it would also be better if they gave their opinions of what they would like – put their input in rather than...

I: OK, and would you do anything about that, or would you... respect their right to just sort of get on with...

Holly: I'd respect their right, most likely, and sort of ask if they have any ideas, so...

This raises the issue of status around ideas and leadership discussed above – the suggestion here is that anyone not involved in putting forward their ideas is impoverished in some way, either shy or marginalised.

In **Interview B** some people's positions changed, while others were reinforced by their experiences on the course. Dan, who has principally seen himself as an 'ideas person' in A, changed his mind:

I: So on the course did you feel that your main role was as an ideas person?

Dan: Hmm... At certain times, yeah – but most of the time during the thing I was more or less a volunteer, I suppose.

I: Right, so you were trying to get on with what the group had decided on and get the tasks done (yeah)? And you volunteered, didn't you, you gave the example of the cooking – you just got stuck in there.

Dan: Yeah.

I: Does that surprise you?

Dan: Erm... kind of. Because more or less outside I'm very... just... I suppose... kind of self-centred, really. And just... thinking about myself. But during this I was more or less thinking about others and trying to get the team going and trying to keep people happy, really.

Dan found a sense of liberation in focusing on others not recognised by those who felt that a volunteer was in some sense a weak position. On the course, however, Dan's selflessness gained him increasing respect and influence within the group; when he did speak up, albeit infrequently, everyone listened. In terms of dialogic theory this might equate to a greater sense of identification with the dialogue itself rather than investing in identification with a particular personal position. Kim also identified herself as a volunteer in B, albeit in the context of her ideas not being listened to – but her response was to join in rather than dissent. Carla also seemed to change her position, revealing a similar assumption to Jake and Holly:

I: How did you get on with people who maybe didn't say too much but just got on with it?

Carla: Yeah I thought they were quite good, they're mostly the shy people really.

I: Mostly the shy people. And you were happy for people to do that, even if they didn't have much to say?

Carla: Yeah.

Jake⁴⁶ suggested that a volunteer role is taken by someone cowed or marginalised who doesn't feel they can contribute their ideas; of himself he said that he always put his input in. Martin took an opposite view, suggesting no-one had volunteered at all because everyone had been too busy trying to get their opinion across; this perspective links in with his previous sense of his idea not being taken seriously enough.

In **Interview C**, these trends continued. Kim continued to identify herself as a volunteer at times and Steve surprised himself by sharing that view; Dan and George more strongly identify themselves in the role:

George: Yeah because if not a lot of people want to do it, there's always someone else that will volunteer and say yeah, I'll do it.

I: And you got on alright with people who've done that (yeah)? And have you been surprised by that -- that people have stepped in and got that done?

George: Yeah.

I: Have you done it?

George: A few times.

I: Can you think of a time when you stepped in, maybe, that you've done something that wasn't really your job to do?

George: Yeah, it's like... if it's a group of people, and someone's asked me, like, anyone to do something and no one wants to do it, I was like, "I'll do it, because no one else is, I'll do it".

This is another example of George really opening up in the final interview and portraying himself as responding actively in a group rather than always hanging back – as such it suggested a significant personal development. Only Holly explicitly expanded further on the view that someone in a volunteer role was likely to have become frustrated or resigned due to not having been listened to.

The responses to this role were of particular interest because of the associations the participants read into it, mostly around its utility and low status. They revealed a widespread sense of patronage, discomfort or even pity towards people ready just to get on what others in the group said. Where this attitude came from is unclear; it might be related towards their non-identification with school tasks and teachers. Whereas every single participant in Interview A identified themselves as an 'ideas person', only Dan did for 'volunteer' – and only secondarily. However, his developing understanding of and identification with the role, alongside that of George, Steve, Bron and to some extent Kat, gave them a sense of purpose, belonging and satisfaction that was more intrinsic than linked to status or position.

7.2.5.6 Summary

The group roles questions were designed to stimulate participants' thoughts on teamwork and group dynamics by offering them scenarios which would make these more vivid. Overall, the opinions in the A interviews were formulaic, making little reference to personal experience and suggesting participants were attempting to give a 'right' response to how they saw each role. Answers in the B interviews drew heavily

on participants' experiences on the residential course, which often challenged their perspectives in the A interviews; for example, not challenging 'objectors' in practice when they said they would in theory. Some responses were quite passionate and even accusatory when associating others with particular roles they construed as negative; by contrast, many talked about adopting roles themselves which surprised them. Several preconceptions and misconceptions about teamwork and roles were also revealed; participants shaped their descriptions of the roles to fit in with their ideas about power relations and status within the group. The perceived utility but low status of volunteering was of particular interest here. Some had these preconceptions challenged, others found theirs strengthened, in the light of course experiences. The C interviews overall indicated a move away from focusing on individuals and incidents towards seeing roles within the group context; they also suggested an increasing attempt to see the situation from others' perspectives and to try to understand and value those. What was perhaps missing, as in the previous section on leadership, was a sense that the participants felt that the lessons they'd learnt about group dynamics would be of value to them in other contexts – there was little focus on the future. However, the greater subtlety and depth, particularly in Interview C, suggested that participants had considered and grasped many of the nuances of group dynamics through their experiences on the residential and through having time subsequently to consider them.

7.2.6 Identity and motivation

(inc. 'independence', 'motivation, effort', 'proving yourself, achieving', and 'understanding of self')

7.2.6.1 Independence

Note: this category arose largely from Holly's and Carla's descriptions of their lives and childhoods in Interview A – it was not linked to any interview questions. It was little used in coding other participants' interviews.

In **Interview A**, in response to the first question on having really learned something in the last year, both Carla and Holly⁴⁷ talked about having been in care and subsequently living alone – with both stating that they'd learned valuable lessons about looking after

themselves:

I: What about that stands out for you, about learning to live alone. What do you think you can do that you couldn't really do before?

Carla: Well, stuff like, doing everything by myself like cooking and cleaning and whatnot, it's really like... really different.

I: For the better? For the worse?

Carla: For the better. It makes me, like, grow up and that.

While both portrayed this positively, Carla also suggested the difficulty of having to be self-reliant so young:

I: And how do you feel about your cooking and your looking after the house?

Carla: It's alright – it's not perfect, but it'll do.

However, she also suggests that her experiences had been key to her determination to do well, and perhaps to her forceful nature:

Carla: Bringing back to what I said at the beginning, living on my own and that... being at home bored all the time makes more motivated to do something, not just at home wasting my life away. So that makes me very motivated and doing stuff.

For Dan⁴⁸, the transition from school to college had a similar effect. He was the only participant to discuss the issue again in **Interview B** – there were none in Interview C. For him, his experience of helping out in the kitchen on the course was an eye-opener and a boost to his self-confidence:

I: So you stepped in (yeah) when you didn't have to (yeah), and how did you feel about that afterwards?

Dan: Erm... quite pleased with myself.

I: Yeah, great. And how did people respond to you for stepping in there?

Dan: I'm not totally sure, but I just personally felt...

I: It was more in yourself that it mattered (yeah). That's great. And has that made any difference since? You say you've been cooking at home more.

Dan: Yeah. And it's just made me more independent, I suppose – just being able to... know how to do things.

Dan was one of the few participants to talk about having learned skills that he's used in contexts outside the course; this illustrates the extent to which many of the most mundane aspects of the course design let to powerful experiences for those not used to having to be self-reliant. While Holly and Carla had had to learn some of these lessons out of necessity, the course allowed others like Dan to learn them in a more controlled environment.

7.2.6.2 *Motivation, effort*

Note: this category was largely prompted by one of the interview questions, 'what recently has motivated you to try your hardest?'. Some participants found this difficult to answer immediately and did so slowly or in response to subsequent questions.

In **Interview A**, only Kat gave an example of a recent activity that she'd found motivating – and that was a warm-up activity from the very start of the Prince's Trust course:

Kat: I know it sounds a bit stupid, but we had to fit, like 4 people through a piece of paper. It actually gets you like, thinking quite a lot, and when you come to thinking, when someone shows you it's like, really easy, but it's... a brain teaser, if you know what I mean.

I: And do those... but you think that motivates you somehow?

Kat: Yeah, because you've got to get moving and stuff, and like, find a way how to do it.

Kat's example suggests intrinsic motivation spurred by an active, problem-solving task that was very different from the sort she was used to at school. Others' answers, however, were more general. Dan and Martin focused on motivation as a beneficial quality in its own right:

I: Is there anything at the moment you think you could do better, and improve on in what you do?

Martin: Erm... My confidence. Maybe my get-up-and-go as well, that's not the best. I'm a bit lazy. Yeah, I think I can improve on that.

Dan and Matt were among several to express their hope in Interview A that the course

would help them develop their personal qualities. Matt's⁴⁹ greatest motivator, however, was his girlfriend. Dan⁵⁰, along with Holly and Carla, also talked about being broadly motivated by the chance to help others. George and Jake, on the other hand, talked about being more motivated by the thought of future success in their studies:

I: OK, so taking courses and learning... that's important to you (yeah)... and the results (yeah) are important to you as well.

Jake: Yeah, good results, that's what I mean... you get as much as you put in so if you're going to do that course you've got to put the extra effort in as well.

Jake, Martin and Dan all talked about having struggled with their motivation, especially at school – all hoped that the Prince's Trust course would provide something different.

In **Interview B**, for Kat, Dan and Steve, the desire to help others was still the main motivator:

I: So, which particular activities really made you really try hard?

Steve: Probably when we was doing the abseiling off that 100-foot bridge. Cause I know there was quite a few people that was scared to go down it, and I stood by the railing talking to the people who was going down to keep their confidence...

That Steve saw himself as “trying hard” to reassure others and keep them calm and confident, and that he chose this over his own motivation to complete the activity, suggests that he had the opportunity to show a significant degree of empathy in the face of genuinely emotive experiences on the course – a capacity which Kat and Dan seemed to share. Both Dan and Carla, however, both describe having been motivated at other times by others' failure to act – in Dan's case, stepping in when others didn't cook breakfast as agreed (see p.162) and for Carla, when others refused to join in with planning (see p.190). This was done out of concern for the group as a whole, which was key to motivating Jake and Kat – as when she acknowledged having taken on a leadership role:

Kat: Leader... I said to a couple of people, 'just get on with it' and stuff – 'even if you don't want to, we've just got to get it done'.

We have also already referred to how Jake's speech on the minibus rallied the participants together (p.190), calling on them to disregard their feelings at that moment by appealing to how all would feel if they completed the final tasks successfully. This taps into a form of motivation not mentioned in the A interviews. Likewise, Carla⁵¹, Jake, Dan and George all referred to the Final Challenge activity as having specifically motivated them. Carla here focuses on her working as part of the group rather than as an individual, again suggesting a shift towards a collective motivation as and for the group. While Kat above described being motivated in this way, she also saw herself having learned personal lessons in the process:

Kat: I'm just more confident, you just like... you've got to stick to something to get it done, cause if you give up half way it's never going to get done. So it's being confident, it's about yourself no matter what it is...

I: And were there any moments when you got that, when you didn't give up when you might have before?

Kat: The building a bridge, cause in the beginning, because I didn't think their idea was going to work, and because they didn't listen to me, I thought, 'stuff it, I'm not going to get involved and doing it'. I sat down, moved away for ten minutes, but I thought it was a bit selfish, I've got to give my idea a go, so I joined in again and helped them.

Here Kat shows an ability to see herself from another perspective – that of a member of the team – and this spurs her to get involved again. Like Kat, Martin⁵² talks about having struggled with his motivation during the course – but with less success. Ironically, the thing he said motivates him most – his girlfriend – was the stated cause of his lack of motivation on the course. He later pledged to get more involved with the rest of the Prince's Trust course to try to make up ground – but he did not attend the third interview. That said, he did talk about being motivated by rock-climbing and abseiling during the course, as they were both activities he enjoyed.

In **Interview C** there were, as in relation to other topics, far fewer mentions of specific activities that participants had found motivating – and indeed, less talk of motivation altogether, with much of what there was being less positive. Dan⁵³ and Bron both talked about their lack of motivation on the Prince's Trust course since the residential course:

I: Since Dartmoor, have you done anything where you've been really trying hard, where you've been motivated?

Bron: ... not really.

I: Are you finding it difficult to motivate yourself at the moment?

Bron: ... [laughs]... I'm a bit lazy, yeah.

This was somewhat disheartening to hear in two participants who had been focused and motivated during the residential course; with Dan it was perhaps also related to his experience at his unsuccessful work placement. For Steve, his statement that his level of motivation hadn't changed since the start of the course because he'd "just been cruising right the way through" didn't quite ring true; it suggested a tailing off, as if nothing since the residential had demanded and provoked similar levels of motivation and effort. That said, Holly in her C interview talks both about moments from the residential and one during the subsequent Castle Drogo activity when she overcame her reluctance to continue and put the effort in:

I: And did you take anything away from that? From those moments when I thought, "maybe I should just go home", and you didn't?

Holly: ... it taught me to carry on through the tough times, because at the end something good will come out of it, so...

This, however, is a self-appeal to the good of the group; it is despite the nature of the activity, not because of it. Despite this, Holly suggests that she has learned a valuable lesson learned in the process. By contrast, George and Kat both talk about having been motivated by the rest of the Prince's Trust course:

I: Since that Dartmoor course, what have you been doing that you've tried hard at?

George: Just the work, really. Just getting my work all done.

I: And the paperwork for the course has been part of that (yeah). It's been putting a portfolio together, has it?

George: Just having slideshows together and that, and just finishing off the work in our folders and that.

I: And what's been your motivation for doing that?

George: Part of the course, to get more experience out of it.

While George suggests he's motivated in this by the experience of the course, he seems to be less interested in the paperwork and more into completing it and finishing the course successfully – as Kat also acknowledges. The motivation here is again less due to the activity and more with an eye on finishing and qualifying. For Kat, however, the other great motivating factor is the new possibilities emerging as a result of her successful work placement, which makes her want to “stick at it”.

Overall, then, there was a general trend from seeing motivation and effort in Interview A as a ‘good thing to have’ towards seeing it in Interview B in the context of circumstances in which they wanted to, or felt compelled to, act – especially for the benefit of the group as a whole. The responses in Interview C suggest the intensity of the residential course, and its consequent motivation and spur to effort, were rarely recreated subsequently, and that some fell back into relying the forms of extrinsic motivation for future reward that they were familiar with at school.

7.2.6.3 *Proving yourself, achieving*

Note: most instances under this code arose from the interview question on what participants wanted to get from the course and what they think they could improve about themselves and their performance.

In **Interview A**, the main achievement towards which Martin⁵⁴, Kat and George saw themselves as striving was the improvement of their CVs. Dan's take on the course was slightly different – an opportunity for him to show himself at his best:

Dan: Yeah, because personally I don't like not doing as well as I can in certain things, and erm... I'd just rather do well at things and it just helps when there's other people there to motivate you, and...

I: And is that because you'd like to do well for them, or is it because you'd like to show them or because you'd like to show in front of other people...

Dan: Yeah I suppose it's a bit of both, because at the end of the day it's... most of the things it's a team thing, and also I like to show my abilities as a person...

However, both George, with his description of gaining his Tae-Kwondo black belt, and Holly⁵⁵ with her description of using her skills in first aid for dogs, both took pride in things they'd learnt outside of school.

In **Interview B**, most participants talked about having a sense of personal achievement following from their actions on the residential course. Kat and Steve gained a sense of achievement by helping others overcome their fear during the two abseiling activities; Steve, along with Dan, also felt good about stepping in to help the group succeed when most needed – during the bridge-building activity and before the signalling task respectively. For Bron, it was the Final Challenge activity where, ‘I show everything what I learn in one week’. Whereas these examples were about helping others, Martin, Kat and Carla took pride in having overcome their fears during through the activities – specifically, the abseiling:

Martin: Abseiling was good – I liked the abseiling. I thought I was going to be scared before, but then I had a big adrenaline rush and I just wanted to do it first, so I just... done it, got it over and done with. It was quite good.

I: Enjoy it (yeah)? And again, why did you choose that one? Why was that a strong memory for you?

Martin: ‘Cause it was the best bit of the week, I thought... yeah.

I: Getting over that rail and taking your feet off the side...

Martin: Oh, that was the scary part, taking your feet off. Thought I was going to go flying back into the wall or something.

I: Yeah, it was a bit tricky that bit ‘cause you felt like you were going to swing into it, didn’t you?

Martin: Yeah.

I: OK. And was that just fun, or does that mean anything else? Has it made a difference in any way?

Martin: Given me more confidence and less fear. If I can do that I can do a lot... more things. ‘Cause... it’s not the easiest thing to do.

The abseiling task, it seems, is designed to provoke this kind of response – it is not physically demanding or complicated, it just confronts people with their fear of heights and asks them to trust in the equipment and the activity leader, and to draw on the support of their peers. As such, it formed the most memorable moment of the course for three participants, all of whom saw it as more significant than as an isolated moment.

For Dan⁵⁶, the fear to be overcome was social – and it was one where we have already seen he felt he'd been successful. Both Jake and Martin⁵⁷ were more self-deprecating, however, suggesting that as a result of the residential they felt that they'd like to prove themselves further on the rest of the Prince's Trust course.

All these examples suggest that the challenging contexts and activities afforded by the course both gave participants the chance to prove themselves, and highlighted their failings in contexts where they would have liked to have done better. In both cases, this led to high levels of reflection and a sense of progress made.

In **Interview C** there were only two mentions of proving oneself: one from George, who again focused on finishing the course:

I: What do you think will be most helpful? The qualifications you take away or the lessons that you learnt?

George: The qualifications.

I: Yeah? What will they do for you? What will they show?

George: That I can work and that... I don't know... I'm quite knowledgeable, I know what to do, like...

George sees his qualification for the course as proof of what he's learned and what he can do – as if being looked at from the outside rather than focusing on what he can actually do better himself. The only other mention of a sense of achievement was from Holly, in late reference (because she did not attend the B interview) to the residential course – her sense of having learned to persevere in the face of difficulty.

Overall, there was a marked difference between all three interviews in terms of how participants talked about their achievements and proving themselves. In A they focused mostly on external markers like qualification and the CV (there was an element of bias in the question here), with two powerful examples from their life outside school and college; in B, however, the focus was solely on their pride – or shame – in their experiences from the residential course, and what they'd learned about themselves in the process. There is little sense, however, of this carrying over into the C interviews; pride may be a short-lived emotion, and none talk of a continuing sense of achievement from the residential – and none of anything they'd

done since which had provoked a similar response. George's pride in his soon-to-be-completed coursework was again redolent of the extrinsic motivation of school rather than coming from a sense of his own increased capacity or awareness.

7.2.6.4 *Opinions of self*

Note: this code was a late addition, bringing together a diverse range of sub-codes relating to participants' reflections on themselves and their progress – especially during the C interviews.

In **Interview A**, Steve and Jake talk about their previous experiences at work and school, and how they have helped them to understand themselves better and to change for the better: Steve talks about 'bringing himself out more'; Jake recognises his occasional short temper in response to authority – and also how a teacher at school had an opposite effect:

Jake: And with the behaviour unit teacher, obviously – 'cause that's where you go when you get in trouble – he starts to understand you as well. You feel that's someone you're comfortable talking to.

I: Yeah. What makes him different compared to other teachers?

Jake: 'Cause that's where you go when you get in trouble, like, and obviously he doesn't just sit there and raa at you, he talks it through with you, sees what you're going through.

I: So he's got time (yeah) to talk to you.

Jake: Helps you.

In both cases a change of context allowed them to see themselves from another perspective, and to be more objectively critical of their previous attitudes and behaviours.

Carla, George and Steve all struggled at times to express themselves when trying to describe their response to people in some of the group roles. This may be down to a temporary vocabulary failure, as Carla suggested, or down to a lack of relevant experience – however, there were no such hesitations or expressions of inability to comment by participants in later interviews. This may relate to their fluency with relevant experiences following the course or to increased self-knowledge regarding

their likely responses; it may also be due to being familiar with the questions and the interviewer.

In **Interview B**, the most common code was 'self, insight into current limitations', with 'self, sense of changing for the better' behind it. These themes follow closely from the last section and from Jake and Steve's comments in Interview A, suggesting that the course's radical change of environment, expectations and challenges afforded them new insights into their own beliefs and habits – and acted as a yardstick against which they could measure their expectations of themselves. This was particularly apparent for Dan, who surprised himself with his ability to simply volunteer to get on with group tasks despite having always thought of himself as self-centred (p.210). For Steve, the chance to cooperate with others verbally and actively had given him new insights:

Steve: 'Cause I just find it easier talking to people rather than writing, cause not many people understand what you write – but when you talk to them they understand it better.

I: OK, and how did this course help you to realise that? [Steve had just said that it had]

Steve: Cause I was talking to quite a few people on the planning and most of them agreed with it.

Jake gained further insight into his anger with authority on the course, describing how he can have 'blackouts' and become inflexible; his lack of planning on the course and subsequent group failures also made him realise that he can be complacent and ill-prepared, and that he would 'do it differently' if he had the chance again. Kat⁵⁸ also gained insights into how she responds, backing out and becoming negative as soon as she doesn't feel listened to. Finally, Martin recognises that his thoughts about his girlfriend's upcoming visit distracted him from taking part in the course fully. All these insights lead to the participants taking full responsibility for their own attitudes and behaviour, identify the cause and suggest, either here or elsewhere, that they would have done things differently in the light of their reflection. Also – happily – none are too negative about themselves despite the highly challenging nature of some of their experiences but rather see them as a chance to learn and change. As well as learning from perceived failure, several participants also see themselves as having changed for

the better as a result of the residential course:

Kat: Well, on this course, like, learning things that, like, changes you, so it's quite important, really.

I: And you came to realise that on the course, did you?

Kat: Yeah.

I: So there were things there that you felt changed you in some way?

Kat: Yeah.

I: Did that surprise you?

Kat: Yeah, pretty much. I didn't think... I'd like, learn nothing on it, like... the group would have changed... but it has changed. We're all getting on a lot better now.

Here Kat is emphatic that something has changed, but can't describe what. She eventually frames it in terms of the group rather than herself – a tendency we have seen throughout this chapter. George and Steve also talk about feeling they can now get more involved – but don't give any examples to illustrate this.

In **Interview C** there were far more personal reflections, with 5 of the 7 interviewees talking explicitly about having changed for the better as a result of the residential course.

I: Do you think that's something that's changed at all, your ability to listen to other people, or...?

Jake: Yeah, definitely.

I: Can you think of any times when you've caught yourself actually listening to someone when you might not have before?

Jake: No, it's just like... even if it's just a little thing like someone's saying something that happened to them or something, I'll sit there and listen.

Jake is emphatic on this – but struggled to make this concrete with examples. Kat⁵⁹ again insists she has changed, as she tries to illustrate by talking about improved communication in the Castle Drogo project, but cannot say quite how. In contrast, Holly, George and Steve are unambiguous in attesting that they feel they've changed because they're now more confident – this will be examined further in the next section. As a researcher, however, there was a positivity of attitude and demeanour in

all three of those interviews that cannot easily be transcribed, but that I tried to address with George and with Holly:

I: You certainly seem more... are you just having a good day? Or... you seem quite upbeat and confident in yourself at the moment.

Holly: Yeah.

I: Is that just a phase, or is there something growing there?

Holly: I'm hoping it's something more than just temporary, so... I'd like it if it stayed!

At the same time, George, Holly and Dan all remained realistic about their perceived weaknesses of shyness, combativeness and confidence respectively:

I: How do you think you would get on now if you got a job and you were working with a group of people?

George: ... Don't know, I'd be quiet and that... do what you're told to do, yeah.

Despite George having talked at some length about having opened up and enjoyed contributing fully to the group, he refuses to explore the possibility that he might be able to do so in future groups. While as an educator this was somewhat frustrating, it certainly suggested that their senses of personal change and progress weren't inflated and unrealistic. Several participants also talked about having come to identify themselves with new stances towards and roles within the group:

Holly: ... I don't know really, but it's just the idea that you get some people who do work on their own and are like self-employed and stuff, and get on really well. And you get others that were better in groups. I suppose I'm kind of in the middle.

This opinion counter-balances her initial placing of 'working with others' as the least important of all skills and suggests a sense of critical detachment. Steve talked about having become a more willing volunteer and a better team player generally, and Dan recognised having become a better listener. Jake, however, was perhaps too self-deprecating or unwilling to analyse himself too deeply when he summed up his role in the group by saying 'I've made everyone smile!'

All the participants claimed to have noticed significant changes in themselves through participation in the Prince's Trust course in general and the residential in particular; most however, struggled to express this coherently. Both Jake and Kat's cases are interesting in that they were perhaps the most emphatic in insisting they felt they'd changed but found it hard to say how. This suggested that they were unfamiliar with talking about personal change; had they had the language and experience to do so they might have gained more from their experiences. Overall, more suggested that these changes came from their sense of limitation or failure in the contexts arising from the course than simply from their positive experiences. The most common theme, however, was a move towards the use of a tone of calm and thoughtful engagement with their experiences and self-perceptions. Finally there is evidence here that this quality of self-reflection is something that built over time after the residential course, leading to many more insights three months after than in the following week – even if many of the specific memories had faded.

7.2.6.5 *Summary*

These interview extracts attest to participants' significant deepening of insight into their motivations and senses of identity and capability – especially in the gap between the B and C interviews – even if they often found these insights hard to express. They came to understand motivation and effort less as possessions they'd like to have, and more as factors linked to their personal and social context. They also suggested that the very different environment of the residential course spurred them to try hard and to see themselves differently in a way that previous environments such as school, and the rest of the Prince's Trust course, had not done nearly as effectively. This may be partly due to the integrated and finite nature of the course as well as its intense social bonding through challenge; if so, it makes transferring lessons across to longer-term projects like school education more problematic.

The extent to which the participants said that course offered them the chance to recognise and learn from their shortcomings was both remarkable and surprising; the commitments to and recognitions of personal change that came from these were perhaps stronger than those arising from participants' sense of achievement and of having proved themselves on the course. This suggests that the high level of challenge

was of great benefit and did little harm. However, there was also a great deal of ambiguity, lack of clarity and hedging in participants' descriptions of how they had changed and what effect these changes might have on them in the future – this will be more fully explored in the next chapter.

7.2.7 Confidence and the future

(inc. 'confidence' and 'thoughts about the future')

Note: these two codes were amalgamated at a late stage due to the emergent overlap in the way participants used them, especially later in the interview sequence.

7.2.7.1 Confidence

Note: 'being confident' was a category in the diamond 9 exercise, but confidence was also mentioned frequently outside that context in Interviews B and C. There is much overlap between these and other codes as confidence was often discussed in other contexts.

In **Interview A**, 8 of the 9 participants said that they hoped the course would help increase their confidence:

I: And what would you like to achieve by the time you finish this Prince's Trust course?

Kat: Have more confidence – like when I first come like, I didn't really want to come because I didn't know no-one... It's the same as everyone really, they didn't know each other or nothing. You've just got to like... build the confidence up.

There was a strong relation in these responses to the fear of new people and situations as discussed in 7.2.1.1 above – but with the hope that they would overcome those fears and gain confidence in the process. After this, the most used code was 'lack of confidence', as expressed by Martin⁶⁰, Dan, George and Bron⁶¹. In contrast, however, George spoke with enthusiasm and pride about his Tae-Kwondo belt certification and how that had given him confidence (p.148), suggesting that for him at least confidence

isn't a unitary quality but relates to context. Carla talked about her attendance on the 'New Leaf' course previously, which was similar to the Prince's Trust in several ways:

Carla: I remember it because before I went there I wasn't confident at all, I wouldn't speak to anyone, but being in a team made me more confident and learn to, like, make friends.

The observation notes suggest that this statement was perhaps simplistic, as Carla continued to struggle to engage with others equally during the residential course (see also Personal Study: Carla); however, she clearly saw the opportunities on that course to do group work, active tasks and to evaluate her progress as addressing and helping her lack of confidence. Steve had also found that meeting people every day as part of his current catering job had helped to build his confidence. Dan revealed a high level of insight in a description of confidence which could easily refer to himself:

Dan: Yeah. I suppose being confident in yourself in your abilities can motivate you to do whatever you can, whatever you put your mind to, really. Because somebody who's quite intelligent and that but not as confident might not show... the abilities that they've got and might not do as well.

Dan, who appeared throughout the interviews to be thoughtful and intelligent, suggests that academic potential alone isn't enough for success at school – he talks instead of his lack of confidence leading to absenteeism and academic failure.

In **Interview B**, 'sense of increased confidence' was by far the most popular code, and one of the most popular overall, with 13 separate instances including all 8 interviewees. Several of these references have already been cited, like Dan's surge in confidence following his volunteering to cook breakfast for the group (p.159) and Martin's boost from the abseiling making him think that if he can do that he can do 'a lot more things' (p.220). For Kat⁶² it was about learning to persevere, citing the bridge-building activity where she decided to rejoin the group after giving up. For Steve, George⁶³, Dan and Bron⁶⁴ it was in and through working with others that they felt more confident, more than in themselves. Here and elsewhere George is cautious about listing that confidence as a personal attribute, but rather he describes it as something he felt within this group; Dan similarly describes his confidence within the

group as having risen. Finally, Steve talks about building others' confidence in the abseil task (p.215) rather than focussing on his own; he also twice links confidence to successful teamwork:

I: OK, so you've put 'being confident' right at the top. Why?

Steve: Because 'being confident' is everything you need to be really. Cause you can't just sit in a corner and let everyone do it. Cause if you're a team you need to work as a team, not just leave out... stay out and let everyone else do it.

Steve here suggests that for him the confidence to participate is the basis of teamwork, and thus is the most important of all personal skills – there is a strong sense in the text and in the recording of personal experience from the course coming across in this statement.

In **Interview C**, there were 11 further references to a sense of increased confidence, and another 5 to 'feeling more confident around others'. Many of their comments are reinforcements and extensions of those in Interview B: Steve again talked about building others' confidence, but this time also mentioned an increase in his personal confidence in talking to others; Bron said of his confidence that 'it's better' than when interviewed after the residential course; George⁶⁵ continued to limit his claims to feeling 'more confident around other people' – although when asked directly whether he felt more confident personally he stated that he did. Holly⁶⁶, who didn't give a B interview, spoke of the Prince's Trust course as whole as having boosted her confidence, resulting in her being accepted to study Health and Social Care. Kat mentioned her increase in confidence on four separate occasions in the C interview; she talks about the introductory week before the residential made getting on with others during the subsequent week away possible, and about needing confidence to be critical of others given the risk of offending them. She ends, however, with a clear sense of confidence gained:

I: And what are your ideas now about what you want to have achieved on this course, and generally as a person?

Kat: I've put a lot of work in and I just want to gain something at the end of the day, even if it ain't much.

I: And what do you think that you've gained?

Kat: A lot of confidence.

The only interviewee who was ambivalent about his confidence in **Interview C** was Dan, who was affected by the failure of his work placement:

I: But you felt okay about going into that different environments and getting on?

Dan: Yeah.

I: And that confidence remained always through? Did you remain pretty confident throughout the week?

Dan: For the first three days I was relatively okay, but the other two people just left and I just... kind of lost motivation, really.

It appears significant here that it was the disappearance of his course colleagues that led to a drop in confidence – especially as he, with George and Steve, throughout linked his increase in confidence through the course with this specific group. He did, however, still try to put a positive spin on it by saying that he had gained experience and knew better what he might and might not like to do in future.

Overall, however, the balance of comments moved overwhelmingly from expressing low levels of confidence and the desire to increase it in A towards a near-universal sense of having gained in confidence through the residential course and the subsequent Prince's Trust course. Even if for some, like George, it was principally in working with that specific group of people, this still represented a significant achievement.

7.2.7.2 *Thoughts about the future*

Note: most codes here were in response to the last question in each interview which was specifically about participants' future plans and whether their recent experiences had affected them; given this, there were relatively few responses.

In **Interview A**, Bron⁶⁷, Holly and Steve all cite their main reason for coming on the course as helping them get onto a subsequent vocational college course. For Holly this is the next step in a so-far dispiriting process of rejection from other courses:

Holly: I was trying, obviously, to get back into college, but they wouldn't allow it. I've also applied for several apprenticeships in nursing and stuff, which I haven't been successful in...

I: So far...

Holly: And obviously I'm here now which will hopefully build my communication skills and things like that, so I can maybe try again next year and maybe get somewhere.

For Dan⁶⁸, his acceptance onto this course feels like an achievement in itself after his perceived failure at school, suggesting that his confidence and sense of direction had been at an ebb.

In **Interview B**, there were only two mentions of future plans – possibly because the recent residential course was uppermost in their minds. Both Bron and Kat said that their ideas for future work had not changed.

In **Interview C**, Kat, Holly and Jake talk about having broadened their career horizons as a result of the Prince's Trust course as a whole. For Kat and Holly, their work experience was key to this:

Kat: You've like, got to get more qualifications because I don't particularly know what I want to do yet because there are a couple of things that interest me, and just having all the qualifications is going to help me out in the long run.

I: Can I ask what those couple of things are?

Kat: Hairdressing... catering... youth worker, or something to do with childcare.

I: And are those things something you've come to think about recently?

Kat: No, I did hairdressing for 2 years, I did catering for 2 years... and I was going to a youth centre [on work experience] where, like everyone went – and, like, being around the people, listening to their ideas, I just wanted to be around the workers so that everyone could, like, talk to me and I could just help everyone get things done.

I: And do you feel any more... how are you feeling about any of those options now as a result of this course? Have you more ideas, or are you feeling more confident or able to go after them, or are you still just seeing...?

