Adults’ and children’s views of a sense of belonging and how this can support atypical school transitions for children in care.

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities

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List of abbreviations

AI  Appreciative Inquiry
AR  Action Research
BPSEM  Bio-psycho-socio-ecological model
CPD  Continuing professional development
DTs  Designated Teachers
EBP  Evidence based practice
EP  Educational Psychologist
LA  Local Authority
PBE  Practice based evidence
PEP  Personal Education Plan
PRISMA  Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses
RADIO  Research and Development in Organisations
SLR  Systematic literature review
SP  School Psychologist
VS  Virtual School
YP  Young people
Abstract

Background: Developing a sense of belonging, a psychological drive to belong to groups, has been described as an innate human need. Pupils are more motivated, engaged and dedicated to their education if they experience this sense of belonging in their school environment. Extending understanding in this domain will potentially inform how schools can better promote belonging, particularly for their most vulnerable pupils.

Methods/ participants: A systematic literature review (SLR) uses thematic synthesis to explore high school staff perceptions of how schools address pupils’ needs to experience belonging. 5 papers were identified using the PRISMA framework and evaluated for methodological quality, coherence and integrity in terms of the evidence. Action research with virtual school staff and a group of looked after young people explored how best to support children in care develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. Appreciative inquiry focus groups were carried out and data was analysed collaboratively.

Analysis/ findings: The SLR identified recurring themes focusing on support offered by individual staff within school, as well as support offered on a more systemic level, via school routines and procedures. The action research identified numerous implications across the levels of individual casework and supporting capacity building within schools, including the importance of young people having at least one key person with whom they can build a trusting relationship. Reflections on the experiences of those involved in the appreciative inquiry were also considered.

Conclusion/implications: Differences between adult and young peoples’ perceptions of belonging were identified and implications for practice and future research are considered. Finally, after an exploration of evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence, a strategy for disseminating evidence to professional practice is proposed.
Declaration

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The Author

The author holds a BSc (Hons) degree in Psychology with Education from Manchester Metropolitan University and a MEd in Psychology of Education from the University of Manchester. The author previously worked in a secondary school as a study centre co-ordinator; part of this role consisted of supporting looked after children.
Introduction

This thesis aims to identify views around school belonging and support practitioners to encourage the development of a sense of belonging for pupils in their schools. By using action research (AR), and more specifically Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (Stavros, Godwin & Cooperrider, 2016), the thesis explores how best to support children in care develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. A sense of belonging is viewed as essential for successful student learning (Combs, 1982) and as it has been suggested that developing a sense of belonging in the school environment is not only linked with a pupil’s academic achievement but also to their emotional well-being (Sancho & Cline, 2012), the researcher was therefore interested to explore how school related staff support their pupils to develop a sense of school belonging and how this support can be built upon. The rationale for the thesis came from similar research around school belonging for vulnerable groups (Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016; Craggs & Kelly, 2017). Within the current literature belonging has been described as an innate human need, a psychological drive to belong to groups (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), but it seemed that an exploration of staff views in schools regarding how they may develop a sense of school belonging for their pupils was needed as this to date has not been the subject of review. AR was chosen as a methodology due to its emphasis on the collaboration between the researcher and co-researchers and AI was chosen as it provides an affirmative approach and focuses the AR around what works within an individual or system, rather than trying to fix what does not (Shuayb, Sharp, Judkins, & Hetherington, 2009).

The thesis is presented in three parts: Paper 1, a systematic literature review; Paper 2, a report of an AR study; and Paper 3, an account of the dissemination of research to professional practice. The research began with a systematic literature review of qualitative studies reporting views of school belonging, with an aim to fill a gap in the literature by identifying how staff in secondary schools create a sense of belonging for their pupils. The research question was:

What are the perceptions of staff in secondary schools regarding how they create a sense of belonging for their pupils?
Learning from the literature review centred around the commonalities across the studies, despite the differing contexts within which they took place. Recurring themes within the studies focus on both support offered by individual staff members as well as support offered on a more systemic, whole school level, via school routines and procedures. The review illustrated that belonging is perceived to be operating across the micro, meso and exo systems of the bio-psycho-socio-ecological model (BPSEM), a multi-level framework to examine school belonging (Allen & Kern, 2017). Literature review results highlight how teachers and other school related staff enact this aspect of their role.