Kat: When I decided to do the... work experience down the youth centre, it made

me think, like, being down there for the week, that I wanted to do it more, and just, like, stick to it because I enjoyed it.

This is a significant expansion in outlook from Kat, who in the two previous interviews was adamant that she would seek work in catering. The idea of her having options seems exciting to her. Her final phrase, ‘stick to it because I enjoyed it’, echoes her language throughout Interviews B and C, where she talks about having learned to see things through even when they get difficult on the residential course. Similarly, Jake, while still thinking it likely he’ll go into the Army, said he is considering other options, and felt that the course has helped equip him with the skills to do so. Holly⁶⁹ also felt empowered by her work experience and was very positive about her future prospects.

Finally, Dan’s was the only note of caution after his unsuccessful work experience, suggesting that he had at least learned more about what he wouldn’t want to do in the future.

7.2.7.3 *Summary*

Participants’ sense of low confidence entering into the Prince’s Trust course, and their greatly increased sense of confidence across a range of areas following the residential course in particular, has been strongly in evidence throughout this whole analysis. What this section has further highlighted is the critical role participants believed their self-confidence plays in their personal development and future success, and that they felt their experiences on the course, and for some on the subsequent work experience, really helped to boost this. While there were some mentions of specific activities such as the bridge-building and abseiling that helped particular participants to build their confidence, for most it was the social interactions and teamwork that they felt had the most positive effect. This also has a potential downside in that several were quite explicit in saying that they only felt more confident within this particular group, and don’t necessarily believe they would be more so in other contexts – however, that doesn’t mean that they would not be so. Their experiences of successfully building working and social relations on this course may well be of future benefit even if they couldn’t see this – the tone of George’s C interview, for example, suggested a genuine shift in his demeanour and outlook that his words did not fully convey – yet a failure to acknowledge the possibility of transferability and development of personal potential is

in itself a potential limiting factor on what participants may feel motivated to try to achieve. In contrast to participants' stated motivation, however, which dropped for many between Interviews B and C, all the participants – with the partial exception of Dan – retained and even increased their sense of increased confidence months after the residential course. Linked to this confidence for some was a new sense of possibilities with regard to their future choices of study, work and career.

7.3 Personal Studies

7.3.1 Introduction

This second shorter part of the analysis of the dataset focuses on the two interviews between myself and the course leader, Ged Walker (his choice of pseudonym), on the progress of each participant, which were held alongside Interviews B and C with the students. The aim of these interviews was to get a more detailed and narrative picture of each student through the course as a contrast to the more cross-sectional approach of *Section 7.2*. These interviews were not subject to the same level of analysis as the students' interviews, but were instead intended to be used as a form of triangulation and additional insight. They are supported by occasional references to participants' interviews and the observation notes.

7.3.2 Personal Study: Bron

Bron had come from Poland with his mother quite recently and was still struggling with his English – a fact that weighed heavily in his interactions with the group and during the research interviews. He was consistently polite and friendly; although his language was limited, he expressed himself during the residential through his engaging physical humour and his commitment to the activities which won the respect and affection of the group:

G: He was also someone who would work very hard and unquestioningly when he was asked to do something. And I think that had an impact on the work ethic of the rest of the group, in that they saw him who was someone who was quietly confident and got on with the job. And in that sense,

although not a vocal leader, he really led by example in terms of his commitment to the tasks and activities he was involved in.

However, as previously noted, Bron's quality of participation in the interview series declined to the extent that we abandoned his final interview after a few minutes: he was clearly frustrated as his inability to express himself adequately and was visibly nervous.

I: Do you wish that you could speak more, or is it not really a problem?

Bron: I think..... I wish...

I: You'd like to speak more, but you also feel quite comfortable...?

Bron: [laughs] my God, English is so hard!

Ged put this deterioration down to Bron's high standards, and the fact that the course had meant a lot to him which he increasingly struggled to express adequately:

Ged: That's very likely -- that actually, the more the interviews progressed, the more he would have liked to have been able to say, and therefore the more the communication barrier affected him.

Despite his difficulty in interview, Bron did, in Ged's opinion, learn to communicate more effectively subsequent to the residential course:

Ged: I think in many ways he has been able to be more vulnerable, which I think is often a step backwards, but for him is a real step forward. He I think have taken on board the fact that he can communicate quite effectively without needing to speak much English. You know, he kind of used his body and his hand gestures, and got a lot more communication across during the residential that I think he had anticipated. And with that, he gained a level of confidence with that communication to actually be able to say to us that he was, you know, not so sure with English, and actually ask for help with English -- which he was not willing to do before.

Bron had also asked for a mock interview to be half in Polish, half in English, so he could demonstrate his fluency and express himself fully; Ged said this had given an insight into his genuine potential. Outside of the higher pressure of the interview, it seems, Bron used his range of skills to communicate, dropping the 'mask of silence'

Ged had previously judged him to have adopted. I personally remember his delight in learning how to play 'hacky-sack' (something I brought along to the residential course), and in persuading others to play, to lose their inhibitions and to enjoy themselves. Through his energetic non-verbal engagement, and through being more open to accepting help with language, he seemed to grow in confidence and to be better placed to achieve his longer-term goals:

Ged: I think his plan is to do a public services course the college in September, and I see no reason why he wouldn't do very well. I've spoken to the tutor about it, and he's happy to take him. So hopefully that will lead to more confidence in his English.

Bron's stated aim in the first interview of becoming a fireman remained, given the competitiveness of entry, a challenge – but through his participation on the Prince's Trust course he appeared greatly to have increased his chances.

7.3.3 Personal Study: Carla

Carla chose not to give a C interview and was brief and circumspect in her responses in B as opposed to A. I got the sense that, after initial enthusiasm, she thought – correctly – that interview process after the course would be looking for her sense of whether she had personally changed; that was not something she wanted to discuss in depth, or by the end, at all – neither with me nor with anyone else. In the first interview, Ged recognised this and was tempered in his appraisal of Carla's progress through the residential course as he believed that she was not committed to the process of self-examination and change it offered:

Ged: I think she started off the course thinking that a lot of it wasn't relevant to her, she's quite a closed character anyway... I think she did open up throughout the week and ended quite positively, but I don't know whether it got through to her core character necessarily.

Ged believed that behind this was a reluctance to abandon control of group situations and to participate as an equal within them – but that at times she revealed another capability:

Ged: ...she is very much "my way or the highway" you know, she comes up with an idea and she will fight tooth and nail to see it through, even if better alternatives exist. Now there was a real change from her round about Wednesday evening, where she suddenly stopped doing that and took on board that there were other opinions in the group, and became a facilitator... And at that point she really took on board other people's ideas and was very open to it, and the whole way through the planning process that Wednesday night she was asking for other people's opinions, making sure that everyone agreed and understood where they were going before they moved on to the next stage.

Ged then said, however, that soon afterwards she would be far less communicative again – that a familiar, more defensive persona would be evident. He acknowledged the strong leadership that she sometimes gave the group, but this was invariably of a more autocratic style; this was reflected in other participants' comments which praised her at times for her commanding interventions but also expressed resentment at her dominance. Even when she allowed others to lead, such as in the example above, by acting as scribe she became in effect the editor of the group's conversations.

Carla seemed genuinely to enjoy some of the activities – especially the abseil – but when expressing this in Interview B she remained ironic in tone, seemingly reluctant to display authentic enthusiasm. Both Ged and I did catch glimpses of her in a less reserved and defensive mode on the residential: Ged when talking to her about her exotic pets (which was an area of real knowledge and interest for her), and I when she joined in playing hacky-sack with a group of participants (which involved kicking a small ball up in the air together). Again, these periods of ease and relaxation quickly gave way to a sense of reserve and caution.

In the second interview Ged felt little had changed overall, but again that on the surface she had learned to get on better with the group:

Ged: She dealt with it better throughout the rest of the course than she did on the residential, but it had a tendency to make her step back from the course as a whole, and start to disengage as opposed to staying engaged but not in a leadership role. She had a kind of "all or nothing approach". But she did

make the leap of not being as argumentative, so her communication style changed and softened.

Ged still believed that this was contextual and fragile, and probably wouldn't stand up to stronger confrontation or challenge. He thought that this kind of course was hard for her as it requires a significant degree of vulnerability and open self-reflection in order for it to be successful – qualities that her educational and family history had made very difficult. Whether this was ultimately due to a fear of failure, as Ged believed, or a fear of being hurt, as I thought likely (or both), the residential course seemed to be a challenge she wasn't fully equipped to face. Having said that, there were no indications that it had done her any harm, while there indications that moments arose in which she had the possibility of insight and learning – as well as having enjoyed herself. More optimistically, both Ged and I hoped that she might be more likely to recognise and utilise such moments in the future.

7.3.4 Personal Study: Dan

Dan immediately struck me as articulate and as lacking in confidence and direction. He talked about having drifted at school although he thought he was capable. He was at first very concerned about blending in and making friends. He was also among those who appeared to gain most from the course:

Ged: That week residential to him, I think, was a key moment when he stopped thinking about it and started doing it -- and he really started opening up and started to say the things he'd been thinking, and really became a... quite a dominant force in the group for the good of the group I think. He really helped gel the group together in quite a significant way.

This reflects a rapid and significant shift in his language in the interviews from focusing on personal concerns and outcomes towards the welfare of the group. His sense of belonging significantly boosted his confidence, and his quiet, thoughtful, responsible and generous contributions on the course gained him the respect of all:

Ged: A big change. I think by opening up in the way he did he went from being very much on the fringes of the group to being absolutely at the core, you know, and forming a friendship with everyone.

Similarly to Bron, he was capable of leading by example – and positively impacted on the whole course and on other participants. However, subsequently to the residential course, he struggled to integrate these lessons and skills into his other activities, as highlighted by his failed work experience placement:

Ged: What I think he still struggles with its being able to get to that point of confidence when he's on his own. He really struggled with work experience, I think because it isolated him from the group he lost those skills – he regressed slightly and became quite nervous.... so he found some security in that team, and blossomed to some extent in that environment – but he's got to move beyond that.

Dan's C interview was cautionary, suggesting that even highly successful participation in the residential course can still require ongoing support and opportunity if the attitudinal changes are to be embedded. Budding confidence is tender – and Dan was in danger of not recognising the transferability of what he had learned. However, he remained clear that his horizons had been widened and that he was far more aware of his capabilities as a result of his week away, which had given him abiding positive memories.

7.3.5 Personal Study: George

At the start, George was painfully shy, almost haunted in appearance, rarely speaking and participating minimally in group activities. His responses in the A Interview were sparse and halting. Ged said that he had a history of neglect which had made it very difficult for him to connect with others – but that the novelty and camaraderie of the residential course had had a dramatic effect on him:

Ged: I don't think he had done anything like it before, and I think he genuinely approached it with an open mind – he didn't complain about any of the accommodation other tasks, he didn't really open up to begin with, he was quite happy to go along with what other people were doing, but I think he began to open up through the week. I think... for him the tasks and activities were novel and exciting, and certainly the abseiling was a real high for him. He was beaming – it was the biggest grin I've ever seen from him and he clearly loved it.

George repeatedly referred in the interviews to the abseiling which, apart from the excitement, is an exercise in trust – in the equipment and in others. However, Ged felt that his greatest progress was in the social aspect:

Ged: ... the cooking, cleaning, being around the group in the evenings, I think for him that was a real key part of the whole residential in terms of... feeling accepted. Because I don't think he's had a lot of that.

While some participants had experienced things similar to the residential, for George they were new, profound and inspiring. After the course, Ged described him as having “physically changed: he became lighter, happier”. Like others, however, he remained throughout the interviews very cautious about considering whether his greater confidence in this group might be reflected in others in the future; also, he made little progress towards adopting more responsible roles in the group during the rest of the Prince’s Trust course. But Ged believed that his greater willingness even to engage represented significant progress:

Ged: And I think that was the result of having stepped out of his comfort zone on the residential, and found that actually it was quite an exciting place to be. And I think that willingness to try, although quite a small step, was significant in that it is the first step towards any other improvements that he's going to make.

Throughout the rest of the course George became more open in his demeanour; having routinely worn two hooded tops at the start, he wore none by the end. He was also far more forthcoming and positive in his C interview – movingly so. Finally, he was able to stand and speak in front of an audience at the end of the Prince’s Trust course. However, Ged and I were both left with a sense that he would need ongoing support – or at least good fortune – if he was to overcome the damage that had previously been done to his confidence, trust and self-belief.

7.3.6 Personal Study: Holly

On first acquaintance Holly was quiet, slight and shy – but with a glint of humour. In interview, however, she opened up about her ambitions, her time in care and her understanding of groups, revealing her to be thoughtful and a shrewd judge of her

own character and needs. However, her apparent shyness did make her a target of some bullying, especially by one participant who didn't return after the residential course. She had some difficult moments on Dartmoor, including her dramatic episode of passive resistance (see *v.2, p.54*); I believe this was the main cause of her choosing not to give a B interview, as I think it remained raw after the course and she didn't want to discuss it. This quality was also apparent in her occasional stubbornness and resistance in the face of some activities, and seemed to be a conscious defensive technique. Holly did make two particular friendships on the course which gave her support, but her interaction with others was limited; she never engaged with her leadership roles. In our first interview, Ged remained circumspect about her progress:

Ged: I think once she starts that ball rolling and gains acceptance from the group and finds her feet, I think that process will strengthen throughout the rest of the 12 weeks she's with the group. Whether that confidence will transfer into working with other groups or other people outside this group is questionable – but at least I think having done that process once she'll find it easier to do that again with other groups.

However, Holly continued to make progress during the rest of the course – to the extent that one could describe it as a transformation:

Ged: I think Holly has made huge leaps forward. Like George, I don't think necessarily if you were to meet her now, you may not think that she has come a long way if you didn't know her before the start of the course. But her involvement and communication have both continued to improve, and being able to do the final presentation at all, I think, was a massive, massive thing for her. It's something she was very scared of – to the point where her care actually rang me to say that she was seriously worried about it. And to be able to overcome that and actually speak in front of a group and in front of an audience is a huge testament to how far she came.

Not only was Holly able to overcome her fear of speaking in public by the end of the Prince's Trust course, but her demeanour had changed considerably: she was perpetually cheerful, relaxed and outgoing, and had changed from dressing in all black to bright colours. Her sense of positivity in the C interview was infectious (see *p.227*).

Ged also noticed that she developed new strategies for standing up for herself without confrontation, such as drawing analogies between behaviours, and that this had led her gaining greater respect from herself and others. In contrast to Dan, Holly seemed to take time to process and learn from the lessons from the residential course, and then subsequently blossomed. Her successful work experience placement was then a significant boost to her confidence and sense of future possibilities. Not given to exaggeration, Ged was nonetheless clear about the extent of her progress, and that this would go beyond the confines of the group setting:

Ged: She has grown in confidence to the point where she feels, on a personal level, she is able to take on the challenge and succeed.

7.3.7 Personal Study: Jake

Jake was sociable, laddish and a joker throughout. Alongside this, however, he demonstrated in the A interview an understanding of the value of teamwork and discipline reflected in his desire to join the Army. He had been deferred in his application precisely to develop these qualities. Also, he revealed a history of real dissatisfaction and alienation at school, to which previous Cadet trips and Outdoor Education had been a welcome contrast. As such, he was very familiar with the context and activities of the residential – so much so that others looked to him for leadership. Ged felt that this, rather than any of the activities, had been his greatest challenge:

Ged: So I think he saw himself as a leader to begin with, he was excited, it was something he knew he enjoyed – and then he was, like, actually I don't want this responsibility to the whole week. So he quickly reverted from being a leader into being a bit of a kind of joker, and a Jack the Lad.

Throughout the residential Jake swung between immaturity and silliness, and moments of genuine leadership (see p.192); of all the participants, he was the one with the most of the personal qualities required to take responsibility and inspire others. His experiences on the residential seemed to help him see this, and it appeared to cause him internal conflict – he was torn between standing out as exceptional, or fitting in as a joker. While this continued through the rest of the Prince's Trust course, Ged was in no doubt that by the end he was moving in the right direction:

Ged: ...he's retained that ability to be very immature juvenile at points – but they've become less and less frequent. And certainly in terms of his next steps, and where he plans to go with his career, by the end of the course he was taking that very seriously and spent a lot of time making sure that his CV was up to scratch, and really considering where he was going to go after the Prince's Trust course. So I think that sense of his ability was key to that – that he started to understand that his ability and exceeded his current level, and that he could do much better if he applied himself.

One anomaly to note was that Jake was noticeably less engaged and coherent in the C interview than in the previous two, which gave a far less positive sense of his progress at the end than did Ged's account above; it's possible that it was just a bad day for him.

7.3.8 Personal Study: Kat

Kat came across as hard-edged and cautious at first; she was usually quiet but quick to respond – often caustically – if she felt challenged or annoyed. This caution was reflected in her A interview, where her responses were clear and coherent but rarely expansive. She did reveal, however, her fears and uncertainty over the upcoming residential course – especially that it would take her away from family and friends. She did in fact find this hard – perhaps more than any other participant:

Ged: I think Kat was one of the people who struggled most with being taken out of her comfort zone into an entirely new place and situation. I don't think that's something she's used to. I think she's built a reputation and a sense of identity around where she lives and the people she knows...

Ged went on to say that she focussed on her phone as her link to home, speaking audibly to family about the perceived shortcomings of others, especially at the start of the week – but this also acted as a conduit for her to deliver some home truths about others and the course without confronting them directly. This enabled her to release her frustrations, but also alerted the group to her sharpness of insight – a quality which she honed and increasingly voiced throughout the week. As she found her role, her participation increased – albeit with caution:

Ged: She definitely, from what I saw, went from saying no and not doing it to saying no and getting involved, to saying nothing and gradually becoming interested. So for me that process was a real shift into actually, "yeah, I do want to engage, and this is quite interesting. I can't quite bring myself to lose face by getting stuck in, but I will be part of it."

Similarly to Holly, however, the greatest impact came after the residential course – in the final interview Ged described her as 'almost unrecognisable' compared to the start:

Ged: ...her level of aggression dropped significantly, her manners improved, her temper improved, she became far better at expressing her point of view; rather than being forceful and getting upset when people didn't listen, she took longer to express her opinion and expressed it more eloquently. And all of those changes -- you know, quite gradual, but by the end of the three months it was a significant change -- that process began from the residential, and continue throughout all the tasks.

Not only did her insight into others find better voice, but she also developed a genuine interest for, and understanding of, both the dynamics of the group and the feelings and perspectives of its individual members. Kat's move from a spiky, defensive exterior towards advocating understanding for those who were struggling in, or even disrupting, the group was remarkable (see p.173); following her successful work experience at a community centre, her newfound in wanting to be around and to help a diverse group of people was equally so. The residential, and the rest of the course, seemed to catalyse her interest in others, her willingness to step outside previously tight social boundaries, and her recognition of her own unique talents. Despite her reticence in recognising the transferability of her new skills, she was already demonstrating it by the end of the course. Finally, the step-change in Kat's confidence was demonstrated by her standing up and speaking clearly in the public final presentation on the Prince's Trust course – the only one to do so without notes or prompts.

7.3.9 *Personal Study: Martin*

Martin seemed at first meeting one of the most confident participants: good humoured, friendly, open and laddish – if also lacking in maturity at times. Like Kat, however, he seemed to really struggle with his removal from his girlfriend and family – and his games console – on the residential course, and so also retreated into his phone as his lifeline. Unlike Kat, he did not recover from this initial shock and remained detached, downcast and uncooperative in the group throughout the week – something he freely admitted in his B interview (see p.185). For Ged, after a couple of frank conversations with him on the residential, he felt that at least Martin had had the opportunity to recognise the repercussions of his attitude and actions:

Ged: Though he may not have necessarily engaged as much with the others, even after, it stopped him being as actively negative...

In Interview B, Martin made several references to his perceived failure to participate fully on the residential course, and his intention to make it up subsequently. But, by the end of the course, Ged perceived little further progress; instead, he saw Martin as an important example of the limitations of the course itself:

Ged: And I think with Martin more than others it was a case of, actually, we were doing something right because he was clearly aware that there were changes that were possible to be made, and that the programme would have helped him to make those changes -- and he actually made the decision not to.

Ged further said that the course had to be voluntary to work, and that participants had to be ready and willing to change in order to progress – it could not be imposed. While Martin frequently identified his own perceived failings and said he would address them, he ultimately did not take this opportunity to do so. We both hoped that that dissonance might encourage him to take other opportunities for personal development in the future.

7.3.10 Personal Study: Steve

Steve was friendly, positive and helpful throughout the interview series and on the course. He looked forward greatly to the course beforehand, despite fears about its difference from his previous experiences, and was highly positive about it afterwards; he was also effusive about the progress and unity of the 'team' (he was the only one to routinely refer to it as such) afterwards. He saw the course as a way of helping him make personal progress. When asked in Interview A about his job, Steve replied:

Steve: I like everything about it, because it's exactly the same as what I'm doing on this course – bonding with all my work colleagues and being more confident in myself talking to the students as well. Because I serve their food, so... I'm like being more confident in myself, instead of being, like... curled up in a ball and stuck in a corner, I'm bringing myself out more.

As well as positivity and a desire to develop in confidence, this suggests a vulnerability that was evident throughout the course – and which Ged saw as limiting his development:

Ged: Erm... I think Steve ... Steve struggles with who Steve is a lot of the time. I don't think he's ever sat down and thought about who he is, where he's going and what he wants. So I think he found it quite challenging to be put in stressful situations because he had nothing to fall back on, no solid sense of identity from which to go forward.

Ged thought that Steve's lack of reflectiveness revealed insecurities around his identity and direction; this was suggested throughout his interviews by his recourse to asserting positive group identity instead of discussing personal feelings and experiences – as here in Interview B:

I: What have you got for us? [i.e. memorable learning experiences]

Steve: I put 'to be a team member': instead of being a little boy in the corner I stood up being a member of the team – go Team 53! [number changed]

When pushed, Steve struggled to account in personal terms for his attested strong positive memories from the course:

I: Why do you remember it so much – why does it keep coming back to you?

Steve: I don't know – it's just when I'm in the classroom it keeps reminding me of Dartmoor.

I: And is it particular moments that come back, or...?

Steve: All of it, really.

I: That's great. Do you think that's made a difference to the way you think or feel about things?

Steve: Erm....

I: What's the impact – what are you reminding yourself of? What difference has it made to you?

Steve: Erm... don't know.

That said, Steve did remember some watershed moments in detail when prompted – particularly his positive, practical action to solving the impasse in the bridge-building task. In the first interview, Ged recognised the importance of this, but felt that by not thinking about his experiences in detail, Steve's learning would be limited:

Ged: For that reason I think he... probably got less on a deeper level than others on the course. But in terms of communication with the group and a sense of identity within the group and kind of, starting the process of building his confidence, I think it was really valuable for him.

In the second interview, Ged felt that Steve had opened up in the subsequent months:

Steve: I think what came out in the residential was that he was very keen to please – that's not something that never went away. But he definitely grew in terms of his personality. He became less and less controlling, in the sense that you saw more and more of what was genuinely him, and less that was who he thought other people wanted him to be.

Key to this, Ged argued, was that it had been impossible for Steve to keep up a positive facade in the relentless social context of the residential course; the others had caught glimpses of his anger and vulnerability and accepted it, which gave him the space to be more genuine in the group subsequently – although Steve did not recall or acknowledge these moments. In addition, Ged thought that Steve had had further chances to play to his strengths on the Prince's Trust course, especially in the more

physical tasks like splitting logs on the Castle Drogo activity – and that these had further allowed him to express himself and to gain confidence and respect. Given his lack of reflectiveness, both Ged and I felt that Steve’s consolidation of his lessons would depend on his finding future similar practical opportunities in his work.

7.3.11 Postscript: Ged’s view of the participant group as a whole

At the end of each of my interviews with Ged I asked him how he felt the whole group had progressed. In the first interview he made clear that he had found the residential a tough week at times:

Ged: It started out much more difficult than a lot [of other groups], and the end result in terms of the number of beans [points] they got from the tasks was the lowest of any team... and there was a lot of arguing, more than I've seen on other teams – but actually I think that was a real benefit. And the final challenge on the Friday was the most cohesive of any group I've taken out.

Ged expanded on what he meant by the arguments being a benefit:

Ged: Where a lot of teams will go through a ‘storming’ [arguing] phase that will go on for the residential and beyond into the community project, I think this group got it all out of the way on the residential... I think that will have a lasting effect on the group: to know that they are capable of pulling together as a unit and achieving that.

This accords with the participants’ sense of heated conflict having settled down quite quickly into deeper mutual understanding and respect – as demonstrated in the ‘final challenge’ at the end of the week. However, by the end of the course, Ged still had reservations about the extent and power of the group’s cohesion:

Ged: So as a group, they didn't perform as well as a team as I would expect most groups to do. But individually, I think most made very valuable progress – and a similar kind of progress that I would expect from other individuals on a course like this. I think that the main issues for the group were that they didn't buy into the team aspect of the course in a way that other groups have -- and I think that's potentially what pulled down the likes of Martin and Carla in terms of not having the same sense of a group unit...

This also accords with the participants' perspectives: most talked about the value of group cohesion and identity, but not all – and those who didn't were singled out by some among the rest as having held the group back. Ged's understanding was that another further level of group bonding is possible on this course – and in his experience, common – which gives even the more reluctant participants the space and support within the group to acknowledge what they need to change about themselves and to do so. In the absence of this, however, Ged felt that many had made remarkable progress in the three months:

Ged: And I think for this group, not to have managed to create that same dynamic as other teams and still have made the individual progress that most of them made is brilliant. And I think, it is in many ways testament to each of those individuals and their level of courage in actually stepping up into changing and growing as a result of the course despite that.

7.4 Response to research questions

7.4.1 In what aspects did the residential course constitute a 'pedagogy of challenge', and how did these affect the group?

The findings above suggest that the following aspects of the residential course constituted a 'pedagogy of challenge', as described in *Chapter 4*:

1. There was a strong correlation between students' recollections of moments of meaningful learning and moments of challenge and difficulty
2. The novelty, fear and excitement of outdoor activities – alongside the scope they gave for error, risk and for conflict – added to the challenge
3. For several, the constant social interaction in an unfamiliar location was equally challenging
4. A policy of minimum staff intervention and maximum student responsibility enabled this approach; this meant that there were many opportunities for students to take and accept leadership
5. Some subsequent activities on the Prince's Trust Course, especially the work experience, further supported the challenge-led approach

These aspects of a pedagogy of challenge affected the group in the following ways:

1. Most students had 'watershed moments' that were meaningful and memorable
2. Both participants and the course leader acknowledged the large number of arguments to be very challenging but also very valuable, in that it demanded that they seek resolutions and develop trust
3. These arguments also led them to gain greater understanding and respect for others' opinions, and for the importance of learning from others' contrasting opinions in general (the *otherness* of others)
4. Students' responses to these challenges revealed what they saw as personal weaknesses that they were positive about addressing subsequently
5. There was also some sense of unqualified personal achievement in response to challenges; again, these boosted their sense of self-confidence significantly
6. In the process, the group achieved a high degree of shared identity, which boosted their confidence
7. Students linked this increased self-confidence to their likelihood of achieving their wider goals
8. Students found the challenging nature of the course greatly more motivating than their previous classroom experiences
9. Rather than fading over time, students' appreciation for what they'd learned from the challenges of the course developed over the three months between the B and C interviews

There were, however, limitations to the course's delivery of a pedagogy of challenge:

1. Students had insufficient experience in describing, contextualising and generalising some of their challenging experiences; had they been better supported in this they may have learned more from them
2. Similarly, students knew and learned little of the terminology of leadership and teamwork; this might have helped them analyse conflicts and face challenges better, and also to recognise changing and enduring attitudes and skills
3. Subsequent activities on the Prince's Trust course did not provide sufficient opportunity to recognise and embed changing attitudes and behaviours

4. This group found cooperation particularly difficult; in the opinion of the course leader, this led to a slightly less positive group outcome than he would normally expect

7.4.2 Did participants' dispositions for learning change as a result of their taking part on the residential course, and if so, how?

Generally, but not in all cases, participants:

1. Recognised their experiential learning on the course as having been personally meaningful, and that it was its challenging nature that led to this
2. Saw, especially with hindsight, that they had been broadly and positively influenced by the course – especially in learning to value others' different perspectives
3. Recognised watershed moments from the course which they linked to personal insights and lasting attitudinal change
4. Improved their group relations and quality of collaboration by the end of the course, suggesting a greater capacity for learning within the specific group
5. Learned to assign practical value to the differences between them
6. Came to value others' leadership more highly and with less ambivalence
7. Developed in their understanding of other group roles from formulaic to experience-informed to nuanced – especially between the B and C interviews
8. Came to see personal motivation as more related to their choices and attitudes than to external events and their possession (or not) of a valuable generic quantity; this was empowering to their future learning
9. Responded very positively to the context of the residential despite initial fears, seeing it as far more conducive to learning than their previous classroom experiences
10. Reflected on challenging course experiences to understand their weaknesses and subsequently address them
11. Gained new confidence in themselves and their ability to learn in the future
12. Saw new possibilities for their futures and felt they could pursue them

However, the findings suggest that the development of participants' dispositions for learning did not progress as much as they could have in the following respects:

1. An overemphasis on shared group identity, which grew over time and led to a lack of reflection on the nature and importance of individual contributions – both by themselves and others
2. Participants did not demonstrate a significantly wider vocabulary and more discursive approach in discussing their valued experiences, which limited their insight and learning from them
3. Personal leadership was downplayed and continued to be regarded with ambivalence, leading to a lack of agency
4. Participants did not attest to significant personal change in their group and transferrable skills – at least, not in those terms
5. Participants remained cautious about recognising the relevance of their perceived learning beyond the confines of this group and course

7.5 Conclusion

The generalised findings above are highly encouraging and supportive of the theoretical model. However, given the complexity and subtlety of the different facets of personal and interpersonal development they address, such generalisations must be considered alongside each participant's personal narrative. The personal studies suggest that each participant gained powerful insights into their strengths, weaknesses, areas for development and possibilities for the future – although the extent to which each was ready, willing and able to act on these varied greatly. How much these insights will go on to help them in their future development cannot be ascertained by this study, and would be very difficult to ascertain in any possible study. The theory and findings of this thesis, however, lend credence to a common-sense belief that exposure to such experiences for all, despite variable results at the time, affords diverse perspectives that may allow even the most cautious or resistant participants to develop their dispositions for learning in response to future events.

The next chapter brings together the findings from the two studies to address the main research questions for the thesis as a whole.

8 Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the findings of the the initial and main studies to address the questions set out in the initial aims in *Section 1.2* (p.12), with reference to findings from both studies and to the wider literature. Of these four questions, Question 1 was addressed in *Chapter 2*; the arguments from that chapter inform this discussion.

Question 4 was answered individually in relation to both studies in *Chapters 6 and 7*; similarly, those findings inform this chapter throughout. The focus of this chapter, then, is on Questions 2 and 3.

The chapter starts by addressing in *Sections 8.2 to 8.4* the three general propositions set out in Question 3 in turn:

3. *Leadership education can promote democratic action by applying the following principles:*
 - a. *Implementing a pedagogy of challenge*
 - b. *Developing dispositions for learning*
 - c. *Encouraging responsible leadership*

Section 8.5 then looks at the relevance of two theoretical perspectives from educational psychology, from Csikszentmihalyi and Dweck, to the current argument in order to further develop the proposed theoretical model and gauge its potential wider relevance.

Section 8.6 concludes by drawing on philosophy of education and democratic theory to re-examine Question 2, and the three propositions that arose from addressing it in *Chapter 3*, in light of the findings from the two studies:

2. *Can we teach for democracy?*
 - a. *Dialogue is central to ethical education*
 - b. *Ethical education is necessarily democratic*
 - c. *Democratic education requires opportunities for practical action*

8.2 Implementing a pedagogy of challenge

While the two courses have been individually evaluated in *Chapters 6 & 7*, the sections below look at their similarities and differences in regard to their support or otherwise of the theoretical model. This is a step away from looking at them purely in their contexts, and towards evaluating them as exemplars of the approach advocated by this thesis. Throughout, the site of the initial study is called the Birmingham course, and that of the main study, the Dartmoor course.

8.2.1. Birmingham course

The tone of the Birmingham course was set by the course leader's initial speech, when students were told that they were 'fantastic', that they'd been specially selected as potential leaders, and that this was a chance to 'fly high'. They were explicitly invited to work and reflect on their communication skills and on their ability in different group roles. Many of the shorter, 'icebreaker' activities were designed to provoke this kind of reflection, such as splitting them into groups of five, and then asking them to subdivide themselves into twos and threes based on different aspects of their appearance; the express purpose was to get them to see such distinctions as arbitrary, to become aware that they nonetheless make such distinctions, and to promote a greater meta-awareness of these processes in future encounters. Such activities assumed students' significant pre-existing capacity for personal reflection and abstraction, and aimed to help them consciously work with these as tools for self-improvement. This approach, designed to maximise transferrable skills, was reinforced systematically through group reflections on each activity; in each case, course leaders stressed that the content of each activity was less important than their appraisal of the interpersonal relationships within the group and the decision-making process. Students understood and took up this approach so quickly that some were already finding ironic humour in identifying their distinct roles within the first hour of the course.

In addition, students were asked from the very beginning to 'step outside their comfort zone' at every opportunity – especially in relation to working with students of different ages, ethnic groups and gender. As shown in *Chapter 6*, this strong theme was internalised and reflected by the interviewees, both during the course and months afterwards in relation to school activities and their wider personal lives. Here again the

challenges were presented not as the situations created by the activities, but their *response* to the situations. They were asked to identify their initial responses of caution, embarrassment or disdain, for example, in the face of new situations, and to recognise them as opportunities to overcome their negativity by fully engaging themselves, to see how this might lead to surprising and positive results, and to gain insight into how their preconceptions limit their self-perception, learning and achievement.