The methodology chosen within the AR study arose in connection to the researcher’s ontological, epistemological and axiological position; social constructionism. The key concept of the social constructionist is the idea that a number of alternative constructions of events exist, that human beings construct their own reality and that all alternative realities are valid. Social constructionism also seeks to examine the ways in which individuals and groups participate in the construction of their perceived social reality (Burr, 1998). As participants had unique insights and experiences to date they each understood the world from the construction of their own perspective (Maxwell, 2012) and made a unique contribution to the AI process, allowing the development of a shared understanding of school belonging. These perspectives are consistent with the foundations of AI, which is built on eight key assumptions (Hammond, 1998):

1. In every society, organisation, or group, something works.
2. What we focus on becomes our reality.
3. Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
4. The act of asking questions of an organisation or group influences the group in some way.
5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past.
7. It is important to value differences.
8. The language we use creates our reality.
The researcher’s previous experience in the field of secondary education and working with looked after children provided insight into the support and care provided to these pupils by members of staff working with them in school. The choice of methodology was both influenced by the researcher’s prior experiences and because using a strengths-based approach and focusing on the positive is consistent with AI. Although negativity emerged in a number of studies in the literature review and within the AI cycle, the researcher’s axiological position resulted in a focus on the positive across the research. The researcher’s focus within both papers was on the positive aspects, providing a useful framework for what works within school systems and what is possible in a positive future. This strengths-based approach is also compatible with the role of Educational and School Psychologists working with children and young people to support them within their education.

The researcher was positioned within a local authority (LA) to collect data during the three-year doctoral training. Initial contracting of the research with the co-researchers began in the researcher’s first year of training when an initial study took place with the Virtual School (VS) staff, examining how they supported schools to create a sense of belonging for looked after pupils. Piggot-Irvine, Rowe and Ferkins (2015) highlight the importance of AR projects emerging in response to needs within an organisation and as the initial study resulted in the VS headteacher indicating an interest in further research, with mid-year transitions high on the service agenda, the researcher feels the research emerged appropriately and successfully. Contracting of the research was made whilst the researcher was on placement within the same LA as the VS. However, upon commencement of the data collection the researcher had begun their final placement within a different LA. The researcher was aware of the dual role of researcher/colleague within the initial study, but feels these roles became distal once the thesis data collection began. It was the researcher’s agenda to recruit the whole VS team for the AR project in an attempt to effect systemic change and this was successful. The VS team consisted of a senior leader, the VS headteacher, which was critical to the project’s success, along with a variety of additional supportive roles, including peer mentors, bringing different experiences and views to the AR project. Data collection was over eight
months and it is felt that AI supported the stability of the researcher and group agenda, allowing the research to evolve and progress in a positive way.

Following the reporting of the AR project is an account of research dissemination to practice and illustrates how the research has been disseminated further afield and how the findings from the study became part of the VS agenda. The researcher plans to return to the LA within which the study took place in the upcoming academic year in order to disseminate findings at their Designated Teacher Conference, with the hope of elevating the project from that of thesis research to a wider LA level.

This thesis contributes to the evidence base as there is a gap in the literature on how to support children in care develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year school transition. The literature review identified methods at the individual staff and whole school, systemic level that were perceived to be useful when supporting pupils within their secondary school environment and the AR project extended upon these findings and brought together the voice of the child and the voice of the school related staff to support the development of a sense of school belonging and develop practice in this area.
References


Paper 1: A systematic literature review to explore how staff in schools describe how a sense of belonging is created for their pupils.
Abstract

Pupils have been found to be more motivated, engaged and dedicated to their education if they experience a sense of belonging in their school environment (Osterman, 2000). This systematic literature review aimed to explore descriptions of how staff in secondary schools create a sense of belonging for their pupils. Databases, including PsycINFO: Ovid online, Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Applied Social Sciences Index & Abstracts (ASSIA) and EBSCOhost were searched for relevant qualitative research studies. PRISMA guidelines were followed, to identify, screen and select relevant research papers, resulting in 5 studies being screened against a recognised scoring framework.

The current systematic literature review identified methods that were perceived to be useful when supporting pupils to develop a sense of belonging within their secondary school environment, both at the individual staff and whole school, systemic level. Limitations of the review are identified and directions for further research are also discussed.