Several activities focused on developing particular concepts, distinctions and vocabulary that would help students become more skilful in reflecting on the performance of themselves and others during group activities and in the pursuit of shared goals more generally. One such activity explored the distinction between responsibility and accountability; others allowed such terms to emerge from the participants. The focus was on developing the subtlety and skill of the response to challenge.

Finally, some activities were introspective – such as those asking them to reflect on the quality of leaders they admired, and to identify past situations where they had demonstrated leadership. This was designed to help them to see what personal resources they had already called upon in response to past challenges, and to cast them in more general terms to see how they might be used in different contexts.

These approaches are similar to many leadership courses aimed at professional adults: a range of micro-challenges are presented which are redolent of a range of similar challenging situations they might face in everyday contexts, and the focus is on the participants' extrapolation of meaning and relevance after the event – hopefully in the form of insight into personal skills, strengths deficiencies and prejudices. The analysis in *Chapter 6* suggests that participants adapted well to these approaches, and were able to identify opportunities to develop transferrable skills. In particular, they learnt the value of working with others of different ages and backgrounds, and valuing the differences in their opinions – they saw this as having broadened their perspective and given them confidence. The lasting effect of this was shown in the number of them that subsequently expanded their social circle outside school, or altered their friendship groups in the classroom in recognition of the impact they had on their work.

However, the danger of this view of challenge, which downplays the importance of events and activities in themselves in favour of focussing on generalisability and transferability, is that it leads to less profound and memorable experiences because the participants are substantially occupied with reflecting on their actions as they happen and less fully committed to the tasks. There were examples throughout of forms of ironic detachment (see v2, p.22) that deflected the risks of full, genuine engagement. Reflecting Bassey's terminology for distinguishing case studies (see p.94), I suggest that this approach to challenge is instrumental rather than intrinsic – where the latter focuses on creating the conditions for unique and powerful experiences, or what I suggest can be called 'watershed moments': moments of radical dissonance between people's pre-existing values, world-views, skills or behaviours and the demands of the situation at hand, that lead to an awareness, whether inspiring or deeply uncomfortable, that new perspectives or responses are needed.

This 'watershed' approach, I will argue, is closer to that of the Dartmoor course; however on the Birmingham course some participants, notably Student C, referred to the role-play exercise in particular as one which had been genuinely scary and daunting (p.117) despite the fact that it was manifestly simulated. Similarly, others referred to the initial activities in which they had joined with groups of students they didn't know and who were unlike them as scary, and that they'd felt a loss of control – but that these experiences had given them great insight into both their own limitations under the pressure of alien contexts and the value of working with others. Their descriptions of these moments are much more like watershed moments – ones which retain long in the memory and have intrinsic value – than learning experiences where the activity is seen mostly as the trigger for an important realisation. The distinction between these is subtle, as watershed moments may be so partly because of the realisation that they provoke; however, I suggest that a watershed borne of challenge is embodied, re-liveable and open to a range of interpretations after the event, whereas in the case of instrumental challenges it is the insight or lesson that is most powerfully retained – and this may in time become detached from the moment or moments when these were gained. The analysis in *Chapter 7* suggests these more intrinsic challenges often involve a greater element of perceived risk, confrontation of established habits and conventions, more open outcomes, and loss of control, than

instrumental challenges – but that the latter can be more accurately targeted at the acquisition of particular lessons chosen beforehand. While it is not in the power of course designers or leaders to determine the nature of any individual's experience in advance, yet they (or wider factors such as the environment) can promote one type of response more than the other.

8.2.2 Dartmoor course

While the Birmingham course was carefully devised to cover a list of leadership skills drawn ultimately from the National College's skills for headship (p.67), the Dartmoor course had no such curriculum underpinning it. By contrast, the participants' exposure to challenge in Dartmoor was more open-ended, with participants themselves having a large amount of control over activities and organisation. What it did do, however, is set a framework of types of activity, structures of social interaction, and an overarching narrative: the stipulation to develop skills and earn 'beans' through the successful use of those skills that would assist them in the 'final challenge', which in turn was presented as the culmination of the course and the measure of their success as a group. Given this structure, the onus was on participants to respond to difficulty and find ways forward with the minimum of direction from staff, and with little emphasis on guided self-reflection, vocabularies for generalisation, or other techniques employed in the Birmingham course to help make learning explicit.

Such open-endedness, and freedom to make mistakes and dwell in challenge and conflict, was in part afforded by the hundred or so hours available in the Dartmoor course in contrast to the 14 or so hours of the Birmingham course. The immersion of the former allowed for a much less structured approach, and one where there was time to let participants struggle with challenging situations without cutting activities short for reflection and analysis. Also, the choice of outside activities in Dartmoor as the basis for the course is in itself a move from the relative physical comfort and emotional familiarity of the classroom setting – even if the activities and students were unfamiliar – to the more alien and physically challenging environment of the moor. This move also focuses participants on the particulars of their surroundings and their response to them, rather than on the generalisable nature of the experience.

8.2.3 *Summary*

These two courses were very different: their structure, participants, contexts, location and timings bore little similarity. Yet the analysis in *Chapters 6 & 7* suggests that both demonstrated important features of what is defined in *Chapter 4* as a pedagogy of challenge, and that both successfully implemented many of these with lasting and powerful results. They also demonstrated the pros and cons of two different approaches to a pedagogy of challenge.

The Birmingham course focused on activities that would highlight important pre-identified skills and themes such as personal reflection, ‘stepping outside your comfort zone’, and valuing others’ ideas; most of these lessons were taken on board by participants – a process aided by creating explicit structures for self and group reflection on activities. The danger identified above was that this explicit focus may militate against full engagement into the tasks as the focus remains less on the experience of the activities themselves and more on the lessons to take away.

The Dartmoor course was longer, more open, more participant-led, less structured, and placed little emphasis on formal reflection. Together with the immersive and physical nature of the activities, which were alien to many of the participants, the experiences it generated were more memorable, rich, ambiguous and visceral. The personal lessons participants learned from them tended to emerge later and with less clarity. The danger of their distinctiveness from everyday life was that participants would not later see the relevance of their learning beyond the bubble of the residential course. It must further be considered that these particular student experiences many aspects of the course as challenging when perhaps others would not; for some, their less diverse life experience, or fear of being away from familiarity, or difficulty in expressing disagreement with others dispassionately, made the course far harder. While the Dartmoor course was designed to accommodate this, it makes the two courses less directly comparable.

Taken together, this suggests that leadership education courses should be mindful of the affordances and limitations of both these courses and design for depth and ambiguity alongside formal processes of reflection and evaluation.

8.3 Developing dispositions for learning

There were several areas in which most participants on both programmes felt they'd made substantial progress, for example: self-confidence, valuing others' differing opinions, increased understanding of different group roles and their importance, and, and at greater level of abstraction, openness to difference and challenge. As set out in *Chapter 5*, this research was designed to shed light on the impact of these short-term interventions over a three-month period as an indication of longer term sustainability; however, there were also many limiting factors which meant that attribution of the courses' impact on dispositions for learning could only be indicative rather than conclusive. Nonetheless, these studies support the argument that both broadly support the wider dialogic theory, and suggests further extensions.

It has been shown that two aspects of the Dartmoor course in particular – the outdoor activities (especially abseiling and rock climbing) and the indoor activities in the evenings (such as cooking and planning) – led to watershed moments for many of the participants which retained in the memory at the time of the third interviews, and to which they attributed great significance and, at times, a sense of transformation. Participants subsequently associate these moments with increased self-awareness, self-confidence, and appreciation of the value of others' perspectives – despite the fact that they were often very difficult at the time and arose from conflict.

In contrast, there was a move between the second and third interviews towards a more generalising attitude from participants whereby they focused less on particular moments. However, as already noted, the Dartmoor participants often struggled to describe and explain such generalisations about their changing attitudes in ways that were clear to themselves and others; they did not have the experience, facility and terminology that those on the Birmingham course had in reflecting on their performance and deriving transferrable insights. In addition, there was far less evidence of dispositional change realised in practice outside the course than from the Birmingham participants. This may reflect the fact that after their course they continued in high-stakes activities (preparing for GCSEs) and in a busy school social environment which afforded them opportunities to transfer their learning by, for example, seeking out greater social diversity through available after-school clubs and

tackling their 'problem' subjects at school – while the Dartmoor participants continued with a relatively lower-intensity course focusing on preparing them for college and the workplace.

A logical conclusion is that these participants lost out by not having being able to sufficiently analyse, gauge the wider relevance of, and store away these memories of challenging moments and the insights that came from them. The contrasting facility with which the Birmingham course participants drew links between their lessons learned and their subsequent changes in attitude and behaviour lends further support to this. However, Howe et al.'s (2005) work has suggested that the positive effects of peer collaboration on learning can be delayed, pending future relevant opportunities where the unanswered questions that arose from that work are raised again in a different context – at which time participants can re-engage with the issue and find a resolution. This "incubation", the authors argue, is far more strongly supported by their evidence than the explanation that subsequent explicit "reflective appraisal" supports subsequent learning (*ibid.* p.67).

While Howe et al.'s research was conducted in the very different context of a physics classroom and focused on measuring change in test scores relating to subject-specific knowledge, it does challenge the hypothesis of this thesis that reflecting on past challenges helps promote learning; it also lends support to my intuition, shared by the Dartmoor course leader, that despite participants' unwillingness and/or inability to see their learned lessons as transferrable, relevantly similar situations in the future might well give them fresh opportunities to change their dispositions for learning – regardless of their level of conscious reflection in the interim. It suggests that watershed moments often do not lead to immediate change in people's attitudes and behaviour, as they are not yet capable of an adequate response to the challenging situation they find themselves in, but instead create a powerful sense of the inadequacy of their current attitudes and behaviours in that situation. This creates a desire or need to respond differently in comparatively similar situations that may lie latent until such an opportunity occurs; in the meantime, Howe's work suggests, shifts in understanding may take place without explicit metacognition or review in preparation for the next situation where they need to address that dissonance.

Data from the Birmingham course further suggests that active and conscious reflection on learning moments does not necessarily promote lasting dispositional change. It is suggestive that several participants' strongest memories were of the role-play activity, which they found the most emotionally fraught and socially transgressive of all. They appeared to stop monitoring themselves and become immersed in the activity; this was suggested by their accounts after the event, in which they looked back with surprise – and even shock – at how fully they'd engaged with it so fully even though they knew in theory it was a role-play. Here participants' sense of their own shortcomings became most starkly apparent – as happened often for the participants on the Dartmoor course – and that dissociative gap prompted deep reflection, driven home by the desire to close it. While participants did review the activity, and seemingly found that review helpful, they did not engage in the type of background self-analysis and ironic detachment during the role-play as they did in less intensive activities.

In 'Narrative Learning', Goodson et al. argue that self-reflection can also be taken too far and become self-defeating.

...the stories we tell about our lives and ourselves play an important part in the ways in which we live our lives... the construction of the story – the *storying* of the life and self – is a central 'element' of the learning process. (Goodson, Biesta, Tedder, & Adair, 2010, p.2)

Drawing on evidence from 120 adult learners' personal narratives, they suggest that, while reflection can be a valuable part of that "storying", too much reflection can confine people to a "narrative maze" in which circular reflection stalls action (*ibid.*, p.125). While this might be less of a danger with teenagers than with mature adults whose personal narratives are more developed and fixed, there are signs in Dan's interviews of a self-defeating circularity in his personal insights that threaten to fix him into a particular pattern of negative response to future challenges. That Dan was the most reflective and perhaps the most personally insightful of the Dartmoor participants would seem to support the narrative maze hypothesis. However, the lack of such tendencies in the Birmingham students, all of which were adept at self-analysis, suggests that other factors may well have been more prevalent in causing Dan's cycles of self-doubt.

Goodson et al. also assert that in many cases active reflection on one's personal narrative can be a powerful learning experience. This lends support to the argument of this chapter that opportunities for personal and group reflection on performance during challenging activities, in which both positive dispositions for learning and negative traits are exposed, can lead to conscious consolidation of those positive dispositions over time – as in the case of the Birmingham students' ongoing commitments. The frequency and sophistication of the reflection in the Birmingham course may well have been inappropriate for the Dartmoor course participants, but the findings suggest that other forms of reflection might have proven valuable.

Taken together, these points suggest that the focus in the Dartmoor course on immersion in challenging environments and activities, which led at times to fear, discomfort and to extended conflicts, also led to powerful intrinsic experiences of challenge that were formative, lasting and open to many interpretations. On the other hand, their struggle to articulate them in terms of transferrable lessons and future utility suggests that instrumental elements – particularly more focused de-briefs and the presentation of some generic terminology and concepts of leadership – may well have helped participants to understand and integrate more fully the lessons they learned. Such additions run the risk of diluting these powerful experiences by encouraging them in some degree to consciously observe themselves while they act, and to dissect them for 'real meaning' afterwards at the possible expense of the integrity of the experience; however, the potentially greater risk in the case of the Dartmoor course, given participants' lesser facility with self-analysis, is that momentary insights are lost because they are never articulated.

Another crucial element in assessing the longevity of dispositional change on both courses was the availability of subsequent opportunities to practice, refine and embed new attitudes and behaviours. As highlighted above, Birmingham participants found opportunities to put into practice their dispositions towards tackling 'problem' subjects and broadening their experience of social diversity; however, they also reported a lack of subsequent opportunities to apply what they'd learned about working together and taking responsibility on behalf of others – because the narrowness of curriculum and pedagogy and intensity of focus in the run-up to their GCSEs provided them with little opportunity to do so. The approaches that they felt they would like take to directly

after the course, such as collaborating more in lessons and volunteering at the neighbouring primary school, ran contrary to school custom and practice, and they therefore did not get the chance to reinforce them by putting them into action. On the Dartmoor course, the intensity of group interaction formed social bonds that remained throughout the rest of the subsequent Prince's Trust course; this provided an environment in which their dispositional change towards valuing others' different opinions, and confidence in themselves and their group, embedded significantly. However, a lack of subsequent high-intensity challenges gave little scope for entrenching more specific changes in their attitudes and behaviour around teamwork and leadership, and thus little scope for drawing links between their behaviours in multiple challenging contexts. The result was a partial return to diffident attitudes by some in Interview C – although the concrete and high-stakes contexts of work experience acted for some as a motivation and challenge that encouraged them to make links between what they learned on the residential course and what they felt they could do in future jobs.

In summary, both of these short interventions led to substantial dispositional change in participants – especially in relation to those areas where they had subsequent opportunity both to reflect on their learning and to put it into practice. Inevitably, where there were no opportunities to demonstrate dispositional change, there was no possibility of evidence; however, Howe et al.'s work encourages our hope that participants might still respond to future opportunities to learn 'incubating' lessons drawn from their previous challenging experiences.

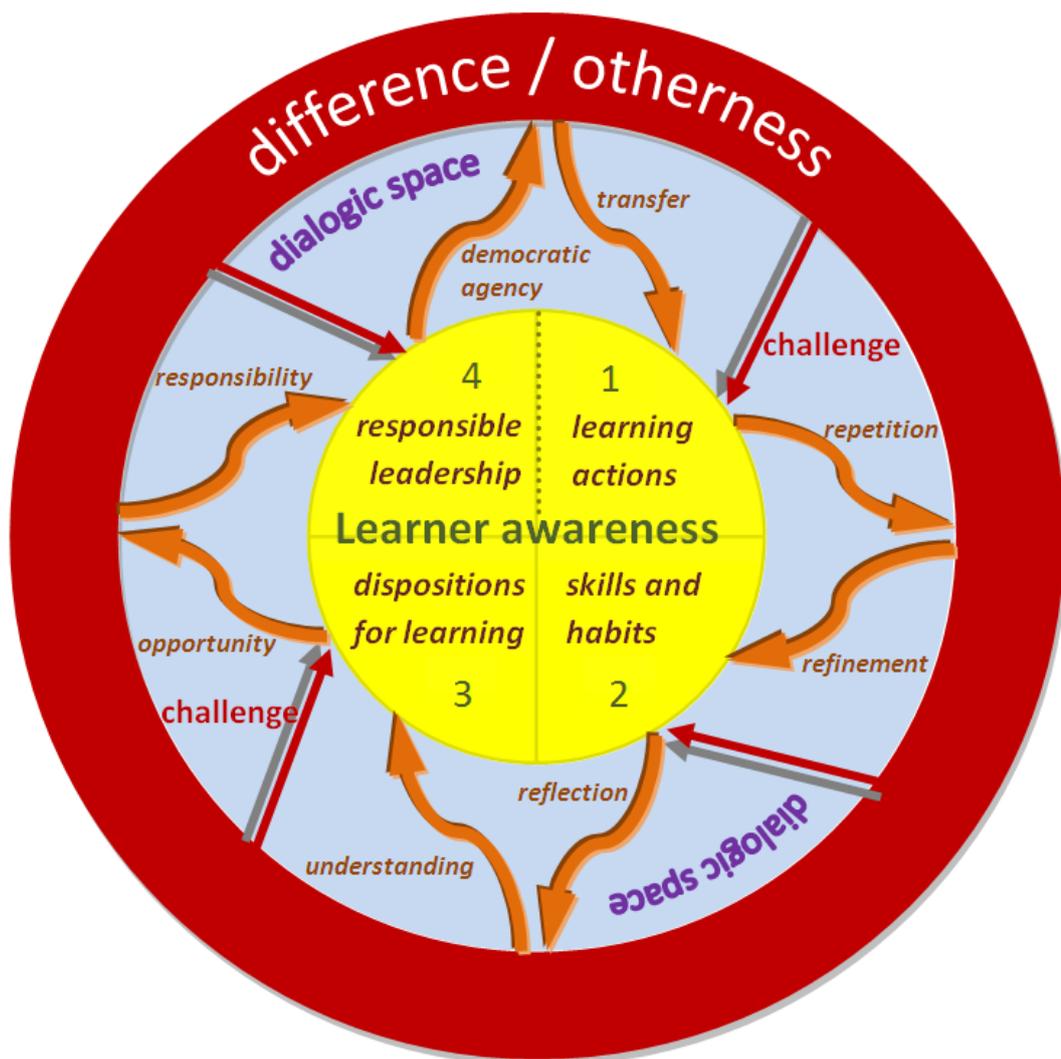
8.4 Encouraging 'responsible leadership'

Evidence for the efficacy of both studies – short leadership courses based on a pedagogy of challenge and seeking to develop dispositions for learning – in encouraging responsible leadership is limited. It is argued below that there are two main reasons for this: limitations of the courses in the study, and the limitations of the subsequent educational environments. The findings are examined for each of these in turn – with reference to a remodelled diagram for developing responsible leadership

(see *Figure 3* below), which has been modified to reflect conceptual development since *Chapter 4* and the findings of the studies.

The Birmingham course had a far more explicit focus on leadership skills than the Dartmoor course. Participants in the former had already been identified as potential leaders within the student population, and this course was part of their preparation to adopt those roles. In addition, the structure of the Birmingham course had much more built in time and space for reflection and feedback focusing on interpersonal relations, individual responses and learned skills. This was reflected in the findings that the participants having developed their dispositions for learning – and is in accordance with the need for ‘reflection’ and ‘understanding’ in the model show in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: Developing responsible leadership and democratic agency through a pedagogy of challenge



To make the jump from dispositions for learning to responsible leadership, however, opportunity is required, and responsibility must be offered and taken. Student D talked explicitly about his frustration at the withdrawal of the opportunity to work in a position of responsibility with the local primary school on a project he valued; others simply made reference the lack of opportunities to work with others in the run-up to exams. An exacerbating factor was the lack of continuity between what the participants did on the course and what they went back to doing in the classroom: the school had no plan for integrating their insights and experiences back into school life, and there was little similarity between the collaborative challenge-based tasks on the course and the largely individual, question and content-based work in class. Furthermore, none of the participants mentioned school-based initiatives for students to development active leadership skills beyond the classroom. So while their requisite skills and dispositions may have been in place, and even strengthened through the course, participants' lack of subsequent opportunities to take responsibility for change in their school environment limited their possibilities for developing responsible leadership. This is a familiar theme in the literatures of student voice and agency – as was discussed in *Section 4.6*.

In the case of the Dartmoor course there were more barriers to responsible leadership, as well as greater opportunities. Some structural factors helped to promote responsible leadership: the course's greater length overall, the time allocated to individual tasks, and the open-ended nature of many of those tasks, led to participants having more time to negotiate, try a range of options, and to fail and regroup. In addition, the nature of the activities meant that there were opportunities for participants to take genuine roles of responsibility, such as holding abseiling ropes and directing the minibus. Against this, there was a relative lack of explicit engagement of participants in reflection and analysis in ways that would help them recognise opportunities for development and develop deeper understanding of themselves, others, and group dynamics. In addition, participants did not have the same initial levels of leadership skill development as those on the Birmingham course, making it harder for them to engage in insightful reflection and understanding – and resulting in anger, blame or self-doubt instead.

Some of the leadership behaviours that participants did demonstrate help to illustrate the problems of students acting in leadership roles without the underlying dispositions for learning. Josh, for example, was acknowledged by himself and others to have good leadership skills which he at times demonstrated – but he lacked the readiness and willingness to apply them in many circumstances, and was therefore also not looking to transfer them to new contexts. He was not sufficiently open to engaging with the challenge of difference, and responding appropriately, in many different situations; he seemed to lack the maturity. Kat also demonstrated at times the insight, authority and reflexivity required by successful leaders, but did not reflect on her skills and abilities nor develop a sufficient understanding of her capacities; this led to her responses being sharp and reactive rather than genuinely responsive. Similarly, Dan also demonstrated leadership at times, but only in reaction to moments of intense psychological discomfort – an inability to bear the social tensions – rather than as a fully engaged response to the situation.

Finally, the chances of any of these lessons to be learned subsequently via incubation were lessened by a relative paucity of opportunity on the rest of the course for participants to adopt similar roles. While in the case of the Birmingham course there was too much pressure from exams, in this case there was perhaps not enough pressure overall, and participants seemed to drift through much of the rest of the course without being exposed to similar levels of intensity and challenge.

This analysis suggests that short courses in leadership education can perform at least part of the work of a pedagogy of challenge: they can create powerful watershed moments that develop skills and dispositions for learning, and they can open up opportunities for responsible leadership that are limited in time and scope. However, the level of integration and continuity back into subsequent educational contexts is crucial: intensive interventions cannot just be a time apart, but must be planned and delivered as inputs into the educational system as a whole. This continuing systemic support is vital if pedagogies of challenge are to help develop responsible leadership.

8.5 Testing the theory: insights from educational psychology

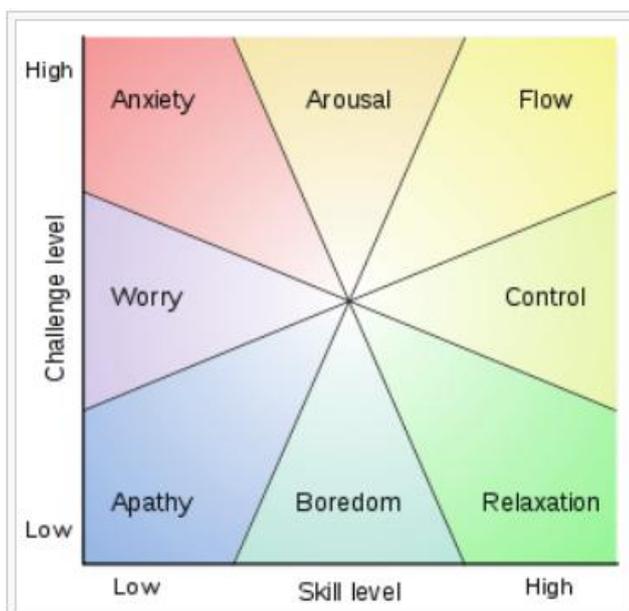
This section draws links with more established theory within educational psychology to test the credibility of the proposed model for leadership education, and to seek wider relevance for its proposals. It explores parallels with two psychological theories. Firstly, Csikszentmihalyi's theory of 'flow' as a way of understanding what meaningful learning might feel like from the inside, and the limitations this parallel in regard to education. Secondly, it looks at Dweck's theories of 'meaning systems' and 'mindset' with respect to a pedagogy of challenge.

8.5.1 Csikszentmihalyi and 'flow'

During some activities on both courses – the 'final challenge' on Dartmoor and the final presentation in Birmingham, for example – participants appeared to be highly engaged, working well in groups and goal-focused. These are indicators of what Csikszentmihalyi termed a state of 'flow', involving an equal match of high task challenge and participants' relevant skills, where people's self-awareness recedes in favour of a total identification with the activity itself (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988).

Figure 2: Indicator of mental state relating to an activity's level of challenge and skill

Reprinted from Csikszentmihalyi (1997)



Czikszentmihalyi and other adherents have argued that a flow state is inherently educative as it generates and develops learners' intrinsic motivation, which seeks to perpetuate itself by demanding steadily greater challenge to meet growing skill – and is therefore to be encouraged in students (Czikszentmihalyi, 1988). They have gone on to study the amount of time students spend in flow in the classroom in order to look at how productive these periods are, and how they can be encouraged to spend more time in them (Carli, Delle Fave, & Massimini, 1988; Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Shneider, & Shernoff, 2003).

The results of this study challenge this straightforward interpretation of flow. Firstly, classroom studies have focused, unsurprisingly, on lessons where specific knowledge content is being imparted, and therefore the teachers are looking to proportion challenge to skill appropriately. This, however, is a very different conception of challenge from the one argued for above: it suggests pushing students' capabilities within a known, bounded framework within which they already have some ability, and the objectives are already known:

Flow theory is based on a symbiotic relationship between challenges and skills needed to meet those challenges. The flow experience is believed to occur when one's skills are neither overmatched nor underutilized to meet a given challenge. (Shernoff, et al., 2003, p.160)

Challenge here is the full utilisation of students' current abilities so that, through practice, they increase and in turn afford more complex tasks – similarly to the lower range of Vygotsky's 'Zone of Proximal Development' (Vygotsky, 1978). A pedagogy of challenge, however, seeks to challenge and stretch not just students' skills and capacities with regard to a subject disciplines, but their wider beliefs, values and identity; this can't be done by maintaining students in flow – instead they must leave that 'comfort zone' and experience the genuine personal difficulty of encountering and responding to difference. This can be bounded, directed, monitored for safety – but it cannot be 'scaffolded' – as the insights to be gained will be unique to each individual. While certain skills may be honed through maintaining flow states, the dispositions that underlie educational motivation and performance are most powerfully developed through this more affective, disorientating interpretation of challenge. In the case of the examples stated above of flow during the courses, these were made possible by

the participants having gone through prior watershed moments, as a result of which they were able to take on challenging tasks that they may have previously seen as beyond them; the relative comfort of these moments was afforded by their response to preceding discomfort – such as in the final challenge of the Dartmoor course.

Even in subject-based secondary teaching there is evidence that flow may not be enough and that challenge is needed. Scott et al. (Scott, Ametller, Geraiis, & Emberton, 2010) give an extended description of a lower secondary physics lesson on forces, using a picture in which a girl from the class is hanging by her fingers from a beam. In focusing on the forces acting on her, instead of trying to teach the right answer the teacher gets the students to discuss their own initial ideas. By steering a discussion of their differing ideas and allowing the students to realise the inadequacy or promise of each, the teacher challenges their misconceptions before helping them towards a more authoritative answer. This approach can greatly increase student engagement as it brings the problem ‘into the room’. Critically, it also has another function. When college level US students trained in physics were asked the question of what forces act on a ball thrown in the air at the apex of its flight, many wrongly presumed that there was a lingering “impetus force” acting upwards on the ball. While they had been taught the opposite, the presentation of this problem in a different context was enough to make them revert to their pre-existing “naïve physics” models (Perkins & Simmons, 1988, p.316). The dialogic approach discussed by Scott et al. helps to counter this tendency by unearthing and discrediting these naïve understandings, rather than just placing new knowledge insecurely on top of them. This requires confrontation and challenge, and inevitably leads to periods of confusion; a feeling that the problem is beyond you or just doesn’t make sense.

In Csikszentmihalyi’s terms, then, this study provides evidence for the value of “arousal” and even “anxiety” – mental states in which the perceived skill level does not match up to the challenge – as states in which people are provoked to question their values, skills and approaches in response to what appears an insurmountable challenge. In such situations, a loss of flow is more than compensated by powerful insight and renewed motivation; in relation to many broadly-based tasks relating to leadership skills, flow may not be possible at all until basic skills in teamwork, for example, are learned the hard way – or until pervasive misconceptions are

undermined. Perkins' work has shown that the same principle can apply for subject-based teaching as well.

8.5.2 Dweck and 'mindset'

Dweck's 'meaning system' approach (Dweck, 2000) comes closer to a pedagogy of challenge, both in its understanding of challenge and in its view of its impact on overall attitude to learning. Dweck argues for an attitudinal scale ranging from a "fixed mindset" to a "growth mindset" (Dweck, 2006, p.6). The former is the disposition to see one's abilities as fixed, and challenges as a pass-or-fail test of those abilities; the latter is the disposition to see challenges, and even failure, as learning opportunities. The former promotes a need for affirmation of personal value through success and a fear of failure as a reflection of personal inadequacy, plus an implicit belief that the requirement of effort is a sign of low ability; the latter fosters an attitude that defeats are not personal judgements but obstacles to be overcome through renewed effort, and through personal development. This theory shares in common with a pedagogy of challenge the idea that challenges of a personal, affective nature can be opportunities for insight and growth, unlike the more technical, domain-specific challenges implied by flow theory. It also embraces a more dialogic conception of the relationship between self and other, seeing the self as malleable and responsive to difference – at least in the preferred 'growth' mindset. However, Dweck's educational insights are focused around educating students into the growth mindset so that challenge and difficulty are not perceived as failures or personal judgements. Furthermore, such is the weight placed on this very powerful insight that other dispositions for learning are not considered in relation. The findings of these studies, especially the second, are that young people who may not have this favourable mindset, and who do feel anxiety or personal threat in challenging situations, nonetheless benefit – even if that benefit is deferred. Several participants on the Dartmoor course steadfastly resisted the idea that they might have learned something transferrable to other contexts – yet the data as a whole suggested that there had been a significant shift in their attitudes and behaviour.

A growth mindset, then, is not a prerequisite of beneficial challenge; in an appropriate learning environment students may find such moments difficult, and in the process

gain insights into their own current limitations, even if they don't at that moment see the positive alternative way forward. In addition, while the learning versus fixed mindset spectrum fits quite well with the theoretical model of openness as the key disposition for learning, it is possible that students may be 'fixed' in some ways and 'open' in others. Kat, for example, was highly protective of her opinion while at the same time keen to try to understand others' points of view. In short, Dweck's dispositional model does not sufficiently explore how it might play out in diverse educational contexts, and is in danger of reducing a broad and complex area to a single quality and scale.

Despite differences, both these psychological models offer areas of valuable synthesis with the proposed dialogic model of a pedagogy of challenge; pursuing these may also be a way to bring them to the awareness of a wider audience and to wider critical scrutiny. It also provides much broader empirical evidence for the centrality of dispositions in learning, and for the value of challenge in developing them.

8.6 Testing the theory: insights from philosophy of education

This section draws on a wider range of literature from philosophy of education and democratic theory to evaluate the extent to which the two studies support the claims made in *Chapters 2 & 3*:

- a. Dialogue is central to ethical education*
- b. Ethical education is necessarily democratic*
- c. Democratic education requires opportunities for practical action*

8.6.1 Dialogue is central to ethical education

Several exponents of dialogic theory draw explicit links between ethics, education and dialogue, in terms both of theory and pedagogical practice. Firstly, Dewey, Bakhtin and Kazepides recognise that participants bring to the dialogue not just their words but their whole character:

A person enters into dialogue as an integral voice. He participates in it not only with his thoughts, but with his fate and his entire individuality. (Bakhtin, 1984, p.296)

Furthermore, Dewey argues, all our actions – even private ones – are moral in that they help form our habits, and in turn our dispositions to act towards well or badly towards others. Through refining our habits and dispositions we can develop virtues, or ‘excellent qualities of character’ (Kazepides, 2010, p.106) – but this process can only be understood in social contexts, since morality is not about who you are but how you relate to others in respect of your differences:

Morality, therefore, concerns the closing of the gap between what we want for ourselves, what others want from themselves, and what we want for others. (Pring, 2007, p.127)

These differences can be addressed, to a greater or lesser extent, monologically through recourse to hierarchy and authority where the views of one person or group are imposed on the other, or dialogically through mutual recognition of personal equality and commitment to engagement with the other’s perspectives – and therefore with their distinct identities in the broad sense stated above: “Voices that speak in connection do not compose a hierarchy” (Oakeshott, 1962, p.198).

In educational terms, the drive to ignore students’ unique identities and desires in favour of imposing what policymakers, wider society or teachers want for them is what Freire terms ‘banking education’ (Freire, 2000, p.60): the instilling of cultural capital into students in the form of approved knowledge that they can redeem when they join society at the end of school. This is akin to the accretional model discussed earlier (p.75), which relates to knowledge as a neutral currency of equal value to all students. Freire calls the opposite of this ‘problem-posing education’ (*ibid.*), where teachers and students:

...become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow... no-one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught. People teach each other, mediated by the world’. (*ibid.*, p.61)

This does not mean that the roles and knowledge of teachers and students are identical, but that both must be willing to try to see from the other’s perspective and to learn from them – as it is this relationship that will allow personal meanings to develop in relation to educational topics rather than just the transfer of facts and skills. While Dewey regards what he terms “the wisdom of mankind” as a vital inheritance from the best minds of past and present to the current youth, it remains “abstract and

dead” (Dewey, 1966, p.8) unless practically applied and made meaningful by students in the contexts of their lives; this means confronting real issues into which this collective wisdom may give them insights, and reaching a practical resolution through dialogue with other people and the environment. These authors argue that cultivating the habits and dispositions of dialogue through practice underpins meaningful, lasting learning in other fields of knowledge and develops moral behaviour – and should thus be the prime focus of our education system:

When educational institutions function as centres of dialogue they become genuine human communities of openness, respect, trust, and cooperation that motivate the students and promote long-lasting and transformative learning. (Kazepides, 2010, p.110)

This analysis is particularly pertinent to the types of leadership course studied in this thesis. They have provided intensive opportunities for students to focus on the habits and dispositions that underpin dialogue, ethical relationships and learning, separate from the usual focus on academic subjects. They implemented a pedagogy of challenge, which demanded that students engage with this process by putting them in difficult, open-ended situations where diverse wants, needs and desires arose – and had to be addressed through dialogue. As a result of both courses, participants demonstrated increased respect for and valuing of others’ different opinions. In the main study in particular, initial anti-social behaviour was increasingly replaced by pro-social, respectful behaviour with a strong sense of solidarity building among the group; this was not achieved, however, by a sense of unifying behind the same values or perspectives but out of respect for the individuality of each. Tensions were not fully resolved but were expressed in less personal and aggressive terms; furthermore, most participants on both courses came to recognise such tensions as productive to the group. In this sense, the courses accorded Dewey’s insight that all genuine social interaction is educative (Dewey, 1966, p.5). Furthermore, this suggests that participants shifted from valuing the utility of their and others’ fixed positions within a dialogue towards increasing identification with the dialogue itself (Wegerif 2011).

In relation to the regular classroom and curriculum, Alexander’s five principles of dialogue (Alexander, 2008b) tie this argument for the link between dialogue, ethics and education back into mainstream practice. The first three principles – collective,

reciprocal, and supportive – denote the habits, dispositions and consensus that are required for genuine dialogue in the classroom; the second two – cumulative and purposeful – reflect the need of formal education to focus on valued curriculum content (*ibid.*, p.28). In Wegerif's terms, the former three are required to create the dialogic space in which authentic learning can take place; in Dewey's terms, the latter two reflect the domain of pedagogical skill where the teacher can act as the bridge between valued knowledge and personal understanding. What the initial study in particular suggests is that the lack of dialogic spaces in the participants' lessons subsequent to the course limited their opportunity to embed and improve their dispositions for learning; interestingly, however, their greater openness towards others was manifested in the area of extra-curricular activity – over which they had greater control. In addition, it showed that participants were subsequently taught in ways that isolated knowledge from contexts any wider than the examination papers they were preparing for. The difficulties faced in reconciling the radical shift in values and ethical relations between the leadership courses studied and the wider context of schooling is explored below.

8.6.2 Ethical education is necessarily democratic

The argument of the previous section was that ethical education takes place in the context of dialogue by creating opportunities for people to encounter, understand and value others' perspectives, to adapt their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in response, and to develop skills, habits and dispositions for learning accordingly. This section expands on the link made in *Figure 3* between these ethical dispositions for learning, a pedagogy of challenge, responsible leadership and the exercise of democratic agency, and evaluates the extent to which the findings of the studies support this.

The model in *Figure 3* sets out the argument of this thesis that a pedagogy of challenge provokes students to develop the actions, habits, skills and dispositions for learning that underpin responsible leadership, and that this in turn lays the foundation for democratic agency. It seeks to collapse the duality between representation and reality, or information and experience, highlighted in the discussion of Biesta & Osberg's and Dewey's critiques in *Section 2.2*, by orientating students' approach to learning around entering into active dialogue with different people, ideas, situations and environments.

Such challenges, it is suggested, are a powerful way to provoke individually characteristic responses to those encounters without predetermining their nature. While many of these responses may not be humane or ethical, and thus not democratic in Dewey's terms, the opportunity for extended dialogic encounters leads to feedback that promotes fresh insights, and can both modify attitudes and behaviours towards being ethical – and sometimes even transform them. The model also suggests that further responses to difference initiated by the students themselves in response to the challenge of encountering difference can be expressions of democratic agency, where democracy implies not a system of social organisation but an active commitment to living in solidarity.

By contrast, a liberal democratic model can be built on the concept of equality under the law and the practice of cultural tolerance based on knowledge about and respect for others; as was argued in *Section 3.2*, this creates the danger of reifying liberal values as the end-point of cultural progress, and portraying intercultural dialogue as a centripetal process leading to eventual agreement around these. In threatening to close down the dialogue across difference, this also threatens to close down democratic engagement as defined in this thesis. Instead, the model of responsible leadership adopts Biesta's assertion that human nature is "radically open" (2006, p.67), and understands democratic agency not as a process with an end point but as an ongoing end in itself.

Findings from both studies suggest that many of the encounters with difference emerging from a pedagogy of challenge were far from ethical. In the initial study, the role-play activity demonstrated that students could display hostility and aggression under pressure that surprised and chastened them afterwards. The main study was replete with examples of acrimonious dispute, standoff, walkouts and low-level bullying in the face of difficult challenges; equally common, however, were participants' accounts in subsequent interviews of how such moments had prompted them to subsequent reflection, and to a much more positive evaluation of the value of others' ideas. In both studies, then, challenges led to watershed moments where the ethical consequences of their actions were made apparent, providing them with powerful spurs to change their attitudes and behaviour towards others. Significantly, both courses allowed participants the freedom to act unethically and to learn from

their mistakes themselves. The feedback cycle was shorter and more precisely focused in the Birmingham course, but arguably the experiences of the Dartmoor course were deeper and more powerful. In both cases, students were not *taught* dispositions for learning but were given the opportunity to develop them in response to difference. These dispositions are in marked contrast to the liberal perspective of working towards shared ideal values; they instead underpin Dewey's idea of democracy as 'a mode of associated living' (p.58) where it is relationships across difference that are valued first and foremost rather than the abstract ethical concepts that may be derived from them and applied to them.

In respect of linking those dispositions for learning to demonstrating responsible leadership in the face of challenge, both studies provided some possible examples: genuine responses to challenge led to expressions of uniqueness, or 'coming into the world' (p.25) that were unpredictable and powerful. Jake and Bron's spur-of-the-moment leadership actions, for example, in rallying the group or demonstrating a solution through example rather than limited language, were powerfully fulfilling for them and inspiring for those around them. On the Birmingham course Student A, among others, expressed strong beliefs in the possibility of change in her personal life and her environment, and a determination to move towards it even if she could not yet say how – yet she described approaching her Maths teacher directly to open a dialogue around changing her attitude towards the subject so as to feel and act more positively in that class. These incidents can be interpreted as manifestations of the dispositions that underlie Arendt's concepts of 'freedom' and 'action', and that appear 'miraculous' in their sharp contrast from past patterns of behaviour and in their creation of new possibilities (p.36).

Both studies – especially the initial one – produced findings suggesting that directly after the courses some students had made independent choices to seek out situations in which they could engage in dialogue with others for mutual benefit. This included the Birmingham course students' uptake of culturally diverse after-school activities; and on the Dartmoor course, Kat expressing her desire to pursue a line of work that would enable her to work with, and help, people with a range of background and needs. While this study could not collect data on those activities or follow up those desires, their comments are suggestive of the link between developed dispositions for

learning, taking the initiative to act in response, and doing so in a way that looks to promote solidarity. In particular, the fact that all the students on the Birmingham course had taken up further after-school activities in response to their experiences on the course is the strongest indicator in this study of the move from dispositions for learning to taking the opportunity to engage with different others, thus demonstrating responsible leadership. Finally, it suggests flashes of these students' 'coming into being' through that engagement, thus demonstrating democratic agency. However, what were markedly missing were examples of responsible leadership and democratic agency within the subsequent education contexts of participants on both courses; the argument below is that these courses were subsequently implicitly or explicitly discouraging of such activities, and thus greatly diminished the possibility of this study demonstrating these links more robustly.

Arendt and Dewey are both clear that such democratic agency is necessarily political in that it happens only through interaction with the lives of others in society; hence Dewey's assertion that: "Not only is social life identical with communication, but all communication... is educative" (p.22). Education for responsible leadership thus requires a constant process of communication around shared aspects of the "common life" and negotiation of the differences within it. For this communication to be substantial and meaningful, students need opportunities for genuine, if bounded, responsibility over their material conditions and for their life direction; they need to be encouraged and supported to put their values into practice – but in negotiation with others. The final set of interviews revealed the structural limitations students faced in demonstrating responsible leadership after both courses in the face of lack of opportunity and support. In the initial study, the biggest limiting factor was an increasingly tight focus on individual examination goals in the run-up to GCSEs, with Student D, for example, complaining that previous plans to work with the local primary school or do fundraising had had to be scrapped. In the main study, the key factors were: limited opportunities on the rest of the Prince's Trust course for students to practice and internalise the skills and habits that underlie responsible leadership in different contexts; and again an increasing focus on individual targets in relation to CVs, portfolios, college application and job-searching. While these activities need not be incompatible with democratic engagement, they do pull in a different direction:

away from engagement with the other, and back towards focus on the self and personal achievement within a competitive marketplace. What was missing was the opportunity to act collectively in pursuit of aims they personally value; instead, they were encouraged to focus on the tangible intellectual goods that have transactional value in society. In addition, it was argued on p.76 that responsible leadership cannot be objectively valued in such terms, that it is identifiable only *ostensively* and entirely within its context rather than being abstracted, tested and measured. As a result, students in these studies identified no ways in which their skills, habits and dispositions for learning had been formally recognised or valued – and this impacted on their own valuation of those skills. This reductionist view of one’s skills and dispositions in terms of outcome pulled participants away from their engagement with activities as an end in themselves, and back towards viewing their learning as a finite process.

In defaulting back to the focus on grades and qualifications, students were submitting back to the new authority of statistics and objective standards increasingly prevalent in education and across civic life in the UK and internationally – despite the strong argument made by many academics (p.31) that this Emperor has no clothes. This is an inevitable limitation of short intervention courses: lasting implementation of their approaches, especially as they relate to interpersonal rather than intrapersonal aspects, requires accommodation within wider aspects of school, college, work and social life; if these do not change, the courses’ impact is limited. These young people’s experience of the wider education system conformed closely to Arendt’s model of ‘freedom from’ democratic responsibility (p.32) – one that looks to defer active citizenship until after formal education.

Education for responsible leadership, then, is inherently in tension with fixed, assessed and anti-dialogic features of the wider educational and social system; Lefstein has argued that dialogic approaches in education inevitably create tension as they challenge the *status quo* both implicitly through their introduction, and explicitly by then opening it to question (Lefstein, 2010). At the same time, students on these courses found ways to internalise valuable personal lessons resulting from the courses’ pedagogy of challenge which dispose them to dialogic relationships with others that

are inherently democratic – even if they lacked the opportunities to demonstrate responsible leadership and democratic agency.

8.6.3 *Democratic education requires opportunities for practical action*

The argument of the last section was that providing opportunities for practical action is the aspect of responsible leadership that meets the sternest systemic opposition; this is especially so when it comes to the subject of core curriculum and teacher authority.

On the other hand, the examples from the IPiL and LfL projects in *Section 4.6* suggest that meaningful, collaborative and community-oriented activities, run on democratic lines, can operate in parallel to core teaching. While Biesta *et al.* rightly warn that this is in danger of demanding that students prove their citizenship credentials through extra activities (p.57), the evidence from The Blue School suggests that this is not what it feels like to the members of that community. The many democratic groups here relate to matters within the school, in the wider community and internationally; they are diverse enough to reflect many of students' interests and values. In this respect, students do have the opportunity for practical action in a way that represents genuine citizenship education as envisioned by Crick (p.50), and by the Welsh Assembly (p.55), defining citizenship through community involvement more than through pre-existing national narratives.

Such opportunities were clearly lacking for the students in the initial study. The Prince's Trust students, by contract did undertake a chosen community project after the residential course that they responded to positively; this project, however, consisted mostly of their voluntary work along externally agreed lines and did not represent an opportunity for democratic action. As the C interviews from both courses revealed, neither group of students expressed a marked sense of democratic empowerment within their communities as a result of the leadership courses due to lack of opportunity.

By Slaughter's standards, however (p.60), The Blue School's model remains a very safe one for school democracy; by providing a contained sphere for citizenship activity it perpetuates the idea that systemic change is not necessary, global crisis is not imminent and that institutional governance can be left to the older generation. It does

not suggest a move towards dynamic and responsive structures in which children learn to advocate radical change and a break from traditional values; it offers no scope for education to be the “militant and interminable political critique” of Derrida’s “democracy to come” (p.65).

The question therefore remains whether opportunities for practical action could be integrated within the core activities of curriculum-based teaching. Given the unlikelihood of revolutionary change in school structures, are there in these examples intimations of the sorts of cultural change that would underpin a more gradual transition towards greater student agency? On the ‘Futures’ course Slaughter describes, students talked about the power of their insight that they could think about possible futures in different ways – including seeing them as less inevitable and more open to change – and that they could play a part in shaping them (Slaughter, 2008, p.64). This was a rigorous, examined curriculum course that advocated and supported radical thinking – but in doing so did not directly undermine the hierarchy of the school. And, despite being successful, it was still scrapped. Nonetheless, the impact of opening students to the possibility of their agency can have more subtle effects. After the Birmingham course, for example, Student A talked about approaching her maths teacher directly to ask her to justify what the point of the subject was (p.136). Her approach was not confrontational but it was challenging; it opened up a dialogue between them that allowed them to find common ground, and in doing so flattened the hierarchy between them, making them to extent partners in a shared activity. It asked that the purpose of the course be made personally meaningful through negotiation rather than through the resort to authority. This is a modest example of practical action *regarding*, if not quite *within*, Maths. How could practical action be incorporated in the heart of subject teaching as well as made possible through more equal student-teacher relationships?

The appeal for seeking personal meaning within core teaching is at the heart of Dewey’s argument, expressed through his metaphor of teachers as a bridge between students and cultural knowledge (p.19). He argued strongly for far greater movement and integration between subject-based learning and the sites in which it is put to use in wider society. Alexander’s principle of ‘purposeful’ (Alexander, 2008b, p.28) as a characteristic of dialogic teaching could be taken as supporting Dewey’s idea. Unless

the purpose of subject-based learning is solely to pass exams, then it is to inform students about the use of knowledge in society in such a way that they can understand it, gain from it, and potentially contribute to it more fully. This presents a challenge equally to schools and to wider society: to give students more access to the worlds of community and work; to help them engage with the practices and ideas that comprise them; and over time to make their voices heard, increase their influence, and ultimately enable them to take democratic action within those wider communities. On one level this can be done by starting to present the curriculum more through practical, worldly problems rather than in the abstract; this is helped in turn by embracing a dialogic ontology that implies that meaning of such curriculum knowledge inheres in the contexts in which it is used. Unger, in his book on manifesting radical educational change, argues that well as students learning to question meanings in context, they must also learn to question the contexts themselves (Unger, 1998); only through systematically detaching themselves from their unquestioning commitment to current sites and uses of knowledge can they develop insight into new possible futures (Bakhtin, 1973).

While it may currently be unfeasible to, say, re-write a school's curriculum to focus it all around practical engagement with the wider world^x, the *issue* of practical engagement could become ubiquitous. Democratic education would be greatly served by breaking down barriers in education between the sites of theory and abstract knowledge on the one side, and of practice and action on the other.

8.7 Conclusion: implementing democratic dialogue in education

On one level, implementing genuine dialogue within and outside schools is as simple: students, teachers and the wider educational system should agree to work in common response to the question, "*Why* are we learning this?" without recourse to existent authorities and structures as reasons in their own right. That process of dialogue would be a genuine democratic engagement, and would be the springboard for practical action as students and teachers alike respond to the challenges it would make to their

^x Although the newly-developed Studio School model is an interesting case in trying to focus the majority of the curriculum around work-based scenarios: www.studioschoolstrust.org

existing beliefs and values. The systemic limitations to students' democratic action within schools discussed in *Chapter 3* would, however, increasingly be reflected wider societal structures such as universities, workplaces and the law. It falls outside the remit of this study to explore the challenge that genuine democratic education would pose to wider society structures. But if such changes are unlikely to be brought about by appeal to fairness, democracy or the logic of dialogue itself, then perhaps, as Fielding and Moss suggest, such radical change may eventually emerge in response to a "multiplicity of crises" (2010, p.167) that ultimately demands a richer, more diverse, more creative and more sustainable set of actions. The fundamental democratic question of 'how do we live together?' is likely to be thrown into far sharper focus as resources are stretched; in the face of the increasing difficulty of ethical and humane responses to those crises, we will need many of Arendt's 'miracles' – especially from the young. Our greatest duty as educators is to prepare them to do this.

9 Conclusion

9.1 Summary of the argument and findings

Chapters 2 & 3 undertook critical literature reviews of the fields of dialogic theory and of citizenship and democratic education. The combined outcome was to establish a theoretical platform – ‘a dialogic theory of democratic education’ – for the framing and analysis of the subsequent empirical studies. *Chapter 4* then asked whether and how leadership education courses might put this theory into practice; it developed the concepts of ‘responsible leadership’ and a ‘pedagogy of challenge’ as tools to help do so. *Chapter 5* set out how these concepts were defined and tested in relation to the two subsequent empirical studies, which were then presented in *Chapters 6 & 7*. Finally, in *Chapter 8*, the results of these studies were used to question and refine both the concepts of ‘responsible leadership’ and ‘a pedagogy of challenge’, and the ‘dialogic theory of democratic education’.

The claimed contributions to knowledge of this thesis are summarised in *Section 9.2* (p.284). Below, the main arguments from *Chapters 2, 3 & 4* and the findings from the empirical studies in *Chapters 6 & 7* are briefly restated in accordance with the research questions and propositions, which were set out in *Chapter 1, Section 2*.

9.1.1 *What are the implications of dialogic theory for democratic education?*

From the discussion in *Chapter 2*, several propositions emerged. First, that Wegerif’s concept of dialogic space, which emerges when different perspectives meet, is a valuable metaphor for sites of ethical education. Second, that participation in such dialogue is not just a means to pursuing fixed knowledge but a valuable end in itself that develops participants’ unique humanity. Third, that democratic action can be defined as responding to the other openly and creatively in a spirit of solidarity, where freedom is always in negotiation. Fourth, Dewey’s argument, that the role of the teacher should be as a bridge between the wealth of abstract human knowledge and the real lives of students, accords with dialogic theory. Fifth and finally, that it is very

difficult to pursue a dialogic theory for democratic education in the face of an educational tradition steeped in a foundational belief in objective standards, and a wider societal context that does not regard children as citizens.

9.1.2 *Can we teach for democracy?*

In *Chapter 3* it was argued that dialogic theory requires that we teach *democratically* rather than *for* democracy, as has been the case in the history of democratic and citizenship education in the UK to date. This distinction was then clarified by three propositions, which findings from the two studies were used to test.

a) Dialogue is central to ethical education

Bakhtin's insight that participants in dialogue engage with not just words but their whole character implies that ethical relations are central to dialogue. This was supported by the findings from both studies, which showed that, in participants' dialogues focused on goal-based group tasks, significant tensions arose from differences in personality and perspective – and that, either directly by negotiation or in time by personal reflection, many of those tensions were resolved. In the process, students came to understand and value the distinctiveness of others' perspectives and abilities. This, it is argued, is the ethical stance of openness to the other.

b) Ethical education is necessarily democratic

Both studies, especially the main, supported Dewey's claim that democracy is "a form of associated living" rather than a formal mechanism for making power accountable. Participants on the Dartmoor course, by being given freedom as a group to approach both outdoor and indoor tasks as they wished, had to negotiate among themselves as equals, and learned to respect and value their differences – often leading to solutions and achievements that surpassed their expectations. This developed their dispositions for learning in ways that were valuable in many future contexts, academic and non-academic. This was a model of living-in-difference rather than living-with-difference, of solidarity rather than tolerance, which had a significant and lasting impact on the outlook of many participants.

c) Democratic education requires opportunities for practical action

It was argued in *Chapter 3* that democratic education must not just teach about the world but involve students in changing it. Both studies gave examples of responsible leadership from participants, which were markers of democratic principles manifested in individuals' actions. A limitation of the findings in both studies, however, was that participants were not given adequate opportunities to take responsibility in response to others subsequent to the courses – and as a result the dispositions for learning underpinning responsible leadership may not have embedded.

9.1.3 Leadership education can promote democratic action by applying the following principles:

Chapter 4 developed a theory of responsible leadership education, which was then tested through the two studies. The findings are summarised fully in *Sections 6.6, 7.4* and in *Table 1*. They are also briefly summarised below in line with the following propositions laid out at the end of *Chapter 3*:

a) Implementing a pedagogy of challenge

Both studies implemented a pedagogy of challenge in that they put participants in open-ended situations with difficult problems that had to be resolved through negotiation between differing perspectives. The initial study showed that making space for reflection on lessons learned, and the promotion of vocabulary and concepts to do so, helped participants to transfer these dispositions and skills to other contexts; however, it also highlighted the risk of over-analysis, leading to shallow engagement and ironic participation. In the main study, the engagement with challenges was more intense and led to conflict in many cases; however, the laissez-faire policy of course staff meant that participants sorted out these issues among themselves in most cases and subsequently looked back appreciatively at those conflicts as having helped them to develop individually and as a group. Both groups credited the level of challenge as having created 'watershed moments' which had been the spur to their learning and development.

b) Developing dispositions for learning

A range of dispositions for learning was developed through the courses: an appreciation of the value of challenge; respect and value for others' opinions, ideas

and perspectives; better listening; taking, sharing and accepting leadership; recognising the value of a range of group roles; self-understanding and motivation; and confidence in themselves and their possible futures. All these, it is argued, fall under the central disposition for learning, *openness to the other*, which was a central theme of both courses – albeit using different terminologies.

c) Encouraging responsible leadership

As stated above, while both courses created the space in which participants could and did practice responsible leadership, neither group had adequate opportunities after the courses to develop and embed these skills and dispositions. Nonetheless, it is argued that the experience of having done so at least once may open students up to the possibility of doing so again in the future when relevant opportunities arise.

9.1.4 What influence does a short course in leadership education that implements a pedagogy of challenge have on teenage students dispositions for learning?

Both the Birmingham and Dartmoor courses were remarkable in that they demonstrated profound and lasting impacts in most participants three months afterwards, despite between only lasting two days in the former case, and five in the latter. These impacts were principally in relation to the dispositions for learning outlined in 3b above, and were generally experienced as ‘watershed moments’ by participants where they came to recognise in the face of difficulty the inadequacy of their current responses. There was no substantial advance three months later in dispositions for learning around group work and responsible leadership; this is unsurprising given the lack of opportunities in subsequent contexts described above. Nonetheless, both courses suggested that a pedagogy of challenge can be disproportionately powerful, wide-ranging and lasting in its effects in relation to the equivalent time spent in a traditional classroom setting.

9.2 Contribution made to field of study

Contributions to the field are claimed in two areas:

9.2.1 Theoretical contribution

Chapters 2 & 3 set out a new dialogic theory of democratic education; this is based on the study of selected major figures in the fields of dialogue and democratic action, and on a review of education for citizenship and democracy in Britain, past and present. While it may have wider relevance, this theory is based in the context of British secondary education. This theory is tested by the two subsequent empirical studies and refined in light of their findings in *Chapter 8*.

Chapter 4 sets out definitions for the concepts of ‘responsible leadership’ and ‘a pedagogy of challenge’ in relation to leadership education for democratic action. On this basis it develops a new theoretical model, which is again tested and refined in *Chapter 8* in light of the empirical studies. An early version of this model and the results of its testing in the initial study have been published in a peer-reviewed journal (see p.15).

9.2.2 Empirical contribution

Both studies found substantial and reliable empirical evidence for the lasting effects of short-term courses in leadership education on participants’ skills and dispositions for learning; these are reported in detail in *Chapters 6 & 7*. In addition, the immediate effects of these courses that did not endure are reported. This evidence is also used to test the proposition that the courses promote responsible leadership and democratic action. The findings, which largely support but partly challenge the proposition, were presented in *Chapter 8* and summarised above.

9.3 Limitations of the findings

The findings from this study, it is hoped, are reliable and persuasive; however as case-studies these findings are not designed to be generalised across other contexts. Similarly, while they provide valuable evidence for testing and refining the proposed theories, more studies are required to strengthen those theories before asserting their utility elsewhere. In both studies the strength of the data lies in the context-specific detail, which allows inductive links to be drawn between evidence and theory – both across the cohort and across time. This provides internal reliability; external reliability can only come through wider application of similar approaches and from similar

findings emerging elsewhere. However, it is hoped that disseminating these theories and findings will generate some interest among practitioners and even policymakers, and that this turn might help promote wider studies and innovative teaching practice.

In terms of internal reliability, this study falls short of providing strong evidence for the link between a pedagogy of challenge on the one hand, and developing lasting dispositions for responsible leadership on the other; as is argued above, these high-level skills are a challenge to develop in educational conditions where opportunities for group engagement on challenging tasks that involve dialogue across difference are limited. It also argued, however, that the dispositions that underpin responsible leadership were developed on these courses. In a rapidly changing educational context in the UK, I hope that opportunities will arise to work with innovative schools which are looking to develop much more dynamic links with the wider community, and which may thus provide their students with opportunities to continue to develop the skills and dispositions of responsible leadership.

Other weaknesses in design, implementation and analysis reflect, I hope, no more than the inevitable tensions and practical difficulties that emerge when undertaking qualitative research; I have tried to address these fully in *Chapter 5*.

9.4 Recommendations for further research

Many outdoor education and leadership courses incorporate elements of a pedagogy of challenge and look to develop what here are termed 'dispositions for learning'. In relation to these, further research is therefore recommended:

- 1) Would a reframing of existing leadership education courses around the theoretical model proposed in *Chapter 4* enhance the experiences and outcomes for participants?
- 2) Would the incorporation of terminology and ethical/philosophical insights from this thesis as taught elements during such courses enhance the experience and outcomes for participants?
- 3) Would either of the above enable greater transferability of skills, dispositions and insights into subsequent academic and working contexts?

In both cases, a trial course developed in negotiation between researchers and partner organisations, and using a similar methodology to the two studies, would help to answer these questions. Results could be compared with the studies described here, and against experienced course leaders' experiences.

A further and broader question for exploration is how the insights from this thesis might inform mainstream subject-based classroom practice. This raises, among others, the following possible research questions:

- 1) What would a pedagogy of challenge look like within mainstream subject-based disciplines in secondary education?
- 2) Can the principles of dialogue for democratic action be embedded within mainstream classroom pedagogy?

While these questions raise a host of difficulties which were tackled in *Chapters 2 & 3*, I am currently undertaking relevant research in secondary schools. The CamTalk project, based at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, is looking into the nature and role of dialogue both within and across secondary subject disciplines – and providing professional development courses for teachers to enable them to engage with dialogic theory and interpret it within their practice. A recently submitted article (Higham, Brindley and van de Pol, in press) interviewed six leading researchers in the field about the difficulties, possibilities and affordances of dialogic teaching in secondary schools. Much in line with the findings of this study, it suggested that the aim of developing positive, respectful and non-hierarchical relationships between students and teachers will be easier to achieve – while systemic change that affords students opportunities to integrate their curricular learning with practical action within the school and wider community will be much harder. Further research into the nature of dialogues within particular subject disciplines, and how to represent them to students as personally relevant and empowering, is ongoing.

Developing pedagogy for responsible leadership:
Towards a dialogic theory of democratic education

Volume 2 of 2

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(signature)

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Appendix A: Search model for leadership courses

Aim

To identify suitable providers delivering short 'leadership' education courses in the UK, and to identify approximately 1,000 research participants from those courses – including around 50 for in-depth, interview-based study.

Objectives

1. to create a comprehensive database of relevant providers in the UK
2. to determine from the providers' literature common definitions and approaches to leadership education, and to sub-categorise them accordingly
3. to select providers' courses which are methodologically compatible with the research project, and will allow the study of at least 1,000 students, plus 1,000 control students from their schools
4. to enter into agreement with providers who are willing to (i) collaborate in the research project and (ii) help negotiate with the participants' educational institutions.

Methodology

Determining relevance criteria

Given that 'leadership' is a contested concept, and that there is a wide range of potentially relevant provision, this study will generate common criteria for identifying relevant leadership education based on both the current academic literature and on the literature from the providers themselves. This will be an iterative process whereby the criteria become more focused as the search progresses; this precludes the disqualification of potentially relevant providers on the basis of criteria derived from the academic literature alone.

Criteria drawn from an analysis of the academic literature on the aims of leadership education courses (see Background section) include the development of the following:

- self-knowledge and confidence
- attitude to learning
- communication skills
- taking responsibility

In addition, the following criteria were determined on the basis of the project brief and methodological considerations:

- Challenging extra-curricular activity
- Working with 13-16 year-olds
- 2-5 day courses

- Courses starting between March and July 2010

Initially, providers were asked to self-select, stating in response to an initial contact whether they felt that their programmes met the above criteria. Where they responded positively, more detailed negotiations ensued.

Searching for relevant providers

The following methods were used:

1. *Following leads derived from the background research:* for example, investigating the *National College for School Leadership*, through whom we identified the provider for the pilot study
2. *Web search using combinations of key terms:* 'leadership', 'leadership education', 'informal education', 'communication skills', 'outdoor education', 'adventure education', 'responsibility', 'confidence'
3. *Following links from organisations identified above:* either website links or through personal contact
4. *Contacting authorities in areas of outdoor education provision:* for example, the National Park Authorities
5. *Contacting authorities governing extra-curricular activities:* such as the *Council for Learning Outside the Classroom*

Reflecting the breadth and scope of provision

In order to ensure that the participants selected for both quantitative and qualitative research reflect to some extent the breadth and scope of provision, rather than being selected on the basis of opportunity sampling, 'first come, first served', or of researcher preference, the potential providers have been sub-categorised on the basis of their stated approach. Courses and participants will be selected from across these categories to ensure that the full range of 'leadership' courses for teenagers is broadly represented in the study. In response to a literature survey (see Background), the following categories were determined:

1. ... (e.g. indoor-based, tightly-focused activities)
2. ... (e.g. outward-bound, open-ended, physical activities with reflection time)
3. ... (e.g. remedial, urban community-service-based activities)

Of these, examples of the first two categories were selected on the basis of opportunity for extended study.

Appendix B: Consent form to students, Initial study

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

If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

all information I give will be treated as confidential

the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
(Signature of participant)

15/07/2009
.....
(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)

Contact phone number of researcher(s): 01626 865621

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

.....
OR
.....

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix C: Consent form to students, Initial study

Dear

My name is Rupert Higham, and I am a doctoral student and Associate Lecturer at the University of Exeter. I am writing to ask for your permission to allow _____ to take part in a research project which will look in detail at the results and potential benefits of the leadership training course which _____ will be involved on the 13th and 14th of July.

This research would look at whether students' attitudes toward learning change as a result of the course, and whether this has any effect on their academic performance and on their participation in the wider life of the school.

For this research I am asking of 5 students who are doing the leadership training to agree to a series of 3 interviews – one just before the course, one just after, and one at the end of the autumn term this December. Also in December, I will interview their form tutor and one of their subject teachers. Finally, I will look at academic performance data from the end of this school year and from the end of next term.

Both I and George Dixon International School believe that this would be an important opportunity to see whether the unique leadership training programme that _____ will take part in is of real and lasting benefit. In addition, we also believe that those who take part in the interviews will benefit further by having the opportunity to reflect upon the new skills and understandings they will develop on the course, and to see how they might apply these to their lives at school.

As a qualified English teacher myself, I would like to assure you that if _____ agrees to take part in the research, and if you allow him / her to do so, we will ensure that the experience will be a valuable one, and that he /she will be safe throughout. All data will remain anonymous, and will not be used by the school or anyone else to check up on students. During the interviews, which will be relaxed, friendly and last about ½ an hour each, students will have a learning mentor with them if they wish. If any academic papers are produced as a result of this research, all names will be changed. In addition, all students will get the chance to see the sections where their interviews have been used and will be given the opportunity to withdraw any statements they have made before publication, and they will be allowed to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Personally, I believe that the kind of training that _____ is taking part in can be extremely valuable to individuals and their communities. I am hoping that this research can help make the case for similar opportunities being made available to many more students around the country.

I do apologise for asking for your permission at such short notice – this is because of the recent closure of the school.

Should you have any questions, I have listed my contact details below. In addition, I will be coming to George Dixon school on Wednesday 8th July, and would be glad to arrange to meet you then.

If you consent to _____ taking part in the research, please sign the slip at the bottom of the page and return it straight away.

Yours sincerely,

Rupert Higham

telephone: 01626 865621

e-mail: r.j.higham@exeter.ac.uk

I agree to allow _____ to participate in the University of Exeter's research project between July and December 2009.

Signed: _____ (parent / guardian)

Date: _____

Appendix D: Example interview, Initial study

George Dixon Interviews: Interview B – Student A

I: What were your impressions of the course over the last couple of days?

A: I thought it was really good. [yeah?] I met, like, some of the Sixth Formers that, I saw around school but I didn't really know.

I: So it was getting to meet different people you enjoyed?