Key words

Belonging; connectedness; relatedness; secondary school; school staff views

Introduction

Developing a sense of belonging is suggested to be a fundamental, basic human need (Maslow, 1954); a need that is satisfied by an interpersonal bond marked by continuation into the foreseeable future, stability and affective concern (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Belonging is also thought to be linked to the concept of relatedness which, along with competence and autonomy is viewed as essential to human growth and development (Ryan, 1995). The need for relatedness involves the need to feel securely connected with others and to also experience oneself as worthy of love and respect (Osterman, 2000); thus, this need for relatedness is the need to experience a sense of belonging or the sense of community (Osterman, 2000). Osterman (2000) also highlights that the psychological sense of belonging is an important element of participation and school engagement.

Belonging has also been defined as ‘the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that
system or environment’ (Hegarty, Sauer-Lynch, Patusky, Bouwsema & Collier, 1992, p. 172) and in relation to children and young people, the school environment appears to be an important system in which they should experience involvement, engagement and belonging. In their analysis, Hegarty et al. (1992) identified two dimensions of belonging, including that of valued involvement (the experience of feeling valued, needed and accepted) and fit (the person’s perception that their characteristics articulate with or complement the system or environment). The school environment represents an important area where bonding to positive adults can occur (Catalano, Oesterle, Fleming & Hawkins, 2004) and children have been found to search for commitment, emotional support and a level of belonging and trust from the adults around them (McMurray, Connolly, Preston-Shoot & Wigley, 2011).

Goodenow (1993) described a sense of belonging in educational environments specifically as a student’s sense of being accepted, valued and included, encouraged by others and the feeling of being an important part of the life and activity of the class. Additionally, Goodenow (1993) suggests that belonging is more than simple perceived liking or warmth, that it also involves support and respect for personal autonomy and for the student as an individual. It would seem therefore that school belonging encompasses a range of associated concepts; feeling valued, securely connected, encouraged and fitting in. More recently Allen & Kern (2017) give a comprehensive ecosystemic definition where school belonging is seen as a student’s sense of affiliation to his or her school, influenced by individual, relational and organisational factors inside a broader school community and within a political, cultural and geographical landscape unique to each school, i.e. one’s feeling of being connected to a school within a school social system. Pupils who experience a sense of belonging in their school environment are more motivated and dedicated to their education (Osterman, 2000) and belonging is viewed as essential for successful student learning and emotional well-being (Combs, 1982; Sancho & Cline, 2012).

Holdsworth and Blanchard’s (2006) review of young people’s views of what assists pupils to engage successfully with school suggested that a holistic approach, developing strong relationships with peers, teachers and the school, relevant curriculum content and appropriate teaching approaches all support a child to feel
more closely aligned with their school environment. Allen and Kern (2017) present a quantitative meta-analysis of the factors and variables which influence and relate to a sense of belonging suggesting that academic motivation, personal characteristics, emotional stability, gender, parent, teacher, and peer support, extracurricular activities and the school environment all influence school belonging. Overall, Allen and Kern (2017) found that teacher support had the strongest impact on a sense of belonging and it was suggested that when students feel that their teachers care about them, are fair, and are a resource when problems occur, they feel more connected to school.

*Rationale for the focus of the present review and research question*

Osterman (2000) concluded that ‘many of the changes necessary to satisfy students’ needs for belongingness involve drastic changes in the cultural values, norms, policies, and practices that dominate schooling, particularly at the secondary level’ (p. 360). A more recent quantitative review outlines practical strategies to facilitate the development of a sense of school belonging at the individual, social and ecological levels (Allen & Kerr, 2017), however the views of staff in schools regarding how they may develop a sense of school belonging for pupils has not to date been the subject of review. Thomas and Harden (2008) suggest that qualitative research is valued for the potential it has to inform policy and practice and this review therefore seeks to draw on educators’ own experiences and their reflections on their practice, extending understanding from the perspective of staff in schools and strengthening the available practice-based evidence in this area. The aim is to identify views around school belonging and how staff promote a sense of belonging for their pupils by answering the following question: what are the perceptions of staff in secondary schools regarding how they create a sense of belonging for their pupils?