A: Yeah. I came out of my comfort zone and it did feel kind of weird. Like not going with [Student B] and [Student E], it's like, separated from the group, getting on with what we needed to do.

I: OK. What things most took you out of your comfort zone, would you say?

A: The activities, like... when we were told to do the activity I'm not used to someone telling me to do this – I felt really like, scared... I didn't know how other people would react to it.

I: OK so the activities, they were scary because they were different to the normal things you'd be asked to do in class? [Yeah] How were they different?

A: It's like, the one where we did the train – you had to like, work as a team, not by yourself or anything.

I: 'Cause you said, when we first talked, you said you're quite happy, normally, to work by yourself. You're quite happy to take a book and go and read, yeah? So that was challenging for you, was it? [Yeah] Can you give me a couple of moments, maybe, that stick in your head, where you felt quite challenged?

A: When we had to do the presentation I was scared then. I didn't know how other people would react to how it was. When we got put into different groups I thought it was going to be in our age groups but we got put into different groups. That actually threw me off because I didn't know what was going to happen, what I was going to do, and who I was going to meet. And if they don't like me or if I like, do something wrong or something.

I: OK. And what about the other activities? Which of those would you pick out as when you were outside your comfort zone?

A: When we had to do the bid [oh yeah?]. And like, we were sitting there... and I wanted to say something but I couldn't – no words were able to come out until they were like saying that he hadn't got the bid. And I thought, 'Oh God, they're going to start... start moaning or something'. And I thought, 'Oh God', I can't do this'.

I: So that was a little bit scary, was it? [Yeah] What was scary, do you think? What were you afraid of?

A: It's like... the reaction, because... you turned round and said 'what?!' and I was like.... Oh God what are they going to say after they say that?

I: OK. And that felt really different from the sort of situation you'd normally have in the classroom? [Yes]. So... the things that were most challenging, then, were where you didn't know how other people were going to react? [Yeah]. That's interesting.... Alright then. We'll come back to that a bit later. But having a look at these [*at the motivation cards*] again, which we talked about your motivations for learning, I was just wondering if your thoughts about these might have changed, or whether you might change the order of any of them in the light of what happened – or whether that still represents pretty much what you think.

A: [*swaps clubs/trips/societies with favourite subjects*]

I: Why did you choose those to swap?

A: Cause we're going on an Alton Towers trip I thought, oh that's a good trip. I was thinking about favourite subjects, and they don't like, pop into my head, so...

I: OK. So what trip were you thinking about? [Alton Towers] Alton Towers. Did you do that recently?

A: No – we're going on Friday. I can't wait.

I: And that to you is more motivating than your favourite subjects at the moment [yeah]? OK – but the rest still feels pretty much the way this is. Thanks. Let's just move on to more questions. So when we talked last week we spoke about the amount of control you feel around school, the amount of say you have about your life in school. Do you feel the same or do you feel differently about that after the course?

A: After the course people start to listen to my opinion so I think I've got a little bit of say in everything. [Mr L] is starting to talk about books to me and what books you think kids will like in the school. I've started talking to the school council about different things that we need in the school...

I: You've done that already?

A: Yeah (laughs). Cos we had to get it in for next term. I'm thinking to go about [Miss V] because he's like the head of trips – to get a trip to a museum or somewhere cos I know we haven't been on a trip like that in really ages – cos in Year 8 that's like the last time I went to a museum. So I'm like, trying to get my opinions in, what I think.

I: So you feel like you have more say now – do you feel that people are looking at you differently, or thinking about you differently?

A: Yeah. My form tutor this morning said that, '[Student A], why are you so quiet? You're normally loud'. I'm just like, I'm looking back on the last 2 days, and he says 'alright' and he just left me – and I was just thinking about what's changed me, what's made me think of things, 'Ah yeah – I'm gonna do that later on in life'.

I: OK. Let's move on then. Looking back at what you said last week was challenging in school, do you still feel the same way, or do you feel differently?

A: Still the same way because I just saw the whole example with the boy and the make-up stuff. And they're like, really hung up on famous people like today, Colin Jackson (who came to visit the school) they were screaming mad, I was like, 'why are you screaming? He's just going to turn round and say, "OK – screaming girls" and walk as far away...' Screeching girls is the most scariest a boy, a man or a girl could ever see in their life. [laughs]

I: So that's confirmed your idea about some of the culture of girls in the school [yeah]? But that was there before wasn't it?

A: I think they're just proving that that's how they are, really.

I: OK but you kind of knew that already, so the leadership course hasn't changed your view of that. Has it make you think differently about how it could be tackled?

A: Yeah. I was talking to my friend today who acts the same way, and for the first time in ages she talks about problems, yeah, she's having at home, and I sat there and listened to her and I told her that it's alright: 'just don't think about boys and make-up, think about your brains and all that you get'. She's focusing on her grades and she's coming over to mine today so she can do some revision with me. And she's like, OK, so she's taking time out from that group so she can get her grades up.

I: Do you think that ability to listen and encourage people is something that has changed with the course?

A: Yeah because I've learned to listen to people because I'm normally like, if someone says something I say 'stop – let me say something!' I think the course has made me listen to people, and like, understand what they're going through, and what their opinions are as well.

I: That's interesting because a lot of people remembered that word 'empathising', didn't they? Cos when I was sitting there I didn't think it stood out, but a lot of people at the end in their presentations were talking about that – empathising with people – and that seems to have...

A: I used 'accountability' today in P.E. and Spanish!

I: Did you (laughs)? And how did that go down?

A: Erm... [Mr A] was telling us a little bit, I said, 'you should be *accountable* to yourself' – and he said, 'ah, so you remember something from yesterday?' And I went, 'yeah,' and my friend asked me, 'what does that mean?' And I said, 'you need to take responsibility' (smiles) [laughs].

I: That's great. So do you think you'll act differently in the school community generally [yeah] as a result of that course?

A: I've started listening to people, taking their opinions down, feeding back, with lots of people, and really just trying to get myself in to groups where I can say my word and what the school needs, and how we're going to change it.

I: It's interesting, so you're talking about listening on the one hand, but also then putting across your opinions on the other [nods]? That's really interesting. Right then – did you learn anything new about how and when you learn best? Cause we talked about that last week, didn't we, and you said, generally, to learn by yourself. Has the course shown you anything else – or is it still the same?

A: Yeah, cause we worked in a group, and how to understand other people, how... if they like put an idea in, how to not say, 'no I don't want that idea', and like, to put that idea in, and put something towards it.

I: So again that's the idea of listening to other people first to help develop your own opinion? OK, are there any other ways in which it might affect your learning?

A: Yeah, I'm more getting into teams now, like in P.E. today we had to do trampolining. I didn't stand by myself and like, stare at the wall. I got into the team and like, helped out, and like, showed people how to do stuff.

I: And being in the team, then – it sounds like you've changed your attitude towards....

A: Yeah, it does give me confidence so I can talk to people more properly.

I: Cause is trampolining something you normally enjoy [yeah]? Oh it is. But why is it before that you used to, like, look at the wall?

A: Because I didn't used to talk to them because they used to like, get on my nerves the whole time, like, 'Oh, [Student A], you hold this and I'll do this', I'm like, 'can I have a say?' And then just, go off, and I'd just stand there and look at the wall.

I: OK. So how were you able to be with them differently today? Do you see what I mean? So that they didn't get on your nerves, or you didn't get on their nerves, maybe?

A: I think because they understand me a bit more. Now I've done the training and I've talked to them about how I am and why I act the same way, I think they've learned

that I'm not in that key role where I was following – that I'm my own individual person. So I think they've learned that I'm different from them.

I: You've already talked with them about all of that today? Wow, you've been busy, huh? (Laughs). OK that's great. So your lessons about how you learn best are really about teamwork for you, yeah [nods]? So last time we spoke you said that there are some subjects you really like, and maybe one – P.E. – that you weren't so keen on. After the course has your understanding of why you like the ones you do and why, perhaps, you're not so keen on the others – has your understanding of that changed?

A: Yeah, like P.E. and maths now... I was sitting down with my teacher this morning in form time, and I asked them to explain to me, what is maths about? So I think I've taken a liking to maths now since that talk this morning because, it's not just numbers that you're learning about, it's other stuff as well. And with P.E., in trampolining as well in first period, Miss told me yeah, that if you like a subject it's like what you like actually *inside* the subject – that you can't just say that you *hate* P.E. It's like, you have to give an individual answer to what you dislike about it. But now, the subjects like, tap into the stuff in P.E. that I do love, so I can't say that I dislike P.E. altogether.

I: So you come to see subjects differently [yeah]? To sort of, break them down, and see all of the different bits inside rather than say, 'I don't like that' as a whole thing [yeah]. And what do you think it was on the course that helped you to make those distinctions?

A: Just trying to be myself and like – I know I can be confident and talk to a teacher, and not thinking that the teacher's going to laugh at you. You like, say that you see or something like that.

I: That's interesting, so – are you suggesting that part of what was behind you not liking some subjects was a lack of confidence – that you felt that a teacher would think that you were no good at it, yeah?

A: It's kind of like a fear that I have, that I couldn't really talk to teachers.

I: OK – especially in some subjects like maths. And so you chose to talk to your maths teacher today [yeah]. And what did you say to your maths teacher?

A: I told my maths teacher, 'I dislike mathematics', and he said, 'yeah I know – but you still get on with the work and try your hardest and learn about it'. And afterwards I asked him to explain me different key points about maths, and he told me that maths isn't just about numbers, it's about different things as well. That you can learn and take on to your future career.

I: OK. So what did you take away from that?

A: I took away that of course you're going to need maths to go through the world, and it doesn't matter how hard it is, there's always an easier option to do it in.

I: So that you can find new ways to do it without assuming...

A: Getting in a pickle...

I: (laughs) Without getting in a pickle! And maybe before you'd have assumed you couldn't do it because it was maths [yeah]? But now it's not all just the same thing – some things are easier than others, and you can find a way [yeah]. That's fine – I understand. OK that's great.... I'm going to come back in a few months, maybe like November, and I said to you last week that I'd like to interview one teacher. Would you be happy with me interviewing a teacher from one subject at the end of next term to talk about your progress in that subject? Which one?

A: [Mr C] my ICT teacher.

I: So it may be him next year or it might not be.

A: Yeah, I might have him for business.

I: OK, but your ICT teacher next term. And is that because you've made any decisions about how you're going to approach ICT differently, for example?

A: Me and [Mr C yeah], have connected ever since Year 8, he has a bond with me. So like every morning he says, 'good morning', and he has a little talk with me about what happened the day before or something. So I'm able to talk to him about things I think – and he knows what I'm like already. It's like he describes himself in, like, few words to me, and when I said, 'of course I was loud last year', he said, 'I can't believe you just said that', and I'm like, 'why?' 'You called yourself loud!' He really does make me laugh – he does actually give me confidence in myself. And like every morning I've always got a smile on my face because I've talked to [Mr C].

I: That's nice. So he's someone you respect as a person. But I guess what I'm asking from the point of view of my research, I need to interview whoever's teaching you in a certain subject next year, and I want that subject to be one you've chosen because you think... you might change your approach in that subject or do something differently – do you see what I mean [yeah]? So you were talking about maths and P.E. for example as ones where you thought there could be an improvement, or we could even look at subjects like the ones you do like most – textiles and drama – do you think those ones where you're already doing well, do you think you might change your attitude towards those as well – or do you think that they'll stay the same?

A: With drama, I'll know I'll stay the same – I'll still do those projects I'm doing out of school. But with textiles, even though I'm doing it next year, I'm not going to change my approach to that because I absolutely love it anyway, so...

I: You're happy with your approach to that subject. So maybe it might be appropriate to talk to either your maths or your P.E. teacher next term? And see if... because you've said you might change your approach to those through teamwork and through

breaking the subject down. Can you think of one of those you'd like me to speak to? Either your maths teacher or your P.E. teacher?

A: I don't mind. I'll still have the same P.E. teacher, we never change P.E. teacher.

I: You never do. OK thanks then. So has the course altered your outlook in any other way, apart from just your academic subjects?

A: When I first became a leader it's like, boss people about – I thought, I'm queen here, I get to do what I want. And then, I think I've learned that, through different courses, and this course yeah, that being a leader isn't being someone special, it's being someone that helps out in different ways.

I: Great, so, it's about helping first?

A: Yeah. It's taught me to, like, to give not to take that much.

I: That's really interesting. So, maybe in the past you associated leadership with being bossy and telling people what to do. How would you sum up what leadership means to you now?

A: Erm... I think it's like helping other, not just to help yourself.

I: That's great, OK thank you. And do you think that will make any difference on your life outside school?

A: Yeah cause, now since the last 2 courses, from Monday night, I came in the house and ran straight upstairs and sat in my room, thinking about the activities and my mum thought something was wrong with me. I went, 'naa, I'm just thinking to myself'. On like, the Tuesday, talked to mum, showed her my certificate, and told her what I'd been doing over the last couple of days, and she said, 'that's why you were so quiet'. Even my uncle, I went up to my uncle's house on Monday, and like as well he said, 'I've seen a completely different change from you, [Student A].

I: What did they say that was different about you?

A: I don't boss round the little kids no more – I'm more interactive with the kids, like I talk to my uncle now. Cause I used to just say 'hello' – now I help out, I like, just take a bit of charge so I can help out my mum.

I: So that's something you're intending to do in the future? Help out more with the family? Great.... that means a lot to you, doesn't it [nods]? OK that's great. Is there anything else you'd like to ask me, or anything else you'd like to say?

A: No, really, but thank you for letting me do this experience.

I: Has it been helpful to you?

A: Yeah. It's like, it's shown me different kinds of things that I can do, and that I can take and show my mum about, and like tell my family so I can start interacting with my family, 'cause I don't really talk to my family. I'm like the only kid, yeah, that doesn't talk to my uncles and aunties – I just sit there reading a book or something, or drawing?

I: Why would you think that you haven't spoken to them so much before?

A: When I was 10, for some reason I just stopped talking to them. And then when my Nan died I automatically just stopped talking to everyone else – I just said 'hello' and 'goodbye' and that's about it. I just sat there and looked into space.

I: So like a barrier came up or something? Well I won't ask you too... well I guess you feel you've got another way forward now. Another way to talk. Well that's brilliant – I'm really glad that it's been such a good experience for you, and I look forward to coming back and talking to you one more time. We'll leave it there shall we, [Student A]? Thanks so much.

Appendix E: Observation notes, Initial study

Observation notes: George Dixon School, 13th July 2009

Students entered the library to calm, structured classical music. SB [course leader] shakes hands and welcomes all. Name labels applied. Chairs are arranged in a large circle/square. SB gives clear countdown signals to the start of the programme. Gentle talking among friends as they sit. The group is ethnically diverse, consisting of British Asians, Afro-Caribbean students, a couple of White British.

TA starts by telling the students that they are 'fantastic' – outstanding students chosen as potential leaders. SB echoes this, and identifies all present adults as safe and trustworthy, including myself. SB talks about the course inviting risks and challenges, flying high, communication skills, roles, heroes and getting on with it themselves.

For the first icebreaker the students were asked to organise themselves into groups of 5, and then to find 10 ways to subdivide themselves into a 2 and 3 on the basis of their physical appearance. Many students giggled during this activity - the license to talk about appearance led to this - with much off-task conversation as well as relevant discussion. The activity was repeated for non-visible characteristics, and finally for learning styles – which led to a greater level of engagement and discussion, although some did not participate.

SB talked about how the activity had raised issues of customs and norms, and how they differ between cultures; through this she introduced the concept of the 'comfort zone'. She said that leaving one's comfort zone raises the adrenaline and the level of challenge, leading to 'powerful' learning. She invited students to leave their comfort zones as much as possible during the course – several students nodded. She then invited students to form new groups of five, inviting them if they felt ready to join groups made of students they didn't know. As they moved around, several girls – mostly in headscarves – linked hands or arms in pairs as they looked for a group. ST helped to organise and direct the students. Of the resultant groups, just under half were mixed gender; nearly all were of mixed ethnicity. SB and TA praised mixed gender groups for leaving their 'comfort zone'.

In these groups students played a board game designed by previous students; question cards asked them about leadership qualities. Several students mentioned family members or friends as exemplifying these. They were absorbed by this activity; some said they didn't want to stop as they were putting them away. Some played with the vocabulary and roles already identified: one student said with ironic self-importance: "I'll do it" in regard to packing the game away. SB then asked them how they had known what to do without instructions; replies included 'common sense', 'self-explanatory' - which on challenge by SB was revised by another student to 'on the basis of previous experience (i.e. other board games).

The next activity for these groups involved setting 'house rules'; students collected a template and rolled a coloured die which indicated different sentence starters for their

rules. During this game I visited one group of older boys who were laughing. Having been introduced by SB as a PhD student who has been successful at university, one boy immediately leant toward me, shook my hand, looked me in the eye and asked me what I thought was the secret to success. Too promptly I replied, 'finding your own thing and running with it'. Two other boys interrogated this remark directly, trying to clarify my meaning: 'does that mean you think we should all be independent?' One boy rolled the sentence starter 'We believe...'. Two suggested 'peace and love'; this was challenged by one as 'cheesy', but defended by the two. Another suggested '...in God'. B_ was going around groups prompting discussion and making distinctions. On asking some students whether they found these activities different, 2 year 10s said that it was unusual for them, while two 6th formers said they'd done similar things before. The groups then offered suggestion for house rules, including: never treat others unfairly; don't judge on the basis of ethnicity; never isolate people; we believe we are all leaders; young leaders are not inferior or superior to others; expect respect (SB draws from this a discussion of what 'respect' is); never underestimate the importance of any group member; we will try to do our best; consult others before decisions; 'life is a challenge'. SB invited the group to raise their hands to agree to the rules; she then adds 'no shouting' and a 'clean slate' policy, inviting all students to be the person they want to be on the course without others judging them on the basis of past experience.

The group were asked to organise themselves into a sequential line of birthdays from end to end of the room without talking; some initial incredulity and mirth, but the group settled quickly into the task and resolved it within a couple of minutes, largely using fingers to indicate months and days. SB and others said they were impressed by the speed and efficiency of this. This line was then segmented to form random groups to work with allocated teacher/facilitators for the day's activities.

I went with TA's group. The first icebreaker involved throwing plastic balls between participants, standing in a circle, calling the name of the recipient before throwing, until the ball returned via the whole group to TB. This was used to establish an order, which was then repeated faster and with more fluency. TB then introduced more balls at once into the same pattern. This caused some mayhem, with people not knowing where to look and getting flustered – balls flew. After some attempts, members learned to keep their eyes on the person they received from, and communicated an incoming throw to the recipient through body language. Five were kept up simultaneously in a group of 15. Students became highly focused, although laughing.

Students were then asked to split into 3 groups, again being encouraged to leave their 'comfort zone'. This resulted in two gender mixed groups of 5 and one girls group of 4. They were asked to refer to their course handbooks, and do the first activity which was to list their own perceived personal qualities and share them with the group, who wrote them down in their books. Most girls did this quietly, sharing the fewest number of words possible; the boys tended to discuss their choices and compare. After this activity, TA drew from them that they had shown the importance of diversity in teams, and the possibility of peer coaching – as opposed to 'teaching' each other, as one student put it.

The next icebreaker involved lines of 4-5, and being given pre-described commands for the members to 'switch', 'rotate', or 'change'. They were next given multiple orders,

and then asked to do it with their eyes closed. Students negotiated these quickly and effectively with much body contact – especially when asked to do so with their eyes closed. Around half did not follow this command. In feedback, students mentioned that the activity had raised the importance of ‘teamwork’ and ‘trust’ (TA asked why trust is important; they struggled to find a satisfactory answer).

The next activity involved bridging a gap between two desks with sellotape, straws and paper clips, strong enough to support a brick. Asked to plan first, students remained quite quiet until allowed to play with the materials. All three groups then busied themselves with good humour. In one group with 4 boys and 1 girl, the girl was soon sitting away from the table with her arms folded. She began to make sarcastic remarks about the exercise. I had been asked by TA to facilitate while he prepared for an inspection. I asked the boys, who were absorbed in the activity, to consider the house rules, and walked away. I soon saw the girl come to the table and get actively involved; by the end, she was giving commands to others and took control of scissors. All three bridges held; 2 relied heavily on sellotape, while the third ran linked wire from paperclips through joined straws. They were reluctant to stop on the deadline as they were intent on laying down as much sellotape as possible. On giving and asking for feedback, they mentioned previously identified skills such as determination and teamwork as having been important. Afterwards during clearing up, several students tried to sit on their bridges, to much laughter and excitement.

The next activity asked groups to devise a presentation to a panel for a ‘fantastic’ activity on a budget of £250; presentations had to include a range of areas including budgeting, health and safety, equal opportunities and others. TA gave a minimum introduction, inviting them to read their handbooks. The single girl in the boys’ group read the instructions aloud; everyone else read / listened silently. All three groups then engaged with the task with little input from the facilitators, who stepped back and partly into an adjacent office. Students remained calm, communicated quietly and sat back in their chairs; all were engaged in their group. I intervened once to ask them to consider delegating tasks in light of the limited time.

The students carried on up until the lunch deadline; TA invited them to return early if they chose to finish off. SB said soon after that she has been disappointed that there had been no feedback session before lunch as requested in the schedule, as reflecting on the activity was at least as important as the activity itself.

After lunch I joined a different group in a hot classroom. The facilitators were ___ and ___.

The first icebreaker involved all sitting in a circle, standing to count upwards. If 2 did so at once, we started again. There were many abortive attempts, but on the verge of giving up, the group got to 14. Feedback cited the importance of ‘body language’, ‘concentration’ and ‘eye contact’.

Students then presented their proposals from the last session. Myself and ___ acted as a panel. Students listened to each others’ presentations, although some looked away. This focused the comments on us, and we also chaired the discussion of the presentations. By this stage 1 boy was playing in phone and turning away. He continued this for the rest of the session.

The next activity from the workbook requires students to consider their heroes and their characteristics – first individually, then agreeing on common characteristics in their groups. Several students were leant back and/or quiet during this activity. One boy said loudly, “Nelson Mandela”, with a sarcastic emphasis. Some discussion began across tables. The student described as off-task above changed tables and started talking to a friend. The facilitators discussed this among themselves, agreeing that it made them uncomfortable, but decided not to act. Asked what heroic characteristics they’d found in common, students mentioned: inspirational, trustworthy, ability to compromise, making their voice heard, ‘outside their comfort zone’, unique, fair and wise. Two students disagreed as to the necessity of wisdom in leadership; one said that knowledge was not always important. I asked whether there was a difference between knowledge and wisdom; this sparked further animated discussion, but this was soon cut short due to time.

The next activity involved students stating what their leadership roles within school are currently, and what they might be in future, separating them into ranks of difficulty. This led to silent work at first, moving towards discussion. Facilitators bent down to talk to, encourage and question students about the task. ___ started taking feedback to a flipchart sheet on the board. Background talk increased gradually throughout the task. ___ started to raise her hand to get attention; this was ironically copied by one student. SB entered and suggested that this task be given to a student. One boy volunteered and chaired the discussion, reflecting students’ ideas succinctly in order to clarify short comments which he then put on the chart. Chatter receded. The session ended with a request to return to the library for a joint plenary session.

Uplifting pop on entry: ‘what have you done today to make you feel proud?’ SB said she was proud of students’ achievements today – applause started in one corner and spread – citing project management, communication. Asked to stand if they had been out of their comfort zone several times that day, most students stood; also for ‘leading self differently’, and ‘working with new people’. SB said that getting people to stand was energising, and they should remember this.

SB asked everyone to thank 3 people who had helped them today by shaking their hands and saying why. I was touched that 4-5 students thanked me. Students’ body language was expansive and happy; staff afterwards agreed that the atmosphere at that moment was ‘moving’. SB then asked all students to give a ‘micro-clap’: all clapping after 3 once, at the same time. This succeeded on the second attempt, and she released them until tomorrow.

One student on the way out said, ‘can we do this again without teachers?’

Observation notes: George Dixon School, 13th July 2009

Back in the library; SB counts down into first activity with no preamble: A to Z of learning review. Again she asks students to form groups outside their comfort zone. Most do, although the older boys and many of the girls with headscarves stick largely together, or at least move in pairs. As the groups work, there is mirroring of body language as they huddle forwards round flipchart paper, and dedicated focus. Conversation is low, and students are keen to finish the task in the short time allotted. Boy (J) pre-selected to run feedback of activity, asking groups to read out their words letter by letter. Noise rises. SB intervenes to remind students to be respectful to facilitator, and then repeatedly calls out the next letter to hurry on the activity.

SB then reminds students of the end of day presentation activity, using the metaphor of needing a toolkit of skills they've learned the previous day. She urges students to behave differently; if they're leaders from the front, push from the back – and vice versa. She asks students to get into new groups with a range of criteria: different from yesterday, mixed gender etc. Students do this relatively quickly, with a couple of students changed through facilitator intervention. Two groups each were then assigned to a facilitator, and went with them to separate rooms. I go with TA's group.

The next activity, the 'run-around continuum game', was facilitated by a volunteer boy. He started reading out the activity description from the book, and halfway through started editing what he read out. It involved numbers from 1 – 10 in a circle indicating level of understanding. When words were read out, students put themselves near the relevant number for their own understanding. The facilitator then asked students for their understandings, and for examples of use. TA intervenes to model this and to suggest asking only high numbers for definitions. The word 'accountability' sparks a debate around responsibility. "Are you a 10?" asks the facilitator. "I would say so," replies one 6th form boy. In the discussion of stakeholders, one student suggests that the whole community are stakeholders in education as students' futures affect everyone. Myself and TA give definitions of some words.

Moving to tables in groups, students discuss, 'what does being accountable mean?' A girl in the middle group suggests a working method to the rest. I intervene to help distinguish accountability from responsibility. They look for teacher input at this point. J coaches one student by whispering in her ear while the rest of the group is talking. Another girl takes the role of chair in her group's discussion, helping to pool all their opinions.

Students then sit in a circle and take turns to pull out an object from a bag. They must then discuss its relevance to accountability. Many students focus on school trips and accidents, stemming from selecting a pen and a picture of a plaster. One girl picks out a globe and talks about trips to different parts of the world. One girl in a headscarf adds that the globe makes her think of the responsibility world leaders have, especially to the poor, and how they should be accountable for this; another says that we should all be accountable for the state of the Earth in the face of climate change.

The next activity involved reading 5 bids for a £500 funding pot, discussing them and then choosing one within their groups. One girl asks me a procedural question;

another answers it before I can. All 3 groups evaluate their bids attentively, with the same working atmosphere of shared body language and quiet communication. One group becomes more animated, making jokes, sitting back, giving high 5s. Students of different ages contribute equitably. In feedback, one boy asks the facilitating girl whether she'd like him to take the role instead. She continues. Afterwards I ask the boy aside how the girl might have felt when he said that. He answers that she might have felt that she couldn't do the job.

There is an interruption as a staff member comes in just before break time to ask for 2 volunteers to show new students round the school. 8 volunteer immediately. The same boy I coached demands noisily that he should be chosen, continuing well after the choice has been made. He then demands to know why he has not been chosen.

The next activity after break involved TA and myself in role as writers of a bid that did not get chosen. The students in their groups had to give feedback on why the bid was not successful. With the first group, TA and I behaved civilly and took the news well. With the second two groups we were more challenging and emotional. This was deliberate, and designed to provoke students, taking them out of their 'comfort zone'. All three groups questioned us on the bids, and refused to give straight answers when we asked if our bids were successful. Many were critical of the bid, saying that they wanted something unusual, and that this sort of thing had been done already. Some questioned our appearance (our shirts were hanging out as we were 'artists'). They questioned costings, and demanded clarification. Voices were raised a little and several talked on top of each other. Students asked some questions among themselves as to what they were meant to be doing. Between role plays, a girl student was asked to chair a feedback from the other students on the group's performance as the judging panel while TA and I were outside. After all 3, TA and I gave feedback to the whole group, suggesting that the decision should be given up front, and that the panel should accentuate the positive of the bid, then suggest how it could be done better in future.

The next activity involved quiet personal reflection on their experiences of leadership. Students were absorbed in this for 15 minutes.

The final group activity was to prepare a performance in groups for all students on what they had learned on the course. TA directed them to the handbook page, and asked them what they should bear in mind. One student suggested that their presentations should be 'unique', picking up on one of the words used in the initial A-Z activity. TA then started to repeat and reinforce key facts such as the deadline. SB, who had just come in, used body language to subtly urge him to stop. The students quickly entered into discussions among themselves. TA and I did not intervene further until just before lunchtime. TA then told them that they would be able to work over the lunch break if they chose, and that he and I would be present to enable this. Some stayed through much of it; most came back at the end of the lunch break – 3 or 4 were late.

1 boy who was not present for the first day of the course sat apart from his group and did not contribute as they rehearsed their performance. He started doing arm-ups between two chairs. Other boys from his group joined in, with the girls looking on. After a few minutes of this, the boy rejoined the group, watching them rehearse and

taking on a small role. With a few minutes to go until the preparation deadline, one group starts clearing up both their workspace and the wider room.

Entering the library for the final session, the 'proud' song is playing again. The seats are set up in cinema formation with a stage space. There is a student film crew at the back. There is much talking and some orchestrated clapping as people come in and take their seats. SB thanks the students in advance for their presentations, and a member from each group goes up to collect. As the first group goes up, there is spontaneous applause – repeated for each subsequent group.

Presentations:

1. The group satirise the X-Factor, using it to model good and bad feedback, especially 'let-downs'. They mention accountability, empathy and responsibility.
2. Students line up to briefly summarise what they've learned, mentioning specific skills, with some citing particular moments such as the bridge-building exercise. It ends with a boy saying, 'It's your voice so use it'.
3. One of the presenters covers an audience member's mobile phone ring by coughing exaggeratedly. Students again line up to say what they've learned, including confidence, and 'coming out of your comfort zone'. They then question the audience if they will do this; there is a loud, 'we will / yes man'. They repeat the 'five finger' rule. All are congratulated on the way back.
4. One 6th form boy role plays an arrogant person, boasting about his 2,000 facebook friends to a fawning group around him and demanding drinks. Another asks the audience whether this is acceptable leadership behaviour: 'no!' Again with the 6th former talking to the others about themselves, about sharing tips for academic success, giving high 5s. Again the other member asks the audience: 'yes!'. A headscarved girl then chairs a short discussion with the audience about what they've learned.
5. A girl starts with a short song about the course. Other members say individually what skills they've developed, especially listening. In role, 2 chase each other around the room over a pen to demonstrate 'weak' leadership.
6. The students stand in a line, chaired by a 6th form boy. They take turns defining leadership with examples and metaphors from the course, especially that of leadership tools being needed to complete a job. Silence from audience as one boy stumbles his lines.
7. Individuals read out personal lessons and affirmations – one boy without notes. One boy recites a short rap/poem – to applause. It ends, '... step up to the plate / and add my gravy'. Image of leadership motivation on flipchart held up throughout.
8. One girl uses assertive body language to silence the room. 1 skill each shared in rapid succession. 'I had a chance to be myself', says one headscarved girl. They mimic an icebreaker, passing around a ball, to show who is speaking. They thank the school staff.

As SB comes up there is spontaneous applause. 'I'm not often lost for words'. SB says that many of them were thinking yesterday morning that they couldn't have done the presentation. She gives the groups 30 seconds to give praise and feedback to each other. SB then describes the accreditation process. She highlights what they've already achieved in terms of some of the course objectives. Evaluation sheets are filled in,

which the students all fill in silently. SB mentions 2 individuals (one not by name) for exceptional contributions.

Certificates of attendance are handed out at the front in batches by staff to applause – then to staff and course leaders. More applause for SB, led by a student. A final micro-clap. Cheers. Students file out past SB and other staff, many exchanging words and handshakes.

Appendix F: Interview questions, Initial study

A: Pre-intervention

- 1) What, for you, is the point of school?
- 2) What motivates you in school? (subjects, sports, meeting targets, parents, activities, teachers, feeling of learning / achieving, winning friends, respect from friends / other students, issues, grades, future career)
 - why?
- 3) Do you feel you're in control of how well you do at school? (teachers, own abilities, time)
 - more in some areas than others?
 - which?
 - why?
- 4) Do you feel like you have a say as to what happens around you in school?
- 5) Can you give me a recent example of a time when you really felt you learned something?
 - When do you learn best? (new ideas, talking with others, personal interest, one-to-one support, exciting presentation, when pushed / challenged)
 - why?
 - Are you in control of this?
- 6) What do you find most challenging in school? (subjects, situations, people)
 - is this a good or bad thing?
 - why?
 - Is there anything you can do about it?
- 7) Are there any academic subjects you particularly like / dislike?
 - which?
 - why?
- 8) Do you think you could improve your approach to any of your academic subjects?
 - Which ones?
 - How?
- 9) Some say that in school you learn as much outside the classroom as inside. What do you think?
 - Can you give any examples?
- 10) Before we end, is there anything else you'd like to say or ask?

B: Post-intervention

- 1) What was your overall impression of the leadership course?
- 2) Has your understanding of what motivates you in school changed?
- 3) Last time we talked about the amount of control you have in school. Do you feel the same or differently after the course?
- 4) Looking back at what you thought was challenging at school, have your views changed?
- 5) Do you think you will act differently in the school community generally?
- 6) Did you learn anything about when and how you learn best?
- 7) Last time you said you like / dislike _____. Has your understanding of why you felt that way changed?
- 8) After doing the course, do you think you could improve your approach to any of your academic subjects?
 - Which ones?
 - How?
- 9) Has the course altered your outlook in any other way?
- 10) Before we end, is there anything else you'd like to say or ask?

C: Post-post-intervention

1. What has the time since the leadership course been like for you?
2. Has your understanding of what motivates you in school changed since the course, or not?
3. Since the course do you feel you have had more or less control over your life and work in school?
4. We talked before about what you find challenging at school. What would you say are your greatest challenges now?
5. Have you acted similarly or differently in the school community since the course?
6. Have you learned anything new about when and how you learn best, or not?
7. Last time you said you like / dislike _____. Have your attitudes or approach to these subjects changed since the course, or stayed the same?

8. Can you give any examples of changes you've made in your approach to this or other subjects since the course?
9. Looking back on the course and your experiences since, would you say that it has changed you or your outlook in any other way, or not?
10. Before we end, is there anything else you'd like to say or ask?

C1: Teachers' interviews

1. How long have you known the student?
2. How would you describe the a) attitude towards learning and b) the behaviour of the student since the start of this term?
3. Have these changed, or is it the same as before this term?
4. How does the student communicate with others?
5. To what extent does the student take responsibility for his/her own learning?
6. Can you give examples that illustrate these?

Appendix G: Diamond nine exercise categories, Initial study

Categories ranked in answer to the question, “what motivates you to try hard at school?”

- My parents / guardians
- Other students / friends
- Favourite teachers
- Favourite subjects
- Good lessons
- Getting good grades
- Learning for its own sake
- Future career
- Clubs and trips

Appendix H: Coding tree, Initial study

This is a screenshot from within NVivo 8, showing the full coding tree.

The screenshot displays the NVivo 8 interface for the project 'Learning to Lead.nvp'. The main window shows a list of 'Free Nodes' with the following data:

Name	Sources	References	Created On
Icon Academic performance	11	70	01/12/2009 10:16
Accountability, responsibility	13	67	10/08/2009 11:00
Ambitions	7	36	07/08/2009 12:53
Changing attitude, behaviour	13	190	07/08/2009 12:50
Changing context	6	31	01/12/2009 10:37
Comfort zone	8	33	10/08/2009 10:46
Compliments, encouragement	7	30	07/08/2009 15:33
Confidence	13	138	07/08/2009 15:34
Determination, resilience	11	53	07/08/2009 15:19
Empathising	6	30	10/08/2009 10:59
Enjoyment, satisfaction	13	96	11/08/2009 12:05
Family involvement	8	33	11/08/2009 10:23
Formal assessment	10	47	10/08/2009 14:30
Frustration, fear	10	71	04/12/2009 10:03
Helping others	10	47	11/08/2009 10:42
Helping self	1	5	01/01/2010 08:58
Inter-cultural relations	8	32	07/08/2009 15:52
Knowledge as information	7	18	11/08/2009 10:27
Learning outside classroom	13	77	07/08/2009 12:51
Listening	7	49	04/12/2009 09:58
Multiple perspectives	14	87	07/08/2009 12:50
Self-expression	14	103	07/08/2009 12:50
Self-knowledge	14	191	01/12/2009 10:12
Teachers' role	11	59	11/08/2009 10:36
Teamwork	10	61	10/08/2009 10:47
Value of peers	13	122	10/08/2009 11:25

Appendix I: Consent form, Main study

Rupert Higham
BC216
Baring Court
St Luke's Campus
Exeter
EX1 2LU

Dear students,

My name is Rupert Higham. I used to be an English teacher, and now I work at the University of Exeter. I'm doing some research into 'leadership skills' courses – like the one you'll soon be doing with the Prince's Trust. I'm looking at how they make a difference to students by building their confidence and teamworking skills.

I'm asking for volunteers to talk to me about their experiences of the Prince's Trust course, and of their education generally. If you volunteer, I'll interview you 3 times: once just before the course, once again just after, and finally 2 months after that. The idea is to see what you've learned on the course, and how much of it sticks as time passes. I record interviews, but no-one ever hears them except me. I'll also be there on the course to watch and to help out.

I've done research like this before, and the students I've interviewed said that they enjoyed talking about their experiences. They found it helpful to think about what they'd learned. If you volunteer I think you'll find the conversations useful for you as well. I won't say in my research who I've interviewed or what college they're from – so if I use any quotes from your interviews in my writing, no-one will know who they're from.

The point of my research is to show that doing challenging activities outside can teach people more in a shorter time than by being in a classroom doing regular school lessons. I will argue that we should make more courses like this available to more young people.

Thanks for reading this, and I hope you agree to take part. If so, please sign the form below.

Yours,

Rupert Higham
Research Assistant and PhD student
University of Exeter

I agree to take part in the University of Exeter's research project on leadership education between October and December 2010.

Signed: _____ (student)

Date:

Appendix J: Example interview with student, Main study

Prince's Trust interviews – B

Kat

I: What have you got for us?

K: Abseiling.

I: OK. Why did you pick that?

K: Because I don't think I'd have done it, like, I wouldn't have done it now if we didn't do it while I was away.

I: OK, so were you a bit scared of it at the time?

K: Yeah, like when I went over the bridge I had to lean back and let myself go.

I: Yeah, I think getting over the rail was quite scary, wasn't it? And then that bit where you've just got to trust the rope (yeah) and lean back. OK. And why does that stick out?

K: Cause it was scary.

I: And how did you feel after you did it?

K: Happy with myself... cause I like, actually done it – stuck it to the end.

I: And do you think that that sort of thing makes a difference at all, or is it just nice at the time?

K: It makes a difference, really.

I: Can you think of how it might have made a difference to you?

K: Cause I'm like, kind of scared of heights, and if I did it again I wouldn't be scared because I've done it before.

I: OK – that's great. Can you think of another moment where you learned something?

K: No.

I: There was no other moment...?

K: No.

I: OK. So generally looking back over the whole week, how do you feel about it now?

K: It was alright. Good laugh.

I: Most of the time? All the time? Some of the time?

K: All the time, really.

I: And what were the bits you enjoyed? Was it the activities? Was it being in the house?

K: In the evening, being in the house with everyone, like, getting along...

I: Yeah? So you enjoyed the games... you were quite good at cutting the wood I remember as well. You enjoyed that, sort of, people hanging out in the house (yeah). Was that the best bit of it?

K: Yeah.

I: OK. So that was the best bit. What sort of bits didn't you enjoy so much?

K: Nothing really.

I: You enjoyed the whole thing?

K: Apart from the arguments.

I: How do you feel about those? Were they necessary, or...?

K: Yeah, cause if we didn't have arguments we wouldn't have got as far as we did in the end.

I: OK – so you didn't enjoy them but you thought they were useful?

K: Yeah, cause everyone got everything off their chest, and everything actually come out and, like, people started to change...

I: That's interesting. Can you think of any examples of that?

K: Like when it happened with Holly. She actually said, like, what she felt on the minibus... and then... Kyle and that lot stopped picking her, really. They stopped picking on her and stopped acting so immature.

I: OK. So even though that was something you didn't enjoy, you thought it was something valuable for the group.

K: Yeah, for everyone.

I: That's interesting. Thanks. <diamond 9> You've moved quite a lot. You've put 'learning useful knowledge on your courses' at the top – before it was quite important. Why?

K: Well, on this course, like, learning things that, like, changes you, so it's quite important, really.

I: And you came to realise that on the course, did you?

K: Yeah.

I: So there were things there that you felt changed you in some way?

K: Yeah.

I: Did that surprise you?

K: Yeah, pretty much. I didn't think... I'd like, learn nothing on it, like... the group would have changed... but it has changed. We're all getting on a lot better now.

I: Excellent. So that's useful knowledge to you – not just like what you learn in school, there's other sorts of knowledge, like how you get on with people in groups, that you can learn in courses?

K: Yeah, I suppose.

I: So this one, 'getting good grades in your courses and exams' – that's still very important but not the most (yeah). So it's not so much the grade you get as what you get out of it?

K: Yeah.

I: This one you had at the bottom: 'understanding other people's ideas'.

K: You've gotta like understand other people's ideas, so if you just think of an idea of your own you can just go with that idea and that may go but you've got to understand other people's ideas cause you don't know whose is going to be the best at the end of the day.

I: So that's risen up a long way (yeah). Were there any particular moments on the course where you got that?

K: When we had to build a bridge everyone had... one idea, and I said another one, and they started with the other idea. And I said, 'no stay with my idea', and they said, 'no', and it all went wrong. And at the end it ended up the way I wanted it, kind of, and everyone got cross.

I: So what was the lesson from that, that they should listen to you?!

K: Just listen to each other, and don't just try one way – try everyone else's ways as well.

I: OK, so if everyone's got lots of different ideas you need to listen out a bit first before you jump in (yeah). This one you've taken down a level: 'working well with other people'. That's still quite important.

K: Still important, you've got to work well with other people, but you've got to understand their ideas better because, like, if they had an idea and no-one goes with it, they don't want to join in, you've just got to let them do what they want...

I: So this comes first, in a way – you need the understanding...

K: You need to understand their ideas before you can work well with them. Cause if their ideas are totally different to yours, and you take your idea, then they won't want to join in with yours, and you've just got to let them do what they want.

I: OK, that makes sense. And this one's also come down a bit, 'listening carefully'.

K: Yeah.

I: Is that because other stuff's got up, or...?

K: Yeah, it cause you've got to understand other people's ideas more. That's still part of listening, but...

I: They're related.

K: It just comes underneath it, really.

I: Fine. 'Being confident' you've got about in the same place. Did you feel the same way about being confident?

K: No, I felt more confident, but I was working with the others and they were like... because I was getting more confidence already I reckon the others are more important.

I: I get it. So in a way a lot of them have become more important.

K: Yeah, cause I really gained more confidence.

I: Yeah, OK. This one has dropped down a bit: 'arguing your point of view'

K: Cause your point of view isn't always right – you can't persuade other people to, like, do your idea if it ain't going to work.

I: So again the listening comes first (yeah). Great. Were there any particular parts of the course that really made you want to try hard?

K: In the beginning, like, the rock climbing – when we abseiled off the rock face – like, not everyone wanted to do it, and me and Carla were listening, and we had to lower two more people down, and like, there was someone skipping with the rest of the rope and it was a bit stupid... so we've just got to, like, talk to them, and actually get them to listen, and I just went that 'you can all work together in the end'.

I: That's interesting – so the thing that motivated you was a moment when other people were a bit scared or in need of support (yeah) and you stepped in when others weren't (yeah), cause you wanted to help the others out.

K: Yeah. At the end of the day if it was me at the top I wouldn't like it.

I: OK, so in a way you put yourself in their shoes a bit (yeah) and thought, 'if I was there and feeling scared I'd want someone to step in and give me a bit of reassurance (yeah). I remember that – I remember how hard you worked to keep going and keep focussed. I was quite impressed. So as a result of that course, is there anything you think you could do better now, either in your studies or as a person?

K: I'm just more confident, you just like... you've gotta stick to something to get it done, cause if you give up half way it's never going to get done. So it's being confident, it's about yourself no matter what it is...

I: And were there any moments when you got that, when you didn't give up when you might have before?

K: The building a bridge, cause in the beginning, because I didn't think their idea was going to work, and because they didn't listen to me, I thought, 'stuff it, I'm not going to get involved and doing it'. I sat down, moved away for 10 minutes, but I thought it was a bit selfish, I've got to give my idea a go, so I joined in again and helped them.

I: So you got over that bit (yeah) where you didn't want to join in and you just got on with it anyway and you helped see it through (yeah). Thank you. <volunteer task> So you still reckon that you would put yourself forward a bit in making some suggestions,

and then see what other people say as well (yeah). And when people were discussing on the course, planning or whatever, is that what you were like?

K: Yeah.

I: The next thing <group roles 1> On the course, were you a leader and an ideas person most of the time? Or were there any of these other roles that you sometimes took?...

So you've taken leader away. Do you not think that you acted as a leader in the group?

K: Not really – I just got on with what everyone else done.

I: So, in the example you gave me where you were supporting other people and then coming down the abseil, you don't think you were being a leader there so much, you were just helping out, or...?

K: Helping out.

I: OK, OK. And you think... on that course were you coming up with a lot of ideas about how to do things well? Can you give me any examples?

K: What do you mean?

I: On the course, can you give me examples of when you made useful suggestions about how to do stuff, how to do the activity?

K: When we was doing that letter thing, and you walked away from us, and we thought we'd just stand there for a bit and see if we could actually work anything out, and we stayed there for 5 minutes and we got, like, 2 letters. Then we thought we had to go.

I: So, at that point that was you having ideas, was it (yeah)? And what about in this volunteer role? When did you get on quietly with what the group agreed?

K: The build a bridge. Cause in the beginning I needed to wait because no-one would actually listen to my ideas. But in the end I thought, 'stuff it, just get on with it'.

I: So you just did what other people were saying, did you (yeah)? OK. And do you think that you weren't really ever in any of these other roles?

K: No.

I: There weren't any times when you sat back and watched what others did, or said you didn't want to take part?

K: [laughs] Yeah. A couple of times I just said that I didn't want to do it.

I: Is that because of the particular activity it was, or was it because of how you were feeling at the time, or...?

K: How I was feeling at the time.

I: How were you feeling when you didn't want to take part?

K: A bit pissed off. I just didn't want to do it.

I: What, just didn't want to be there, or...?

K: Just didn't want to be there.

I: Yeah, OK. So, is that unusual for you, do you think?

K: I don't know, actually – I've been getting quite[?]

I: You would (yeah)? And what makes you not want to take part?

K: Just no-one actually, like, listens to my ideas, they just stick to their own... you know, just actually give mine a go and see how it ends...

I: So when you feel your ideas aren't being considered or given a chance, you sometimes back out and say you don't want to take part?

K: Yeah.

I: Did you ever, like, just ask tough questions about what other people were trying to do?

K: A couple of times. When they said the opposite from my ideas, I just didn't want to get involved.

I: Thanks a lot. <group roles 2>

K: Volunteer... It was alright because they didn't moan about nothing, they just got on with it and done what they had to do, and that was it.

I: Was there a lot of that on the course?

K: Quite a bit, I reckon.

I: Great – pick another one.... When were people being like that?

K: Spectator... cause if you didn't want to do anything you couldn't force them to nothing. Depending on how they were feeling that day.

I: So it depends on how they were feeling – if someone was sitting back and watching, not going I'm not having... but just being quiet and not taking part, can you think of how you dealt with that – did you just leave them be, or did you say anything, or...?

K: I said something a couple of times, 'it means that we were losing out on beans and stuff'. But they didn't want to do it, so I asked them and they said no, so I thought, 'fuck it, leave them'.

I: OK. Pick another one.

K: Leader – I said to a couple of people, 'just get on with it and stuff – even if you don't want to you, we've just got to get it done'.

I: OK, so you think there were a couple of times when you took a bit of a leadership role.

K: Yeah, a couple of times.

I: What about when other people were leading the group? How did you find that?

K: A couple of people didn't make it clear enough and I got a bit peed off because I didn't know what to do, and others made it really clear and I knew what to do. I don't know – it depends on how they... like... how do you say it?

I: Take your time.

K: It depends on like, how they... express themselves, like... how it has to go and stuff.

I: OK, so what do leaders do that got a good reaction from you?

K: Give us ideas, told us what we should have done and what we could do and stuff, and then we just went with the best idea and that.

I: And what was it about when people were leading that you didn't respond well to?

K: When they didn't make it clear enough, and like... they made it, like... cause they knew what they was going to do they made it clear for themselves and not for everyone else in the group and they just done their own thing and left us standing there, basically.

I: And how would you respond to them if they did that?

K: Have a go at them, basically.

I: Yeah? You'd get a bit cross.

K: Yeah, get a bit peed off.

I: Thanks. Did you come across this at all [pretender]?

K: Yeah, a couple of times. But in the end if they didn't want to do it you couldn't force them to do nothing, cause if they didn't participate we could have lost out on beans and stuff.

I: Yeah. And did that annoy you, the fact that the group lost beans for stuff that people did or didn't do?

K: Not really because at the end of the day everyone's got a reason for not doing something or doing something, so...

I: What about [objector]?

K: It's up to them – obviously there was something wrong with them that day for them to feel, 'I just don't want to do it', so I'd just leave them be.

I: Cause I think you said at the beginning that sometimes that made you a bit cross, but

you're also saying that you've got to understand where they are that day, how they're feeling?

K: Yeah.

I: And you think that's acceptable?

K: Yeah, they need time on their own just to think – and if they're just sat there on their own, like, thought for a bit, they might actually change their mind and say, 'yeah, I might be feeling down but at least I, like, stick in and help you for a bit'.

I: Can you think of any examples where that happened?

K: ... A couple, but I don't want to say.

I: OK, that's fine. Can you think of any times when someone was being a critic?

K: Not really, most of the questions was just stupid – everyone prating about.

I: Right, it was more people being silly or showing off than it was people...?

K: Not exactly, 'being silly and showing off', I'd just say, yeah a bit showing off but trying to have a laugh and make everyone else happy.

I: Oh, I see – just trying to have fun and not taking it too seriously (yeah), so not really being a critic like, actually asking tough questions.

K: No.

I: OK. And what about... how did you get on with people who were coming up with loads of ideas even if they weren't really, like, leaders?

K: Yeah, I'd listen to their ideas and like, try it – but if it didn't go right and they wanted to stick by it, I'd be like, 'no, cause it's not going right, so we've got to try someone else's idea'.

I: Nearly there. Last couple of questions. By and large, did people treat you with respect?

K: Yeah.

I: Most of the time? All the time?

K: Most of the time, really – it's just I didn't like the fact that when like... I actually told them what I thought, like if someone was messing about, and like, actually taking things too seriously about other people I'd tell them to shut up or something – and they wouldn't like it.

I: So a couple of times you intervened because you felt people were saying stuff to other people that wasn't right or hurtful (yeah), and they didn't like that (yeah). But do you think it made a difference that you did?

K: Yeah, cause at the end of the week everyone got on a lot better, there was less... or there weren't no arguing... and everything got done a lot quicker, and by the end everyone had a smile on their face and they were still happy.

I: It's interesting, cause I said that when we got to the Tor on the last day: even though the arguments are no fun – actually sometimes I think you were one of the best at that, telling the truth sometimes and getting people to look in the mirror. You know what I mean (yeah)? And if you think about what you want to achieve on the PC course and more generally in life, have your ideas changed at all as a result?

K: I just want to get more confidence, I just want to get a job by the end of it to do with catering... and actually just come out with something at the end of it, like, something more than I have.

I: Great.

Appendix K: Example interview with course leader, Main study

Prince's Trust interviews – C

Ged

I: the questions I will ask will be, "how do you think they have progressed from the time we last spoke just after the course to the end of the course?", And then I'll ask you, bearing in mind what I asked you about them before in our previous interview, "can you trace any of the progress that you think they made on the week away during the residential into any progress they made after, or would you attributed more to other things on the course?"

G: okay.

I: let's start with **Dan** if we can.

G: yeah, Dan, on the residential, really came out of himself, I think more than almost everyone else. I think that's definitely had an impact on the way he entered all the other activities we did throughout the rest of the 12 weeks. For the project, he definitely took those skills from the residential into that, and it was a huge success.

I: but those skills, you're talking about...?

G: the confidence and leadership, and being able to speak out in front of the group. He did a lot of bringing the group together -- he kind of grasped the concept on the residential. What I think he still struggles with its being able to get to that point of confidence when he's on his own. He really struggled with work experience, I think because it isolated from the he lost those skills -- he regressed slightly and became quite nervous.

I: but I think some of the other team members were supposed to be on that placement with him? And then they left, I bet he didn't last long after they left.

G: yeah. It was that isolation from the team, so... in terms of his teamwork and leadership skills, I think, they really have blossomed -- but not having that security blanket of the team, you know, and fronting up in a situation independent of that, he seemed to struggle. So, I think the team aspect he really got.

I: so he found some security in that team, and blossomed to some extent in that environment - - but he's got to move beyond that.

G: yeah, he's got another step to go, I think, to take it on a personal level.

I: and what about **Bron**? What progress has he made since we last spoke?

G: I think in many ways he has been able to be more vulnerable, which I think is often a step backwards, but for him is a real step forward. He I think have taken on board the fact that he can locate quite effectively without needing to speak much English. You know, he kind of used his body and his hand gestures, and got a lot more communication across during the residential that I think he had anticipated. And with that, he gained a level of confidence with that communication to actually be able to say to us that he was, you know, not so sure with English, and actually ask for help with English -- which he was not willing to do before.

I: but he did do that, he did come forward and ask for help?

G: he did, yeah. I'd also be asked if he could do parts of his mock interview half in English and half Polish so we could get a sense of how he would communicate in his first language -- you know, to give us an idea of the difference that the second language made his performance in interviews.

I: were you able to do that for him?

G: we were, yeah, and it was actually really -- you could tell it was a huge relief for him to be able to speak Polish part of that -- and actually, it was a real insight for us as well into how different he was replaced communication. And I realising that through the residential really brought him throughout the rest of the 12 weeks. Hopefully he will continue to do that, and it will actually help him with communicating in English in the future. Whether it will is hard to

say, but certainly the first steps have been taken.

I: and you hope he will continue to work with the college in improving his English?

G: yeah. I think his plan is to do a public services course the college in September, and I see no reason why he wouldn't do very well. I've spoken to the tutor about it, and he's happy to take it. So hopefully that will lead to more confidence in his of English.

I: that's interesting, so whereas he always seemed to have an air of confidence that people respected, a lot of that was in some sense a bit of a comic mask that the fact that he was insecure about his English ability...

G: I think so, yeah...

I: ... at that mask slipped a bit as he became more trusting of yourselves and the group?

G: absolutely. And I think it's very easy to maintain a mask of silence -- it be easier thing to hide behind because there's no way through that, there's no communication, you can't get through to someone to actually take that step of understanding that he was vulnerable, his second language wasn't perfect. And to take that step to improve communication in that second language... although it may seem small from the outside, it was actually a huge personal step for him to take.

I: it's interesting from my perspective as well, for my research, how do you think he would have responded himself to the challenge of being interviewed by me? What do you think his response was to that -- whether he showed it or not?

G: ... I think is always very good-natured, but I think it would have worried him. I think he would have given less responsive answers that you may have thought of. I think for every word he spoke he probably had a sentence he would have liked to say -- but he held back because he wasn't sure he would be understood.

I: it's interesting, because my experience was that he became less communicative as the series of interviews went on -- at that accords with what you said about His own sense of vulnerability, perhaps even his sense of frustration in the face of not being able to express what he would like to.

G: that's very likely -- that actually, the more the interviews progressed, the more he would have liked to have been able to say, and therefore the more the communication barrier affected him.

I: ... the more nervous he got, in my opinion.

G: yeah.

I: let's move on to **Kat**. How would you say that the progress she made on the residential played out in the subsequent two or three months?

G: ... I think Kat awful lot on board over the course of that week. I think as a person, as a social human being she was almost unrecognisable at the end of the three months from the beginning. I think the social skills she took on board, you know, listening to other people, respecting what other people have to say, not necessarily pressing home the point as violently as she did to begin with, are all things that she started to do on the Residential. She had a few tantrums on the way, you know, it was definitely not easy progress, but I think she was very interested in the process behind what went on at the residential, and the way the team formed, and she was very good at cutting through... during that analysis of the team formation, and the hitting on key points -- and I think those insights, she definitely took on board, and grew as a result of that.

I: that's interesting, so you're suggesting that she realised that she had a skills understanding group dynamics at the personal dynamics to some extent (absolutely), and to what extent were those skills apparent during the rest of the course?

G: well, it didn't manifest itself in terms of her taking on leadership roles, or that type of thing. But it did in terms of her personal interactions with members -- there was a dramatic difference -- her level of aggression dropped significantly, her manners improved, her temper improved, she became far better at expressing her point of view, rather than being forceful and getting upset when people didn't listen, she took longer to express her opinion and expressed it more eloquently. And all of those changes -- you know, quite gradual, but by the

end of the three months it was a significant change -- that process began from the residential, and continue throughout all the tasks.

I: that's great. And that you would say was the key set of skills that grew for her throughout the course?

G: definitely. That understanding of her interactions with other people.

I: so again, it wasn't just her understanding of other people's group dynamics, but also her role within it and her effect on others?

G: I think so, yes. There was a subtlety about the way she approached other people within the group dynamic at the end of three months that was definitely not evident at the beginning.

I: what about Jake?

G: **Jake**... had flashes of great leadership quality on the residential. You know, he showed the ability to be very mature, very level-headed, a good leader and communicator... it wasn't something that he always did, by any stretch of the imagination. He was easily led by the others, and also was very immature and very silly at times. Although it remained throughout the rest of the time, it became less and less -- he became more mature and sensible in his approach to the tasks as the months went on.

I: so more mature more of the time?

G: yeah. And he retained that ability to be very immature juvenile at points -- but they became less and less frequent. And certainly in terms of his next steps, and where he plans to go with his career, by the end of the course he was take that very seriously and spent a lot of time making sure that his CV was up to scratch, and really considering where he was going to go after the Prince's Trust course. So I think that sense of his ability was key to that -- that he started to understand that his ability and exceeded his current level, and that he could do much better if he applied himself.

I: and he started to demonstrate that more, rather than fly away from it.

G: yeah, although it wasn't 100%, he started to embrace that.

I: what about **George**?

G: George... remained very quiet throughout, but I think that there were key moments on the residential that kind of opened his eyes to what's, I think, the world is like, really. He's led a very sheltered life, and, you know, the abseil on the residential had a significant impact on him and he had, I think, a more positive outlook as a result of doing those activities.

I: that was something he continued to talk about, was it?

G: yeah, it was something... he physically changed: he became lighter, happier -- he seemed more excited when he talks about the adventure activities, but the abseil in particular... I think that had an impact on what he was willing to try. I think that was probably the biggest change in that he never, he wasn't always brilliant putting himself forward, and you know, it wasn't particularly good in a leadership role -- and he did remain quite shy and didn't so much. But it will always give things a go. And I think that was the result of having stepped out of his comfort zone on the residential, and found that actually it was quite an exciting place to be. And I think that willingness to try, although quite a small step, was significant in that it is the first step towards any other improvements that he's going to make.

I: it implies a lot of fear, doesn't it, in difference? (Absolutely) or the new, or the unusual. I think I suggested to you that in all, especially in the last of the interviews, please was by a considerable margin the most eye opening, the most pleasing, really, to listen to in terms of the difference compared to the first, and the sense in which he just opened up and demonstrated understanding new things about himself, and was able to put those briefly into words. And was able to do that also in the final presentation -- to do his bit without much fuss, really.

G: Absolutely. And that in itself is a massive achievement given that he barely spoke words of the first week and a half, you know, he really was very, very shy and retiring.

I: and I think also, if I'm right, on a physical level he retreated from under at least two police at one point nearer the start (he did, yeah) and there weren't any by the end.

G: no, not at all.

I: and those sort of things can be some sort of indicator, can't they?

G: yeah, absolutely.

I: and I don't remember seeing his head covered much of the end at all (no). **Carla**. What would you say about her continuing progress after the residential?

G: I think Carla is the kind of character who knows very quickly what it is she needs to do... but making the leap to actually doing it can prove something of a struggle at times! She's quite resistant to change, especially within her own surroundings, and a big struggle for her on the residential was releasing control of the group, as it were, and other people taking on leadership roles. She struggled massively with that. And it's something that she still struggled with throughout the rest of the course. She dealt with it better throughout the rest of the course than she did on the residential, but it had a tendency to make her step back from the course as a whole, and start to disengage as opposed to staying engaged but not in a leadership role. She had a kind of "or nothing approach". But she did make the leap of not being as argumentative, so her communication style changed and softened.

I: and that had a beneficial effect on the group dynamic did it? (Absolutely, yeah) my own interpretation was that she retreated more into an ironic stance -- instead of being confrontational, she used irony instead -- and would gently joke or hide behind phrases that little bit as a way of referring the attempt to bring her in further.

G: yes, definitely. And I think there is a genuine fear of failure on her part. She didn't have the best of several careers, and I think that has had a lasting impact on her engagement with education. I think she has this approach whereby she well, kind of, later on the fringes until she realises that there is something she definitely can do -- and then she jumped in with both feet. And if it's something she can't do she want to touch. And I think that is very much a fear of failure. Whether or not that changed hasn't been massively evident. I'd like to think that the course has gone some way towards that the kind of effort and the involvement are as important as that and go in many ways. But it is a tough lesson to learn to someone who struggles as much as she does with that kind of all or nothing approach to her involvement. So I think she learned a few things quite quickly early on; in terms of overall progression, I think, it slowed throughout the rest of the course.

I: that's interesting. How about **Holly**?

G: I think Holly has made huge leaps forward. Like George, I don't think necessarily if you were to meet her now, you may not think that she has come a long way if you didn't know her before the start of the course. But her involvement and communication have both continued to improve, and being able to do the final presentation at all, I think, was a massive, massive thing for her. It's something she was very scared of -- to the point where her care actually rang me to say that she was seriously worried about it. And to be able to overcome that and actually speak in front of a group and in front of an audience is a huge testament to how far she came.

I: and given that I think we said last time she had demonstrated the ability of, sort of, passive resistance in the face of things that scared her (absolutely), but she didn't want to do, that probably increases the value of that...

G: absolutely -- because it's overcoming a personal barrier as much as overcoming any external fears -- and that's a huge leap forward, especially, as you say, because her approach before was to be very passively resistant.

I: it's potentially quite heartening to see that perhaps the residential week she made progress in terms of asserting herself -- even if she had to resort to quite negative ways of doing that at times -- but that she could assert herself in public in a wholly positive way.

G: yes, definitely. And certainly within the group she talked more and more throughout the rest of the course, and became much happier -- you know, from being very serious and quite shy and saying very little, by the end of the course she was laughing and joking the majority of the time. You always saw her with a smile on her face.

I: it's true -- and although I didn't see her as often as you, it was my impression that at the

beginning of the court she was always in black and by the end she was in Technicolor, I would say. She wore a wide variety of colours and was more open and brighter in herself and in choice of dress.

G: yes, absolutely.

I: that seemed quite noticeable to me. So you would say there was a move in her sense of confidence in expressing herself?

G: yeah, definitely. To the point where she, I think, is able to take on challenging situations which during the residential and before she would have simply backed away from, and passively resisted by not responding. She has grown in confidence to the point where she feels, on a personal level she is able to take on the challenge and succeed.

I: again, my impression was that she was able to do that with something more like humour than through direct confrontation?

G: yes, definitely.

I: so that's very positive indeed.

G: she was also, interestingly, very good at bringing up a similar situation from completely unrelated area. So if there was an issue within the group that she didn't like she would voice that not directly -- she wouldn't say to the group "this annoys me" -- that she would bring an example from a completely alien situation that had the same annoyance factor, and would voice that quite audibly. So although she wasn't directly confronting issues, she was dealing with them by bringing them up in a kind of safe way, you know, so that the group were aware that it was something that did annoy her. And that I think was a step forward...

I: and would you say that that was a technique that she modelled and picked up on the course? Is that a technique that the course used quite a lot? Or is it something that...

G: I think it was a personal -- I think that's something that she had picked up herself and that was working. Whether she picked it up from someone on the course I wouldn't be able to say. But it's not a confrontation technique that we had taught on the course -- it was her own thing.

I: and she'd also made some progress in her future direction, hadn't she?

G: yeah, she had had two very clear ideas of where she wants to go. She wants to go to Bicton to study veterinary science...

I: I think she moved towards health and social care, didn't she?

G: absolutely -- that was the other option. Having done her work experience where she worked with a volunteer agency that works with disabled adults, she did then look quite seriously at the health and social care side of things -- and I think both, by the end of the course, she had definitely picked one... but she was very clear that one of the two would be the way to go.

I: excellent. Can we talk about **Steve**, then? Do you feel that he continued to progress throughout the rest of the course?

G: Erm... Steve is an interesting character. I think the sun came out in the residential was that he was very keen to please -- that's not something that never went away. But he definitely grew in terms of his personality. He became less and less control, in the sense that you saw more and more of what was genuinely him, and less that was who he thought other people wanted him to be. It never, in my opinion, completely went away... he definitely made progress towards being comfortable in the group, around being himself as opposed to being, you know, a fictional version of the group wanted him to be...

I: or that he thought the group wanted to be... I remember at least one incident where he got that very wrong!

G: absolutely -- and I think it was through those mistakes, actually, several made on the residential and a few made after, that actually kind of helped break that mould, and allowed him... the chinks in his persona that he created made him realise that, actually, people were more interested in him being genuine than in some kind of act. And I think it's tough for him to break that is completely, because it's clearly a coping strategy that some time. But to make the first move and to start that process -- he definitely did that.

I: so you're suggesting that the intensive nature of the residential trip kind of forced that to a head?

G: absolutely.

I: the cracks showed because he couldn't keep it up 24 seven...

G: no -- that's exactly it. There is no privacy in that sense -- there's nowhere to go and be yourself. If you are putting on it is 100% the whole time -- which is an awful long time to stay in character.

I: and would you say that he -- apart from perhaps gaining some understanding of recognition of what he was doing... well, would you say that he consciously gained any recognition that, would you think it is adapted his behaviour slightly during the rest?

G: I don't know how conscious it was, but he certainly became more accepted in the group the less the persona was there, and the more genuine he was, the more he was accepted -- whether he consciously made that link, I'm not sure. It was hard to say. Certainly he didn't completely change and drop the persona -- so if he was conscious of it, it wasn't to a point where he decided to act on it.

I: would you say that and yet the more positive skills that we have identified that he showed during the residential course were developed or manifested any further during the rest of the time? Because we noted this ability to get involved and to take a lead in things (absolutely) and to be enthusiastic, and to try to get others to do so...

G: certainly in the practical elements of the rest of the course -- the community project, the final challenge... I mean, in the final challenge he was fantastic: he was splitting logs, he was actively engaging with the other volunteers and the clients... it was really... I think group being backed in for dropped a lot more, and he became very genuine because he was very involved with that task.

I: yes, from my recollection it wasn't that he put on his act, as it were, and was overbearing in doing so -- because the task he was doing required working quite calmly with others, and he very much took his turn and did his bit -- rather than trying to dominate proceedings.

G: absolutely. And I think that that physical work on the community project as well really felt on that, because it is clearly a skill he has -- to grapple with that physical elements of the course -- and I think that having something that was within his comfort zone as a skill meant that he was able to drop the persona because he was more comfortable with the activities he was doing. He definitely stepped up and took a leadership role on several patients during the residential and during the final challenge as well.

I: so especially the outdoor and practical elements brought the best out of him?

G: yeah, definitely.

I: or the last one I've got here is **Martin** -- what would you say about his progress subsequent to the week away?

G: Martin, like Carla, is someone who is very aware of what... can change about him, but is very unwilling to actually put the change into place. And that manifests itself as a very negative response to activities that were designed to help him change.

I: and thereby would cast light on his failings in those areas.

G: absolutely. I think less a change in him as a change in the group's approach to him. It was quite noticeable that his negativity around these activities that he saw as a threat because they were a change...

I: revealing in some way?

G: yes. And the group started to get quite annoyed with the fact that he was being quite negative and resistant, and I think they realised the impact that his behaviour was having on the group. And that had one of two effects of him: either he joined in and it had a really positive effect -- and when that happens he got a lot out of it -- but the other effects was that he simply disengaged completely, and he continued, as he did on the residential, used his mobile phone as a way of removing himself from the group -- and on a couple of patient actually want out of the classroom.

I: he was capable of more active sabotage as well, wasn't he?

G: he was. I think its capacity to change was far greater than the actual change that took place. And I don't think that that was necessarily linked to the course or the course content – I think it was largely his approach in that he decided quite early on that he wasn't interested in changing to the extent that the course was time to help him change. And so it became quite opposed to any, kind of, help to change. So, it's an interesting one -- it's hard to say whether that was a fault on the part of the programme or the delivery, or whether it was something that, no matter how well it delivered... it's difficult to say.

I: it's an interesting question: extent to which this course relies on the willingness of its participants address and adopt change. Because whereas it would be easy to say, "of course they need to be ready and willing", you can always point to examples where they certainly aren't ready and willing at the beginning -- but do change, nonetheless, throughout the course. Perhaps for me it's the ones who are most ready to change, but not willing, that don't make progress, in that less not much else to discover before they realise... there is very little that they have to go through to discover that they're capable of change that they already know. Whereas in the case of some who have to make some progress... who need to be opened up and brought out a little of themselves, and then discover that there are new horizons beyond, the first shift makes the second more possible. I don't know if that makes any sense to you.

G: yes, it absolutely does -- and I think that in some parts it is the job of the programme to be able to bring about the change in some way. So for someone not to change its always in part the fault of the programme, in terms of content delivery... you know, something hasn't engaged them. Equally, there has to be an effort at some point in the programme for them to actually accept the change because otherwise it can never work, because you're delivering a program to 12 or 15 students - it's not possible to make a programme so that every single one of them has the ideal course that will allow them to change. So there is give and take on both parts, you know, and I think in the case that there was very little give. So I think that although as programme providers we have to take some responsibility for that, equally the fact that he was so unwilling to bend may our job nearly impossible. And I think with Martin more than others it was a case of, actually, we were doing something right because he was clearly aware that there were changes that were possible to be made, and that the programme was helping, but would have helped him, to make those changes -- and he actually made the decision not to. So in that sense I we were doing almost as much as we could to provide that ...

I: ... and bringing in that awareness that he was has responsibility is something positive -- that may influence him to make a different choice in the future in another environment.

G: yeah -- and ultimately that's all you can do, you know, it's that old adage "you can take a horse to water..."

I: because of the level of compulsion on a course like this strong, is it?

G: no -- and it absolutely can't be, because we're forcing people to do things when they're not changing. That's the entire point of the course: it has to be led by the students -- they have to make that choice -- and I said that all of them, but to Martin in particular, several times: that no one is making them do this. You're here because you've chosen this course, you want to benefit from it, and if you don't want to, you're free to leave -- no one is keeping you here. It's not like a school course where you have to be there from 9 to 3 -- if you want to say to me, "this isn't for me – I want to leave" then I will withdraw you, and that's absolutely fine. And the fact that Martin didn't do that makes me think that there was some kind of struggle within himself -- that he was aware that there were changes that he needed to make, and that he knew the course was pointing in the right direction, but that he just couldn't quite make himself do the things required...

I: but there was something about the atmosphere where that was happening that continued to draw him back... and probably similar to Carla, she felt some kind of refuge here, some sense of belonging, even if she wasn't willing to the extent that the others were to commit to the process it was asking people to go through.

G: absolutely. And I think that in both those cases it shows an awareness that there were positive changes that would have had an impact on their lives, but for some reason there

were, you know, influences either within the course or with other aspects of their lives that were preventing them from actually making those changes as effectively as we would have liked.

I: and the last question quickly ask you, then, is how representative do you think that group was of the young people and the work that you generally do on that course?

G: that group, in terms of the courses that I have run, is one of the more challenging groups that I've had. For the group and individuals that were on it, I think that they made good progress; in terms of the progress I would expect from most groups, they could make as much progress as I would normally expect them to make.

I: You mean in terms of what the group were able to do as a unit out there in the world, in a physical environment?

G: absolutely. So as a group, they didn't perform as well as a team as I would expect most groups to do. But individually, I think they all made very valuable progress -- and a similar kind of progress that I would expect from other individuals on a course like this. I think that the main issues group work that they didn't buy into the team aspect of the course in a way that other groups have -- and I think that's potentially what pulled down the likes of Martin and Carla in terms of not having the same sense of a group unit...

I: the loyalty, almost?

G: yeah, that's it. It's very hard if you consider yourself to be one in a collection of individuals to stand up and say, "I'm prepared to make a change" -- because a very hard place to be, because you're accepting that there are things about you that need changing, you know, and that's a hard thing for anyone to do. And the process of creating a team is that there are not standing there is an individual with an a collection of individuals, standing there as a member of a team with the mutual support and respect of the rest of the group -- when they're willing to make that move and say, "I will change". And I think for this group, not to have managed to create that same dynamic as other teams and still have made the individual progress that most of them made is brilliant. And I think, it is in many ways customers to each of those individuals that their level of courage in actually stepping up into changing and growing as a result of the course despite that...

I: ... so they had to do it more alone, and normally it would be easier for them to make progress as part of a group -- but it was instead a collection of individuals largely doing it alone...

G: absolutely. And for them still to make progress is actually very valuable for all of them.

I: is anything else you'd like to add about the process, or anything like that?

G: I think we've about covered it.

Appendix L: Observation notes, study

Monday 18th Oct

Arrived at 9:30 at Guildhall Campus. Heard minibus not booked due to admin mix-up. Several boys ask to go out / home until lunch. Others stay in the classroom surfing, facebook, watching shoot-up game youtube extracts. 6 play Trivial Pursuits, Cranium (which goes down well). 4 girls and 1 boy go shopping with £150 after lunch to buy food for the whole trip after a planning session the previous week. Some tension and disgruntlement in the group at the wait, but the time passes quickly enough. Minibus arrives after 3pm; Steve suggests human chain to get bags into van and minibus. Ged: best group ever for loading. En route several complaining about the distance, esp Kyle. On arrival much complaining about 'shithole' and spiders in the bathroom. Once fire lit and tea served, much better. Short 'find the key' activity required they walk in a line, count steps and arc as a group clockwise from a fixed point. Group separates at start, goes off in different directions, takes 20 mins before they get back together to agree on new direction. Carla starts leading and then hangs back when the others go off, waiting for them to come back to her. Eventually she plus Martin go across. Martin in a deep sulk focusing on phone reception. Says he wants to home. Kat similarly searching for signal. Both facing away, hoods up, when rest of group is listening to instructor. In planning session for next day groups takes over 20 mins to disjointedly plan the next day's activities. Carla writes it up after taking control of the discussion, but few collective decisions made. 2 folders with activities in, but Carla read from one while the other was unopened. They did not read many of the overall instructions that guide planning. Dinner a great success with sausages, mash, gravy, carrots and beans, all well cooked. This improves mood greatly and receives compliments. Clean-up goes well. Games in lounge until late; wood-burning stove becomes centre. Kyle fascinated by fire – keeps wanting to put things in it. Boys go upstairs to play music and play poker. This continues until 2am, at which time Ged goes in to tell them to be quiet. All sleep soon after.

Tue 19th Oct

Day starts at 7:30 with cockerel. Naomi and Amy in position having breakfast. Cooked doesn't materialise after boys rise late. Some have to be chased with a saucepan and spoon. When Sam arrives with planning sheet he points out that participants haven't read that they need to build in travelling time, so ask them to re-plan. This is fractious and disordered. Kyle keeps pulling the conversation off-track on purpose. Carla disowns the plan. Naomi and Carla eventually take on navigation of minibus to climbing site. They get us there with 2 wrong turnings, fairly quickly identified and corrected. Carla refuses to believe that driver would continue to knowingly drive in the wrong direction if directed to.

On arrival students put on harnesses and helmets. On walk to wall some lag behind, esp. Kat. At wall there are 2 climbs and groups. Sam asks 1 to climb, 1 to belay, one to spot. These do not always rotate so many do not assume all roles. He very pleased to complete both climbs; Ba very good although never done it before. Amy shaking with fear but goes much further than she thinks she can with encouragement. Says she didn't enjoy it but is surprised at what she did. At one point 4 boys disappear out of sight contrary to instructions to smoke. This leads to a loss of 'beans' taking the group into the negative. Citing injustice, Carla and Kat leave towards the end in different direction. For 10 mins they wait for the whole group to come to them. Eventually they come back with beckoning. Fractious atmosphere. At bus Kat loses temper as Sam tries to lead review but she wants the door unlocked so she can get her lunch. In bus rings friend and calls everyone else 'wankers' within earshot. Their laughter provokes worse language. Lunch in bus. On return to base Kat and Kyle zone out and refuse to participate in next activity, planning. Kyle lies along bench and keeps asking what the point is and why they should work for no money; he compares it to school. Planning activity requires that they all explain the rules for respecting the countryside. They start making a list and stop halfway through, eventually allocating rules to each member at random and getting them to largely improvise their reasons – which are generally poor. After this session students agree on a 20 min break. Boys go off and play football, coming back 7 mins late. This leads to more docked beans: -8. This causes more tension with the rest of the group, although boys, especially Martin, unrepentant. Holly, Amy, Steve and Naomi dejected at demotivation of most of the group, saying that they were doing their bit but that the others were spoiling it. I suggested that if they felt that they had a better attitude and more maturity the challenge of the course was to take responsibility for influencing the attitude and behaviour of those less motivated members of the group; sitting back and complaining wasn't an option. In the next session, searching, Naomi and He spoke up after a while to push the group towards decisions. Outside, the search activity required they hold a line formation. This happened, but kept getting wider. However, they found the helmets fairly quickly. For the main activity of finding the missing person a similar widening fan happened. Interestingly, the gaps were widest around Kat (who had just earlier been swearing at everyone) and between Martin and Steve, who had just given up the leadership after being told by Kat he was 'crap' at it. Naomi takes role with Jake, who steps in forcefully. He seemed upset, but later said he was following the path as it diverged from parallel with the wall. Martin found the missing person – Sam said afterwards by luck as there were large gaps either side of him. However, the victory lifts the mood and pushes the beans into the positive. In the review Sam says that the group should plan in the evenings for the next day, coming up with initial plans for each. Dinner is pizza and chips from Jake and Kyle, both undercooked and under-portioned. Others pick up the pieces, putting on extra chips. Arguments over who gets slices of which pizzas. Kyle eventually ordered by Jake to do his rota washing up. After a break Ged gathers all round the stove for tennis ball time. Ged, Kat, Steve, Naomi focus on the positives. I note that the group seems happiest when close, especially

around the fire. Outside they spread, which is when the difficulties occur. Then planning, in which Steve and Naomi take the lead with the navigation and pre-planning of the rest. Timings worked out in 20 mins with staff leaving the room. Measured, respectful discussion in a good atmosphere, which lasts the evening as all remain to play Scrabble, Monopoly and chat.

Wednesday 20th Oct

Gradual appearances for breakfast with Carla again in sleeping bag. Kyle agreed previous evening to do breakfast but swore at Josh when he tried to wake him up. Dan and Jake cook bacon and eggs instead, with assistance from me. Martin on washing up duty, but comes late, sits in duvet and leaves it too late. Kyle gets onto sandwiches late but completes, leaving all the food and tools out. Much left over in the sink and on the sides. Just before 9:00 Carla and Al go out to smoke. Late start again. In planning review team picks many holes in plans, saying that not everyone was consulted; team gets fractious. Staff find many problems with plan. To bus late; Carla demands another fag break. Navigation session in lodge – several resist the sit-down, teacher-led activity. Martin, Carla flit in and out, citing boredom and ease one moment and then taking the lead and getting absorbed the next. When finished, another break before going in bus to site. Bridge-building: Naomi, Steve and Carla take charge; Martin refuses to take part, tying George up with ropes instead. The ropes and barrel are lashed together fairly quickly. Steve takes physical control, tipping the bridge over into the river then scrabbling precariously over to the other side. The team decide to set up a handrail rope to help others to cross. They do, with 2 getting wet feet, including Kyle who has come round having crossed and gets wet trying again. Dan stays until last and acts as anchor. More by luck than judgement the bridge holds. Then to lunch; this time Kat tells the others to get on with the debrief quickly so that lunch can begin. Several beans lost due to Martin refusing to take part – when He expresses her annoyance Kyle slaps her down. In the bus Kyle throws biscuits and makes rude comments. Several play hacky-sack outside the bus to much mirth. Spider's web: 4 boys sit out initially, but after George moves in to help all the others follow. All 12 in a small area working together, they complete the task fairly quickly and successfully. Back to the bus and to the lodge. On the way we stop for petrol. Kyle and Jake's banter becomes racist, then they start shouting sexist phrases at passing women. I intervene, asking Ged to demand we stop the bus until the windows are closed and the language addressed. Again, Kyle insults Holly with sexual language as she tries to intervene. The journey back is less coarse. On arrival several say they don't want to do the night navigation, outnumbering those who do. Several girls complain about the boys' language and attitude; Carla becomes fixed in a negative mindset, insisting that the group will fail and that others cannot change. Others discuss how they could help change the atmosphere and how they could communicate their feelings and ideas more clearly. Martin comes in eating and refuses to finish quickly, delaying the next session. The next training session is knots. Many get involved but again several switch

in and out between engagement and helpfulness, and refusal and disruption. Both Martin and Kyle refuse to participate, saying that the instructor has annoyed them. The group do not organise teaching each other the knots so take 15 mins to make a decision as to how and when to demonstrate their knowledge. In doing so half need special dispensation or help to complete their knot. Finally, 50 mins is left for the pipe run. After more fractious discussion they agree not to do the activity this evening, but to use the time for discussion and planning tomorrow instead. In the whole group discussion the air is cleared a little, with some speaking up about the failure of the group to work as a team at times that day. Carla curls up in a ball in the chair and refuses to speak. She and Kat cook an excellent spaghetti Bolognese, which improves the mood. After dinner Ged gets everyone round for a tennis ball discussion. This one is more extensive with most speaking – although Carla again curls up and refuses to say a word. Matt admits to have being ‘a complete prick today’ and pledges to work better tomorrow. Several speak about the need to listen to each other. Several also acknowledge how much better the team activities went than the day before.

Afterwards, board games and a break before a 2 hour planning session. Carla has had a change of heart having threatened to leave, and now takes control by writing down, but asking Naomi to chair the discussion. Many contribute, but Kyle sits in the corner and graffiti himself with marker pen. When asked to contribute he gets up to scrub it off. When finished he comes back and draws attention to his arms. He and Kyle, Martin continue a film / sexual banter throughout much of the session and contribute little. He and Kyle talk together off-task. This time they come up with full plans, teams and contingencies for each task.

Thursday 21st October

Although Bron and George are down to do the breakfast, neither emerge before and Naomi steps in to do a cooked breakfast. Bron then does a 50 minute washing-up session. 4 volunteer to do sandwiches. Everyone is ready on time, aided by starting their day as planned at 8:50 to ensure that everyone has had a cigarette and time warning before the staff arrive at 9. Plans gain approval except for the send and receive task; the staff warn that their first 2 plans will not be adequate due to the distance and that they should plan it further. They do, but there is an element of wishful thinking in how visible they believe their signs will be. The group set off at 9:20. The first activity was abseiling, off a 100m bridge. The drop was challenging for a few, especially for Amy and Kat, but generally the group was encouraging and supportive, with a good atmosphere among those waiting. All completed the task. After this the group travelled to a rock face for the group lower abseil challenge. For this the group had to rig and control the descent themselves with a staff member acting as safety. Although only one was being lowered at once and the rock face was only 5m, all the rest were required to hold the rope and coordinate its being fed to the member descending. The beginning of the descent was also awkward, with members having to climb down the rock backwards – this was nerve-wracking for several. Many, especially

the boys, did not pay full attention to their responsibilities holding the rope, turning around and carrying on often puerile conversations. This led to several people feeling unsafe in the descent even if they had been confident in the longer abseil – Naomi for example. In addition there was loud puerile talk at the top, and Carla and Kat were telling me to shut up at the bottom until I told Kat to stop. She reacted instantly with hostility, but didn't repeat the behaviour. In the debrief afterwards, after 2 or 3 had said that they thought that the activity had gone alright, Naomi said that she hadn't felt safe and specifically mentioned Kyle as not being attentive. Kyle fought back, but Naomi lost her temper a little and forced her demanded her right to her interpretation of her point of view. He also said that she hadn't felt safe, and was again (although more subtly) pounced upon, especially by Carla. Interestingly as Carla tried to undermine Heather by placing the blame for her sense of lack of safety on her behaviour, Kyle intervened by saying that Carla didn't like Holly, and asked her to deny it – which she didn't. Carla and Kat reverted to saying how repetitive and pointless this arguing was, but Ged and the instructors countered by saying that this had been the best, because the most honest, review so far.

After lunch, during which several attempted some lateral rock climbing with Ged, the group was driven down to the reservoir for the send and receive activity. 1 group was left at the bridge, while my group was taken to the other side. At the water's edge these 6 started throwing stones and complaining that the others were too far away and the task therefore impossible. I heard later that the others tried really hard to get their part of the message across. At our end we could see the signals but no one in my group managed to look with attention at the opposite group for more than a few seconds at a time, and therefore couldn't begin to decode the message. The disruptive behaviour worsened, especially from Jake, culminating in him abusing the staff member, Stuart, who then called off the activity. The 6 at this point objected and remained while Stuart, Kat and I returned to the minibus with Steve, who was quite down. I talked to him about his previous team-focus and suggested that if he started to hang his head others would too. Stuart retrieved the other 5, complaining vociferously that they had been on task and scuppered by us. On meeting again with the others we decided to debrief back at the lodge, although there were some recriminations already on the bus. Soon after setting off we realised that He had not done up her seatbelt, and refused to do so after having been told in derogatory terms by Kyle. This led to the bus pulling over, and with He refusing to acknowledge anyone or move, Steve putting the seatbelt in for her. Jake at this point told Kyle he had gone too far. On arrival at the lodge Holly went to bed and the others discussed the situation, with no-one accepting responsibility for having spoken offensively to Holly, and several instead trying to say that she had been juvenile and unreasonable – while Naomi tried to say that she had been similar when younger, and hadn't felt able to stand up for herself verbally. Kyle took this discussion off into a tangent about perceived fairness in Ged's treatment of him. Although no definite conclusion was reached, the air felt clearer afterwards. Enough beans were awarded for the map for the final activity. Carla and Kat said they

didn't want to take part; Jake gave a rousing speech about the need to finish the week on a high by everyone trying their best as a team rather than dropping back and ending on a low. A break for hacky-sacking and scrabble lightened the mood; playing with Carla and Bron revealed the unaffected lighter side of both, with Kat also joining in and having a good time. A roast dinner from Amy and Steve was appreciated by all, and Kat and Kyle came outside with me to chop wood and prepare a fire, which Kat particularly became absorbed in. Asked to come together to begin cleaning, nearly all got stuck in without a murmur. Then in planning, Carla and Kat again said at first they didn't want to get involved, but soon enough they were both drawn in as all the other members, including George and Kyle, moved into earshot of the groups and started listening. Kat used the fire as a way of moving in without losing face; Carla ended up entering into an equal discussion with Holly, Naomi, Steve and George about routes and planning. The mood for the rest of the evening was quiet and upbeat, with Kyle opening up about his family and several others quietly listening. All went to bed earlier than any other night, with Kat having laid the fire ready for tomorrow morning.

Friday 22nd October

45 min earlier start this morning to clean down and pack in preparation for leaving – no return to the house after the morning's activities. There was a quiet, purposeful atmosphere. Breakfast was served, with volunteers pitching in to make sure it was done and sandwiches made. Others swept, checked the rooms. Several had their fags 10 mins before departure to ensure that the group was ready to go on time.

The final challenge entailed the team splitting into 2 groups (chosen by Ged). The groups went to different locations in Dartmoor a few miles apart. Ged led one group; Sa let the other with myself and Kat in, alongside Jake, Kat, Holly, Naomi, Dan. The first stage was navigating from the car park to a hill on the map where a flagpole would be found. Naomi took the lead on this after her previous navigation experience. No-one lagged far behind in the uphill walk. Naomi's direction was not accurate, however, and Sam had to intervene increasingly to help us get to the destinations. On several occasions group members were subtly looking to Jo to take a lead (army training), but he didn't do so. George was very quiet and did not help carrying any of the kit until near the end of activity – eventually taking one end of the flagpole for one stint as it became increasingly clear that Holly wasn't strong enough to do so for long. On reaching the flagpole location Kat offered to climb up and get it, which she did efficiently and without fuss. With much help from Sam, the group worked out which direction to the hill where we were to meet the others. Near the hill I had been asked to 'lose the use of my legs' and become the 'guardian', from when I would have to be carried up the hill except for the 1 min use of 2 'pill's'. I had showed Jake how to do a seat carry the night before, thinking it might be useful that day. He didn't offer either to do it or to show anyone else how, so I taught Bron and Dan. They carried me for 2 stints before I took a 'pill' and ran across the river. Bron, Jake and George carried me more, then reinforcements from the other group came who had already reached the

final summit. After taking my second pill and running to near the top, Jo took me most of the rest of the way in a fireman's lift in the sight of the whole group. We all made it with the kit to the final summit and raised the flag with 5 mins to go. Overall my group, I felt, had done just enough to get there knowing that they would receive extra help from Sam and myself.

After this we shared highs and lows as a group. Most students cited the arguments as lows, and picked out moments such as successful activities and the evening social time as their highs. I suggested that the arguments had actually been useful in helping bring the group together. After this meeting all walked down to the minibus and were driven home.

Appendix M: Interview questions, Main study

Prince's Trust Interview Questions

A: Pre-intervention

Tell me about 3 moments in the last year when you really felt you learned something - inside or outside college. (Interviewees have received this question in advance)

- What happened?
- Why do you remember it?
- Has it made a difference since?

How do you feel about the residential course in 2 weeks? (given standard prompt list of emotions)

What do you like about college? (subjects, situations, people)

What don't you like about college?

Put these in order of importance to you, and explain why. (Diamond 9 formation)

1. Understanding other people's points of view
2. Learning useful knowledge through your courses
3. Arguing your point of view and persuading others
4. Being confident
5. Working well with others
6. Listening carefully
7. Writing clearly and powerfully
8. Getting involved in issues you care about
9. Getting good results in your courses and exams

Which subjects or activities at college make you want to try hard?

Is there anything at college you think you could do better?

- In your studies
- As a person

The College puts you in a team of 6 and gives you the time to raise money for a charity of your choice. When discussing which charity to support, would you: (options on separate cards – ask students to choose 1 or 2 most likely responses)

- Suggest your favourite charity and persuade the others to choose it
- Suggest several charities you like and see what the others think
- Ask the others which charities they support
- Listen to what others are saying and keep quiet
- Let the others decide
- Say you're not interested in the project

In your fundraising group, which role or roles would you most likely take? (each role presented on a separate card)

- *Leader* – you take responsibility for the project and try to organise the others
- *Ideas person* – you make useful suggestions about how to raise the money
- *Volunteer* – you get on with whatever the group agrees to do
- *Spectator* – you sit back and watch what the others do
- *Critic* – you ask tough questions about what the group agrees to do
- *Objector* – you say you don't want to be a part of the activity

Your group has one person in each of these roles. How would you get on with each one?

Do you feel respected at college?

- By teachers?
- By other students?

What do you want to achieve by the time you finish college?

- In your studies
- As a person

Is there anything else you'd like to say or to ask me?

B: Post-intervention

Tell me about 3 moments from the week in Dartmoor when you really felt you learned something. (Interviewees have received this question in advance)

- What happened?
- Why do you remember it?
- Has it made a difference since?

How do you feel about the week on Dartmoor now? (given standard prompt list of emotions)

What did you enjoy about the week? (subjects, situations, people)

What didn't you enjoy about it?

Last time you put these in order of importance to you. Can you now look at them again and see whether or not, in the light of your experiences on the course, you would move any.

(Diamond 9 formation)

1. Understanding other people's points of view
2. Learning useful knowledge through your courses
3. Arguing your point of view and persuading others
4. Being confident
5. Working well with others
6. Listening carefully
7. Writing clearly and powerfully
8. Getting involved in issues you care about
9. Getting good results in your courses and exams

Which activities on the Dartmoor course made you want to try hard?

As a result of the course, is there anything you think you could do better now?

- In your studies
- As a person

Last time I gave you an imaginary fundraising situation where in a group of 7 you had to agree on a charity to support. You said you would most likely respond in these ways (lay out interviewee's previous choices). Think about how you worked in groups on the Dartmoor course. Do you still think the same way or would you like to change your response? (options on separate cards – ask students to choose 1, 2 or 3 most likely responses)

- Suggest your favourite charity and persuade the others to choose it
- Suggest several charities you like and see what the others think
- Ask the others which charities they support
- Listen to what others are saying and keep quiet
- Let the others decide
- Say you're not interested in the project

Last time I asked you which roles you would most likely take in that fundraising group. Thinking back to how you worked in groups on Dartmoor, do you still think the same way or would you like to change your response? (each role presented on a separate card)

- *Leader* – you take responsibility for the project and try to organise the others
- *Ideas person* – you make useful suggestions about how to raise the money
- *Volunteer* – you get on with whatever the group agrees to do
- *Spectator* – you sit back and watch what the others do
- *Critic* – you ask tough questions about what the group agrees to do
- *Objector* – you say you don't want to be a part of the activity

Last time I asked you to imagine that your fundraising group has one person in each of these roles, and I asked you how you would get on with each one. Think back to the roles people took on activities and in the house in Dartmoor. Tell me again how you think you would respond to someone in each of these roles.

Did you feel respected on the Dartmoor course?

- By teachers?
- By other students?

Have your ideas about what you want to achieve on the Prince's Trust course, and more generally in your life, changed – or have they stayed the same?

- In your studies
- As a person

Is there anything else you'd like to say or to ask me?

C: Post-post-intervention

Tell me about 3 moments since the Dartmoor course when you really felt you learned something. (Interviewees have received this question in advance)

- What happened?
- Why do you remember it?
- Has it made a difference since?

What are your strongest memories of the Dartmoor course now?

What have you enjoyed since the course? (subjects, situations, people)

What haven't you enjoyed?

Last time you put these in order of importance to you. Can you now look at them again and see whether or not, in the light of your experiences since the course, you would move any.

(Diamond 9 formation)

1. Understanding other people's points of view
2. Learning useful knowledge through your courses
3. Arguing your point of view and persuading others
4. Being confident
5. Working well with others
6. Listening carefully
7. Writing clearly and powerfully
8. Getting involved in issues you care about
9. Getting good results in your courses and exams

What have you been doing since the Dartmoor course that has made you try hard?

Is there anything you think you're doing differently since going on the course, or isn't there? If there is, can you give me examples?

- In your studies
- As a person

Last time I gave you an imaginary fundraising situation where in a group of 7 you had to agree on a charity to support. You said you would most likely respond in these ways (lay out interviewee's previous choices). **Think about how you worked in groups on the Dartmoor course. Do you still think the same way or would you like to change your response?** (options on separate cards – ask students to choose 1, 2 or 3 most likely responses)

- Suggest your favourite charity and persuade the others to choose it
- Suggest several charities you like and see what the others think
- Ask the others which charities they support
- Listen to what others are saying and keep quiet
- Let the others decide
- Say you're not interested in the project

Last time I asked you which roles you would most likely take in that fundraising group. Thinking back to how you worked in groups on Dartmoor, do you still think the same way or would you like to change your response? (each role presented on a separate card)

- *Leader* – you take responsibility for the project and try to organise the others
- *Ideas person* – you make useful suggestions about how to raise the money
- *Volunteer* – you get on with whatever the group agrees to do
- *Spectator* – you sit back and watch what the others do
- *Critic* – you ask tough questions about what the group agrees to do
- *Objector* – you say you don't want to be a part of the activity

Last time I asked you to imagine that your fundraising group has one person in each of these roles, and I asked you how you would get on with each one. Think about the roles people you've worked with have taken in activities since the Dartmoor course. Tell me again how you think you would respond to someone in each of these roles.

Did you feel respected on the Prince's Trust course?

- By teachers?
- By other students?

What are your ideas now about what you want to achieve on this Trust course, and more generally in your life?

- In your studies
- As a person

Is there anything else you'd like to say or to ask me?

Appendix N: Charity task, Main study

Charity task question – participants chose up to three of the below.

“The College puts you in a team of 6 and gives you the time to raise money for a charity of your choice. When discussing which charity to support, what would you do?”

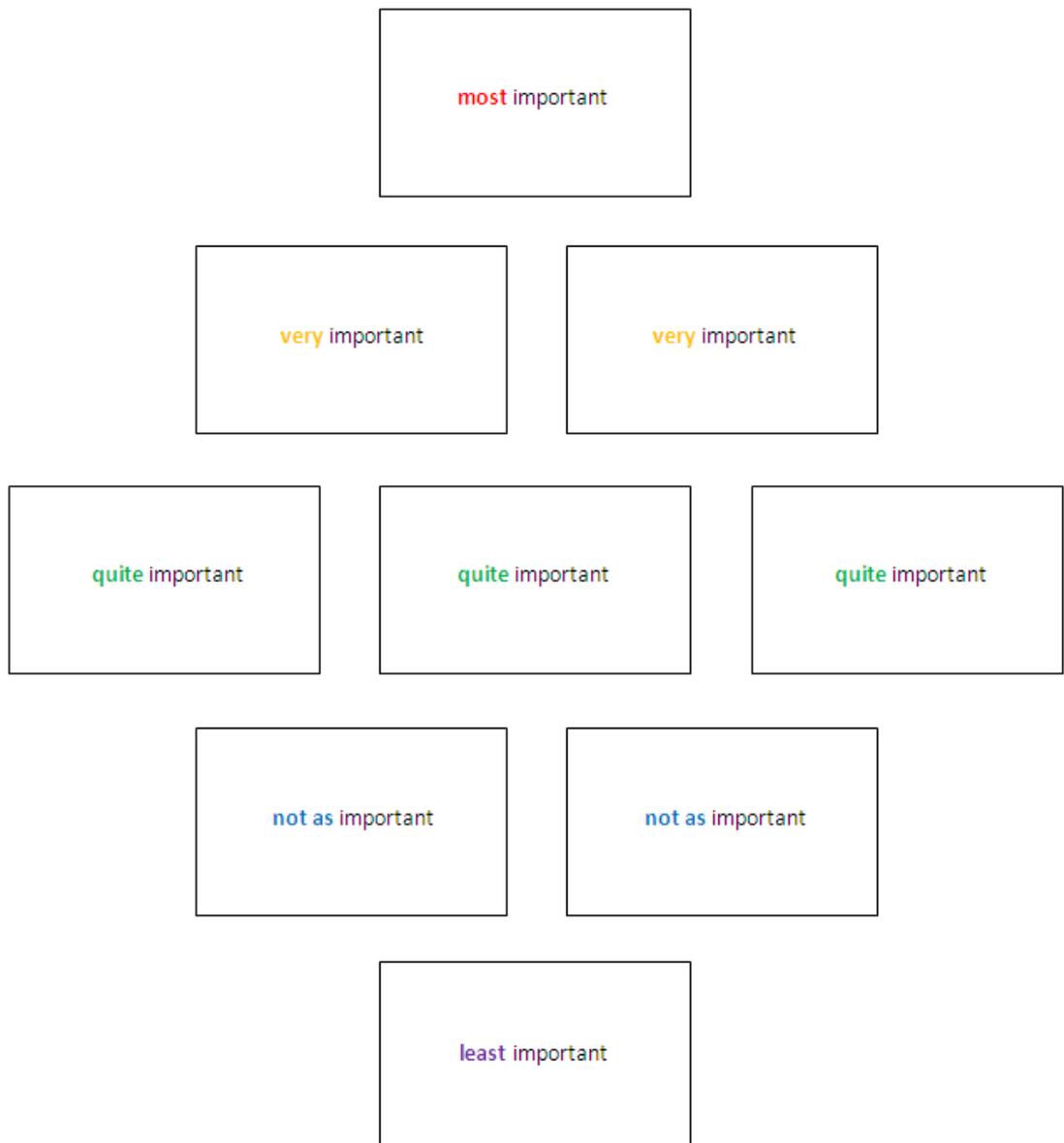
- Suggest your favourite charity and persuade the others to choose it
- Suggest several charities you like and see what the others think
- Ask the others which charities they support
- Listen to what others are saying and keep quiet
- Let the others decide
- Say you’re not interested in the project
- Criticise other people’s suggestions

Appendix O: Diamond nine templates and categories, Main study

Diamond 9 template:

Put these in order of importance to you, and explain why.

Please arrange the cards in this order, and get ready to say why you've done so.



Diamond 9 categories: Team work skills (participants ordered these as above)

- Understanding other people's ideas
- Learning useful knowledge through your courses
- Arguing your point of view and persuading others
- Being confident
- Working well with other people
- Listening carefully
- Writing clearly and powerfully
- Getting involved in issues you care about
- Getting good results in your courses and exams

Appendix P: Group role cards

This is the text from the 6 group role cards:

Leader: you take responsibility for the project and try to organise the others

Volunteer: you get on with whatever the group agrees to do

Ideas person: you make useful suggestions about how to raise the money

Spectator: you sit back and watch what the others do

Critic: you ask tough questions about what the group agrees to do

Objector: you say you don't want to take part in the activity

Appendix Q: Coding tree, Main study

Tree Nodes			
Name	Sources	References	
Arguments, conflict and conciliation	0	0	
Arguing and persuading	0	0	
Arguing your point of view, value of	4	5	
Arguing your point, decreased value of	4	6	
Argument and persuasion, lack of value of	8	8	
Persuading, doesn't see self as	1	1	
Persuading, increased sense of value of	1	1	
Arguments, anger	0	0	
Anger at critic	2	2	
Anger at sense of not being listened to	2	2	
Anger, fall into spectator role because of	3	3	
Angry when leader is perceived to be self-serving	1	1	
Arguments always followed by conciliation	2	2	
Arguments caused by lack of participation	1	1	
Arguments caused by people not listening	4	5	
Arguments leading to improved attitudes	8	12	
Arguments leading to some feeling they couldn't speak	1	1	
Arguments revealing people's true feelings	2	2	
Arguments, didn't enjoy	4	5	
Arguments, made feel angry	2	2	
Arguments, motivated to intervene by	1	2	
Arguments, perceived as inevitable	2	3	
Arguments, seen as pointless	1	1	
Arguments, step back from	3	3	
Arguments, try hard to avoid	1	1	
Frustration at group's lack of achievement	1	1	
Challenge and difference	0	0	
Challenge	0	0	
Challenge, new approaches adopted in response to	1	1	
Challenge, sense of impending	1	1	
Challenge, sense of significant change in response to	3	4	
Challenging experience pays off	9	14	
Pushed to do something at the time	5	5	
Newness	0	0	
Getting away, value of course for	2	2	
New activities, fear of	1	1	
New activities, pleasure at encountering	1	1	
New activity fails to satisfy	1	1	
New environments, fear of	4	4	
New people, fear of	4	4	
New people, feels shy around	2	2	
New people, less afraid of meeting	1	1	
New situations for learning, value of	1	1	
Past events, significant	0	0	
Experience, sense of building up valuable	3	3	
Past experiences, referring to relevant	18	41	
Past mistakes, learning from	4	5	
Work experience as helping to grow	2	4	

Name	Sources	References
Physical activity	0	0
Active learning, preference for	5	5
Appreciation of physical activities	5	5
Fitness, value of course for	2	2
Scary in a good way	5	5
Prince's Trust course	0	0
Prince's Trust course similar to previous course	1	1
Prince's Trust course, coming on to help with future career	1	1
Prince's Trust course, increased sense of the value of	1	1
Prince's Trust course, negative about	1	1
Prince's Trust course, positive about	3	3
Residential course	0	0
Enjoyed a particular activity	9	10
Enjoyed evenings	9	10
Enjoyed whole course	6	7
Mixed feelings about course	1	1
Residential course, upcoming, excitement about	2	2
Confidence and the future	0	0
Confidence	0	0
Confidence linked to motivation	2	2
Confidence opens up other possibilities	2	2
Confidence, build others'	3	3
Confidence, felt more around others	7	12
Confidence, importance of	11	16
Confidence, lack of	6	6
Confidence, motivated by building	2	2
Confidence, necessity for teamwork	1	1
Confidence, sense of increased	14	27
Confidence, value of course for building	11	13
Confidence, value of job for building	1	1
Self-confidence, expression of	3	3
Future, thoughts about	0	0
Future achievements, ideas of not changed by course	1	1
Future study plans	3	5
Future work scenarios, new ideas gained about	4	4
Future work scenarios, relating to	4	7
Future, feels better prepared for	3	3
Following, abstaining, dissenting	0	0
Critic	0	0
Critic, assume as a negative role	5	5
'Critic', awkwardness of working with	5	5
'Critic', challenging the	4	4
Critic, get angry with	6	6
Critic, group members have adopted role less	1	1
Critic, identifies self as	6	6
Critic, need to be confident to be	1	1
Critic, try to ignore	2	2
'Critic', value of	11	12
Criticise others, unwilling to	2	2
Objector	0	0
Objector, become because no-one's listening to you	1	1
'Objector', comfortable with	4	4
'Objector', frustration with	7	7
Objector, identifies self as	2	2
'Objector', ignore	7	7
'Objector', justified if task is pointless	1	1
'Objector', look to draw in	4	4
'Objector', respect for	4	4
'Objector', seen as letting the team down	2	2
Pretending	0	0
'Pretender', comfortable with	5	5
'Pretender', frustration at	2	2
'Pretender', identifies self as	5	5
Pretender, ignore	2	2
'Pretender', look to draw in	1	1
Spectator	0	0
'Spectator' and 'objector', difference between	2	2
'Spectator', ambivalent towards	2	2
Spectator, comfortable with	1	1
'Spectator', frustration at	8	8
'Spectator', identifies self as	7	9
'Spectator', ignore	8	8
'Spectator', look to draw in	7	7
Spectator, response to depends on knowledge of	1	1
'Spectator', value of	2	4
Volunteer	0	0
Get on with tasks, willingness to	3	4
Volunteer, always gives opinion when being a	2	2

Name	Sources	References
'Volunteer', appreciation for	13	13
Volunteer, associate with shyness	1	1
Volunteer, become because some feel they can't speak	1	1
'Volunteer', encourage	1	1
'Volunteer', identifies self as	4	4
Volunteer, increasingly identifies self as	2	2
Identity and motivation	0	0
Independence	0	0
Independent living, learning	3	3
Independent thinking at college valued	1	1
Look after yourself, value of being able to	2	2
Making a life for yourself, value of	2	2
Maturity, increased from living independently	2	2
Self-reliance, ambivalent about	1	1
Motivation, effort	0	0
Effort, putting in even when you're not really enjoying something	2	3
Effort, sense of not having put in sufficient	1	4
Motivated by desire to help others	8	11
Motivated by final challenge	4	4
Motivated by future reward	3	3
Motivated by girlfriend	1	1
Motivated by others' failure to act	3	4
Motivated by rest of Princes' Trust course	2	3
Motivated by specific activity	2	2
Motivated by thought of group's success	3	4
Motivated by threat	1	1
Motivation linked to 'getting involved'	1	1
Motivation, fades when group members step back	1	1
Motivation, importance of	5	6
Motivation, lack of	6	6
Motivation, lack of because focused on girlfriend's arrival	1	2
Motivation, level of has not changed	1	1
Motivation, seen as linked to mood	1	1
Motivation, sense of increased	3	3
Problem-solving, motivated by	2	2
Trying their best at the moment	1	1
Proving yourself, achieving	0	0
Abilities, wants to show	4	4
Competent, value of feeling	2	2
CV, motivated by improving	4	4
Fears overcome	4	4
Personal achievement, sense of	6	7
Self, understanding of	0	0
Cannot give explanation	2	4
Can't remember relevant experiences	3	9
English language, learning	1	1
Express self, struggling to	6	11
Refuses to talk about an issue or event	2	2
Role, identifies own within group	6	7
Self, able to express	3	3
Self, can't recognise changes in sense of	2	2
Self, insight into current limitations	9	14
Self, not having lived up to own expectations of	2	2
Self, sense of changing for the better	9	10
Understood, importance of feeling	2	2
Leading and decision-making	0	0
Discussion and planning	0	0
Decisions, use of voting to make	2	2
Discussion, agreeing on the best idea through	3	3
Planning, didn't enjoy	2	3
Planning, increased sense of importance of	1	1
Planning, most people unwilling	1	1
Ideas	0	0
'Ideas person', appreciation for	12	12
'Ideas person', identifies self as	10	12
Ideas person, identifies self less as	2	2
'Ideas person', promote to 'leader'	2	2
'Ideas' preferred to 'volunteering'	1	1
Ideas, acknowledges potential clash of	3	3
Ideas, communicating through action	1	1
Ideas, failure to listen to others'	1	1
Ideas, fear of putting own forward	1	1
Ideas, increased value of understanding others'	8	14
Ideas, lack of value of understanding others'	1	1
Ideas, let bad ones be proved wrong	1	1
Ideas, not concerned if own aren't adopted	1	1

Name	Sources	References
Ideas, people more interested in getting across their own than listening to others'	3	5
Ideas, sharing without thinking them through	1	1
Ideas, too many people talking to get across	1	1
Ideas, understanding others' only quite important	1	1
Ideas, value of trying several	2	2
Ideas, value of understanding others'	9	9
Leaders and leadership	0	0
Lead, willingness to	3	5
Lead, willingness to let others	9	9
'Leader', ambivalent towards	4	5
Leader, doesn't want to identify self as	6	6
'Leader', identifies self as	4	4
'Leader', value of	6	6
Leaders, comfortable with	7	7
Leadership, accept from people you like	1	1
Leadership, assume to fill gap	5	7
Leadership, importance of shared	2	3
Leadership, linked to ownership of ideas	5	6
Leading by example	3	4
Questions	0	0
Q01a when did you learn something	8	8
Q01b when did you learn something	7	7
Q01c when did you learn something	7	7
Q02a feelings about course	9	10
Q02b feelings about course	7	7
Q02c feelings about course	6	6
Q03a College likes, dislikes	8	8
Q03b course likes dislikes	6	6
Q03c likes, dislikes since course	7	7
Q04a diamond 9	9	9
Q04b diamond 9	6	6
Q04c diamond 9	7	7
Q05a motivation	9	9
Q05b motivation	7	7
Q05c motivation	7	7
Q06a charity task	9	9
Q06b charity task	6	6
Q06c charity task	5	5
Q07a group roles 1	9	9
Q07b group roles 1	6	6
Q07c group roles 1	6	6
Q08a group roles 2	9	9
Q08b group roles 2	7	8
Q08c group roles 2	6	6
Q09a respect	9	9
Q09b respect	5	5
Q09c respect	6	6
Q10a Achievement by end of course	9	9
Q10b achievement by end of course	7	7
Q10c achievement by end of course	5	5
Q11b what can do better	7	7
Q11c Doing anything differently	4	4
Relating to others	0	0
Communication skills	0	0
'Asking' and 'Suggesting', linking	8	8
Communication skills, sense of own having improved	1	1
Communication skills, value of course for	1	1
Talking freely to others	3	3
Writing clearly and powerfully, increased importance of	1	1
Written communication not valued	10	10
Friends and family	0	0
Friends, hope to make on course	8	10
Friends, improved ability to make	2	2
Friends, standing up for	1	1
'Issues care about' as friends and family	1	1
Groups and teamwork	0	0
Group discussion about progress in spare time	1	1
Group, feels they can work better with this	5	7
Group, people getting on well in	9	15
Group, relations in improved by knowing others better	4	4
Group, sense of cliquishness within	2	2
Group, someone in ignored	1	1
Groups, cautious about working with new in future	4	5
Isolated, feels	3	3
Let down, sense of being by others	3	3
Participants, feels solidarity with	9	13
Team relations, equal valued	2	2

Name	Sources	References
Team roles, willingness to be flexible	1	1
Team working well, recognises	6	9
Team, ability to work in with those you wouldn't choose to	1	1
Team, supporting others in the	4	6
Teamwork and building confidence, linking	1	1
Teamwork skills, value of course for gaining	6	6
Teamwork skills, value of job for building	1	1
Teamwork, increased sense of ability in	7	7
Teamwork, increased sense of importance of	2	3
Teamwork, link to understanding others' ideas	3	3
Trust, lack of in group	1	2
Listening	0	0
Listening to others as only quite important	3	3
Listening, increased ability to	1	1
Listening, increased sense of value of	6	7
Listening, start by	2	3
Listening, value of	9	9
Others	0	0
Others' fears and concerns, understanding	3	6
Others, desire to get more involved with	5	6
Others, desire to get to know better	2	2
Others, encourage participation of for team's sake	4	4
Others, feeling more open with	3	4
Others, increased sense of value of working well with	2	2
Others, lack of value of working well with	1	1
Others, learning what annoys	2	2
Others, not judging	2	2
Others, speak out on behalf of	2	3
Others, value of working well with	7	9
Others, want to help	7	9
Respect	0	0
Respect from others, increased	4	4
Respect, little received because little given	1	1
Respect, value of course for gaining	3	3
Respected by staff and students, feels	12	12
Respected, unsure about feeling	5	5

Appendix R: Additional quotations in support of findings, Main study

¹ Steve: Yeah, it'll be a different environment for me, because I've never been to Dartmoor before, so it's going to be different.

I: So you've been based in Exeter?

Steve: Yeah, I've basically been in Exeter... for all of my life.

I: OK – get you out in the wilderness!

Steve: It's going to get me out... like... I'm going to get lost!

² *I:* What do you think you can do that you couldn't really do before?

Carla: Well, stuff like, doing everything by myself like cooking and cleaning and whatnot, it's really like... really different.

I: For the better? For the worse?

Carla: For the better. It makes me, like, grow up and that.

³ Jake: Erm... I think... I felt I learned that maybe... when I didn't come to college and I just left school... I couldn't really be assed to get up all the time, get a job, I think... when everyone started going – going to college and stuff – left there with nothing to do... I think I learned, maybe to pull my finger out.

I: OK. Was there anything that really brought that together – was there anything that happened?

Jake: Yeah, I was going to get chucked out, like.

I: Ah, you got a warning, did you?

Jake: Yeah, for not doing anything.

I: OK. And has that made a difference?

Jake: Yeah. I used to sit in day in, day out, same thing different day... boring. Now I come to college, like... I can hardly find the time to do anything [laughs]

⁴ Holly: And another one's probably when I did the dog first aid training with Bickton College, because we were out with our dog once and it walked over a load of glass and cut all its paws open... so obviously that was useful because I was able to deal with it and they called the vet who obviously came and sorted it.

⁵ *I:* So what did you show in that last challenge that you had learned during the week?

Bron: Everything. To get up from bed early, abseiling everyone down... conditions...

I: The conditions (yeah) – do you mean the conditions like the weather or your condition?

Bron: My condition!

I: Your condition. OK!

Bron: ... work as a team...

I: So did you enjoy it, that challenge?

Bron: Yeah – I enjoy it, the whole week.

⁶ *I:* So, which particular activities really made you really try hard?

Steve: Probably when we was doing the abseiling off that 100-foot bridge. Cause I know there was quite a few people that was scared to go down it, and I stood by the railing talking to the people who was going down to keep their confidence...

I: Can you remember if there was anyone in particular you talked to?

Steve: Yeah, it was Keira and Annie pretty much...

I: They were the worst?

Steve: Yeah, they were pretty scared, really. I was just there talking to them, keeping them calm.

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- I:* That's good. And did you feel like you made a difference?
Steve: Yeah – I felt like I did my best and they both done it wonderfully.
- I:* OK. Anything else that stands out as you look back?
Dan: ... probably one of the nights where everything just clicked together, and everyone just knuckled down and got everything done.
I: All the planning and everything.
Dan: Yeah, where everybody all started to work as a team.
I: And have you seen any evidence of that since, that sense of things sort of clicking into place and people getting on?
Dan: ... Occasionally on some of the planning for the other activities that we've done, sometimes, people start to get good ideas down.
I: And you think that you're any different, or any better, at helping that sort of thing to happen? Encouraging people to knuckle down and get on with things?
Dan: Probably not recently.
- I:* So, what activities or parts of it were the best?
Kat: The last one, the final challenge.
I: What was it about that you enjoyed?
Kat: Because we split up into two teams and everything worked better.
I: You got away from the others! What was good about your team? What worked well there?
Kat: When we had to carry something, everyone took it in turns, no-one moaned about it...
I: The flagpole (yeah)? And you whipped up and got it, didn't you?
Kat: Yeah.
- Holly:* It kind of makes me feel like I wasted a year of my time, because I think although I like animals I think it's not for me. That's maybe have a few pets and look after them!
- I:* Can you think of anything [you've learned recently] for us?
Dan: Probably from the work experience, I gained more confidence by working with unfamiliar people. It put me in a strange environment and just... kind of... [?]
I: This is Halfords, was it?
Dan: Yeah.
I: And how did you get on with relating to new people you haven't seen before and working with them, how did you get on with that?
Dan: Yeah, reasonably well.
- Kat:* Yeah, like when I went over the bridge I had to lean back and let myself go.
I: Yeah, I think getting over the rail was quite scary, wasn't it? And then that bit where you've just got to trust the rope (yeah) and lean back. OK. And why does that stick out?
Kat: 'Cause it was scary.
I: And how did you feel after you did it?
Kat: Happy with myself... cause I like, actually done it – stuck it to the end.
I: And do you think that that sort of thing makes a difference at all, or is it just nice at the time?
Kat: It makes a difference, really.
I: Can you think of how it might have made a difference to you?
Kat: Cause I'm like, kind of scared of heights, and if I did it again I wouldn't be scared because I've done it before.
- Kat:* And 'arguing your point of view' because like, you could be right and everyone else could be wrong – and you can't just sit back and say, 'Oh, I'm wrong then' just because everyone

else like, is having a go at you for it. If you think you're right and know you're right, you've just got to argue your way across.

¹³ Carla: ... I didn't take part quite a lot if I was upset or angry. That's about it, really.

I: So if you're in a group but you're... for some reason feeling upset or angry than maybe... you might... back out a bit (yeah). And are you happy with that, or is it something you can't help?

Carla: Ohhh [frustrated] ... I don't know.

¹⁴ Jake: Yeah it was alright – just a lot of people was arguing, about doing what and that.

I: Right. Is that part of the week you didn't enjoy as much?

Jake: No, just no-one was doing anything, couldn't be bothered. That was when it all went wrong.

I: Can you think of any examples of that?

Jake: he bridge, kind of... yeah.

I: What happened there?

Jake: Weren't really made properly, not right.

I: Why do you think that was?

Jake: Not everyone did their job... not everyone participated.

I: OK. And how did you feel when everyone was arguing or not listening to each other?

Jake: Just let them get on with it.

¹⁵ *I:* You didn't have any low moments?

Steve: No.

I: Not even the arguing or the fighting?

Steve: Oh, everyone does that!

¹⁶ *I:* OK that's fine. And you've put...

George: 'Writing clearly and powerfully' – that's not really my thing.

I: Not your way of communicating.

George: No, there's no point in writing – I'd rather just speak face to face.

¹⁷ George: More people started to talk to each other more, and ideas and that.

I: You think since then people have been better able to share their ideas and stuff?

George: Yeah.

I: What about you? Has it made any difference to the way you got on with the group?

George: Yeah.

I: Just... easier to talk to people?

George: Yeah, yeah.

¹⁸ Holly: Working well with other people I've put as not as important because a lot of people work on their own and do their own businesses and do absolutely fine...

I: So you could potentially do that even if you didn't work with other people, you're thinking?

Holly: Yeah. You could probably work on your own... quite easily.

¹⁹ Dan: Yeah, because some people aren't very good... random people, I suppose... I know it's just me intruding a bit, but they don't seem too happy at certain times, and I just want... to help other people, really.

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- ²⁰ *I*: Have you been in situations like that sense, where you really felt you got to know people better, or seen a bit deeper?
- Dan: ... Not really.
- I*: On the everyday level in here, then, you don't see that as much?
- Dan: It's just when, for the whole week you get to see people... you have to... after hours, really, you get to see what they are really like.
- I*: And that's the sort of situation you'd like to find yourself in again?
- Dan: Yeah.
- ²¹ *I*: So at the top you've put 'listening carefully'. Why did you choose that, then?
- Holly: Erm... because obviously to be able to understand what people are saying to you, to get anywhere, you need to understand what people are saying to you. So, say if you're in a job interview and basically they ask you a question and they give you completely the wrong answer because you weren't listening, you're not going to get anywhere.
- ²² Dan: Because I realise that as a group this is what happened during the residential, where a lot of people were getting annoyed with just not being up to have their ideas heard, and things like that.
- I*: Right, and you feel like you're one of the people who actually listen (yeah), rather than just want to speak.
- Dan: Yeah.
- ²³ *I*: And does that... are you actually interested in what charities they support and why or are you just being polite?
- Carla: Erm... I'd be polite, but I'd also give my suggestions as well, so that we all have, like, a fair amount and we just put all the suggestions in one... as a team.
- ²⁴ Kat: Yeah, pretty much. I didn't think... I'd like, learn nothing on it, like... the group would have changed... but it has changed. We're all getting on a lot better now.
- ²⁵ *I*: Can you think of a time when people got on well or when it was working really well?
- George: The last day.
- I*: On the last challenge (yeah). Tell me more about it.
- George: Yeah it was alright, just everyone got along... and just did it.
- I*: OK. And why do you pick the last challenge particularly? Was there anything special about it, anything it showed, or...?
- George: No, just everyone was working well.
- I*: OK, and do you think that will have made a difference to you or anyone else since? Or was that just a nice memory, a nice moment?
- George: More people started to talk to each other more, and ideas and that.
- I*: You think since then people have been better able to share their ideas and stuff?
- George: Yeah.
- ²⁶ *I*: So how do you feel about that week now?
- Steve: I feel great as can be really. And I know we won't, but I wish I could actually go again with the group, because that's actually what brought us together.
- ²⁷ *I*: So if you think back to that Dartmoor course now, what are your strongest memories of it

now, looking back?

Steve: ... I'd probably say the final challenge, because when we split in the team we made the whole challenge look easy -- and we got everything done, and when we were doing the bridge thing, when we had to lower down this bridge and it was quite high and we had some people who were quite scared of heights... basically we all just got together and we chanted them on, trying to bring their confidence up, tell them not to worry.

I: ... And what do you think you will take away from that when you go back to your job?

Steve: ... I'd probably, like, tried to help them out and stuff as much as I can -- if they're stuck on something or they don't know where something is, like, help out and show them where stuff is so that they'll know for next time.

²⁸ I: Do you still feel like you've been well respected by the staff and the other students on this course?

Kat: Yep.

I: Is that something that's stayed the same, or got better, or...?

K: Got better – everyone's got used to each other and worked out how everyone needs help and which way they learn and stuff, so...

²⁹ I: And this is what you said you were in a way [ideas person]. And what if there's someone else in the group who also has quite strong ideas?

Jake: Erm, then you come together as a group and you say, 'right, should we do this one, should we do that one', and you vote on it. That's what we'd do...

³⁰ Steve: Erm, I wouldn't mind someone trying to take responsibility as long as they try to respect others – not just chuck them in one place and ask them to get on with it. I'd... talk to them, well, say 'why don't you ask that person what they'd prefer to do?'

³¹ I: And you were also able to make suggestions to the group?

Bron: It was... hard – everyone talking.

I: Because of the language barrier? Did you sometimes have ideas but you weren't able to...

Bron: I did try...

I: You did try to get them across. Can you think of any examples?

Bron: Erm... the rescue the person from the pitch around the bank, perhaps...

I: What idea did you have?

Bron: Put him on the shoulders, and carry him...

I: ... and carry him out of the field. And did you make that suggestion just by doing it... or did you?

Bron: I don't know how...

I: I get it. You just got on with it to show what your idea was, and then everyone agreed (yes). That makes sense.

³² Dan: I just kind of snapped at everybody and just told them to grow up and things like that, and I just went... I said I'd prefer being one of the leaders.

I: So you took over leadership of one of the tasks, did you, there?

Dan: Yeah.

I: Great. And did things go a bit better after that?

Dan: The team I was on... (was this the reservoir task?) Yeah. We all went well, we got on, we just... carried on trying to do it. I don't know what happened on the other side – apparently things didn't go too well – but our side was pretty good.

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- 33 *I*: You said you're this kind of person yourself [Ideas Person].
Dan: I suppose I... might get along with them – it depends. Their ideas might clash with my own.
I: If their ideas are quite different from yours and they're quite keen on putting theirs forward you might clash a bit.
Dan: Yeah. I suppose I'm the type of person that would try and compensate a bit...
- 34 Jake: With the leader, if they've got good ideas you follow them, but if they're [not there?]... you turn around and put your piece in.
- 35 Martin: No. Everyone was trying to get their ideas in.
I: So you felt that most of the time people were just trying to get their point of view across (yeah). Were there a few of them?
Martin: Yeah, quite a few.
I: How did you get on with them?
Martin: Well, it depends really. Because some people, as soon as they got their ideas in their head, they weren't going to change them – they were sticking with theirs and they wouldn't let anyone else put their ideas forward.
I: And you can think of examples of that, can you?
Martin: Yeah, quite a few.
- 36 *I*: But you recognise that you do sometimes just sit back and listen (yeah) and keep quiet, but that's not necessarily a bad thing?
Dan: No, because you get to hear what other people have to say, and sometimes other people get frustrated if other people keep talking over them or keep, like, putting them... and I just, like, see what other people have to say because they might, like, have a good idea of something, or have similar ideas to you. And then you can listen to they've got to say and maybe add points to the build...
- 37 *I*: So you are prepared to ask tough questions and that (yeah) but you're not fussed about your idea being the one...
Jake: ... that gets booted? No.
- 38 Steve: If someone were asking me tough questions I'd try not to get angry or upset. I'd just... say what I think's right and just get on with it.
I: OK, that's fine. So you'd respect their right to do that and try not to get upset. But you recognise it would be possible to get annoyed (yeah) but you'd try not to be.
Steve: Yeah, definitely.
- 39 *I*: Critic. Someone who asks a lot of tough questions.
Kat: I'd ask them what they think, and ask them all the questions that they've been asking and see how they do.
- 40 *I*: Can you think of times when people have been a bit of a critic, asking tough questions?
Jake: No, I think everyone's got over that ages ago...
- 41 Steve: If someone said they don't want to take part I would try to change their mind, I'd leave the decision they want.
I: So you'd respect their decision.
Steve: Yeah, I'd respect anything what they say.
I: And you wouldn't have a problem with that, necessarily?

Steve: I wouldn't have a problem, no.

⁴² Martin: ['Objector'] That was me.

I: Sometimes you were quiet, sometimes you said outright, 'I don't want to do it'.

Martin: Yeah, 'I ain't doing it'.

I: Did other people ever do that?

Martin: Yeah.

I: How did you feel about that? How did you respond to that?

Martin: Same as the spectator, really. I couldn't really say anything about it cause I know how it feels.

⁴³ Martin: Well, I done that most of the week – I was a spectator most of the week... didn't want to do it... but I'd still be an ideas person.

I: That's still who you'd like to be (yeah)? OK. But you found yourself slipping more into a spectator role (yeah).

⁴⁴ Kat: I said something a couple of times, 'it means that we were losing out on beans and stuff'. But they didn't want to do it, so I asked them and they said no, so I thought, 'fuck it, leave them'.

⁴⁵ Dan: I suppose I'd get on with them ['volunteer'] because I guess they'd just come up with questions about what to do, and I suppose I just... I'd just help them as well.

I: So you're quite comfortable with someone who's just looking to get on with it and not looking to ask many questions (yeah).

⁴⁶ *I:* That's fine. What about people who were maybe not saying much, but just getting on with it?

Jake: Yeah, there was some people who done that on the course.

I: You were happy with that?

Jake: I got on with them, I don't know if some people did!

I: How do you mean?

Jake: Well, like I say, some of the arguments put people into those kind of positions...

I: Where, what, they didn't feel they could speak much?

Jake: Uhuh.

⁴⁷ Holly: One's where I sort of, went into care – because basically rather than going into your normal care home I was put into supported living. So I've had to learn to do a lot for myself, do all my own stuff, to become more independent.

⁴⁸ *I:* So you're not at college at the moment, but when you were, what did you appreciate about college?

Dan: Erm... the independence, I suppose. It showed you... the way to think for yourself to get things done... I suppose, meeting people again, and... just having to put the effort in.

I: You like being asked to do that?

Dan: Yeah.

⁴⁹ *I:* So, what in your life at the moment makes you want to try hard, motivates you to try hard?

Martin: My girlfriend. She's changed me. She's given me a goal in life, which is to always be with her. So, I want to make her happy by doing well in college, and I think I can.

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- ⁵⁰ *I:* Is there anything particularly that motivates you to try hard?
Dan: Erm... other people. Support, and maybe... something active makes me want to be able to achieve and do well and that.
- ⁵¹ *I:* Were there any moments where you really gave it a lot of effort?
Carla: Erm... the last 2 days.... In the final challenge.
I: You really tried hard there, did you?
Carla: Yeah. I didn't want to cause any arguments there, so I tried hard.
I: OK, and what did you do well on that last day?
Carla: Work in a team well..
- ⁵² *I:* OK. So, looking back on the week as a whole, how do you feel about it?
Martin: Yeah, it was alright. I didn't put as much effort in as I should have. That's probably why I didn't enjoy it as much.
I: OK. Why was that?
Martin: Dunno really – I just wanted to get the week over and done with... look forward to the weekend.
I: Is that because your girlfriend was coming (yeah) so your mind was on other things?
Martin: Yeah – just looking forward to that.
- ⁵³ Dan: No, it's it recently I haven't been feeling so good, and it's just... hard to motivate myself, really.
I: So you're just struggling in yourself with your motivation?
Dan: Yeah, but when I'm feeling alright, I can get... ideas down and try to get other people...
I: So you just feel a bit up and down?
Dan: Yeah.
- ⁵⁴ *I:* Good. And what would you like to achieve on this course by the time you finish it?
Martin: Confidence, qualification...
I: Do you know what qualification you're aiming for at the end of this?
Martin: No, not really. Just sort of, for the CV.
I: So there's something there.
Martin: Yeah, yeah.
- ⁵⁵ *I:* And how did you feel about the first aid training, the dog training?
Holly: It was kind of frightening... when it happened with the dog, but obviously it paid off in the end.
I: So when that happened and your dog hurt itself, how did you feel that you were able to... when you could do something, how did you feel about that?
Holly: It felt great at the end of it, knowing that you could help it and that was fine, so...
- ⁵⁶ Dan: Yeah, it's just... cause before this I wasn't too confident about meeting people – that was one of my fears, just meeting new people – but doing that residential, I just feel like I'm more confident around people, I just want to open up and get to know people, really.
- ⁵⁷ *I:* Any new ideas on that, what you want to achieve, after your week away? Any lessons you've picked up?

Martin: Try harder from now on. Try harder – put more effort in. Show what I'm really about.

⁵⁸ I: You would (yeah)? And what makes you not want to take part?

Kat: Just no-one actually, like, listens to my ideas, they just stick to their own... you know, just actually give mine a go and see how it ends...

I: So when you feel your ideas aren't being considered or given a chance, you sometimes back out and say you don't want to take part?

Kat: Yeah.

⁵⁹ I: What do you think you might have done differently before?

Kat: I don't know, I just reckon it'd be different because, like, I've gained a lot more confidence and changed since I've been on this course.

I: So you're not sure how it'd have been different, but you're sure it would have been (yeah).

⁶⁰ Martin: I'm not the most confident of people, but I'd like to get more confident. Cause then it would make me a better person, and want to do more things. And I won't be shy to like, put my ideas forward and stuff.

⁶¹ I: So at the top of the list you've got 'being confident'. Why have you put that one there?

George: Because I have no confidence.

I: You don't feel confident at the moment (no).

⁶² Kat: I'm just more confident, you just like... you've gotta stick to something to get it done, cause if you give up half way it's never going to get done. So it's being confident, it's about yourself no matter what it is...

⁶³ I: And when you look back on the whole week, how do you feel about it now? Different to before you went?

George: Yeah, definitely.

I: How do you feel about it?

George: More confident... with other people and that.

⁶⁴ I: And looking back on the course, is there anything you think you can do better now as a person or on the course? Or not really?

Bron: Maybe working in a group I feel more confident.

⁶⁵ George: ...Because we had this week together I feel more confident with other people and that...

I: ...and are you suggesting that it was that week away on Dartmoor that really helped get your confidence up?

George: Yeah, definitely.

⁶⁶ I: you feel like you're more capable now, or I'm more likely to get on the course? Or are you not sure yet?

Holly: I think I'm more likely to, because getting on this course has given me more confidence, so I'm more confident to go into somewhere and apply for things, so...

⁶⁷ I: Have you finished studying (yes) and you stopped and now you've come on this course [yes]. And why have you come on this course?

Bron: Because I want to get back to college for Uniformed Services, for the Fire Service.

⁶⁸ Dan: For me, it was just... a sense of achievement because I actually know what I want to do and this will help me achieve things later on in life.

I: OK, just feeling like you've been accepted and given a chance is good for you (yeah).

⁶⁹ Holly:... and the second one was on work experience, because I did it with these people who have learning disabilities and stuff, and I found out that I really enjoy that kind of work and it's something I really might look into doing in the future.