*Method of the review*

*Literature search strategy and selection of research*

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses framework (PRISMA) (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009) was used to identify, screen and select relevant research papers (appendix 1). The research papers within the literature review were sourced from across a number of databases,
including: PsycINFO: Ovid online, Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Applied Social Sciences Index & Abstracts (ASSIA) and EBSCOhost. Literature searches were carried out between October 2016 and April 2017 and in February 2018; the following search terms were used: (School staff OR Teachers OR School support staff) AND (Views OR Perceptions OR Descri*) AND (High School Students OR Secondary Pupils OR Secondary Students OR Adolescents OR Young People) AND (School belonging OR School connectedness OR School engagement OR School relatedness) AND (Education OR High school OR Secondary school). Relevant article reference lists were also searched by hand. A date range between 2005 and 2016 was specified; to ensure the most recent, relevant studies were identified.

Following the final phase of the literature searching in February 2018, 14 more papers were identified, which resulted in 365 papers being sourced in total. 328 papers remained after duplicates were removed. A further 320 papers were excluded after screening of titles and abstracts (inclusive of the additional 14). The remaining 8 papers were read in full and screened against the following inclusion criteria:

- Is an investigation primarily focusing on the views of staff in schools regarding how schools create a sense of belonging for their pupils
- Focuses on children of secondary school age
- Is an empirical study collecting qualitative data
- Is written in English
- Is published between 2005-2016
- Is a peer-reviewed journal article

At this stage, a further 3 studies were excluded as they did not meet the inclusion criteria; one was not a study focusing on children of secondary school age (Jonasson, 2012); one did not focus on staff views (Jones, 2011) and one was not a study primarily focusing on belonging (Pickens & Eick, 2009). 5 papers therefore remained and formed an in-depth qualitative review which was considered purposive rather than exhaustive (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Gough, Oliver and Thomas (2013) suggest that in a purposive review it is not the number of studies which is key because, for example, the results will not change if ten rather than five
studies contain the same concept, but will depend on the range of concepts found in the studies, their context, and whether they are in agreement or not.

**Quality assessment of research**

To ensure that only reliable research was included in the review, all studies were evaluated for methodological quality using the scoring framework (appendix 2) formulated from Woods, Bond, Humphrey, Symes and Green (2011). The framework is employed in a number of published systematic literature reviews and was used as it provides an indication of research quality that is based on a combination of the criteria set by two established frameworks that also evaluate qualitative studies (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992; Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis & Dillon, 2003). The framework identifies 12 criteria to which each study is given credit and criteria include: appropriateness of design; clear sampling rationale; well executed data collection; analysis close to the data and evidence of attention to ethical issues. Each paper was given a total score ranging from 0-14 after attributing one or two points for each framework feature that was present. Scores between 0-4 were deemed ‘low quality’, scores between 5-9 were deemed ‘medium quality’ and scores between 10-14 were deemed ‘high quality’. The current author acknowledges that the criteria are open to interpretation and therefore a process of inter-rater checking was undertaken. An inter-rater agreement score of 95% was achieved following an independent moderation of 2 of the 5 studies included in the review; this high inter-rater agreement ensured the remaining 3 papers could be evaluated independently.

The quality of the 5 papers included in the review were assessed and all studies were evaluated as being relevant to answering the research question, through meeting the inclusion criteria and as being at least medium quality research. Quality assessment of the research therefore suggests a reasonable level of confidence may be placed in the findings of this review.

**Abstraction and synthesis**

Thematic synthesis aims to achieve analytical abstraction at a higher level, by rigorously examining overlap and elements in common among studies. The current literature review undertook a three-stage process of Thematic Synthesis (Thomas & Harden, 2008) to analyse and integrate the findings of the identified qualitative studies: free inductive line-by-line coding of the findings of each included study; the
organisation of the free codes into related areas to construct descriptive themes; and finally, the development of deductive analytical themes. To ensure trustworthiness, a clear audit was kept for the Thematic Synthesis (appendix 3, 4 and 5). Codes and themes were discussed, and any disagreements were resolved through discussion with a university tutor.

The current paper first provides a brief summary of the included studies and the subsequent section outlines the thematic synthesis. To gain an overview of the qualitative material, direct quotations of those participating in the research are included where possible and identified as they are in the original text. ‘’ and italic font, denotes direct quotes from participants of the research paper and ‘’ and regular font, denotes quotes from the research paper.

**Review of research**

**Overview of included studies**

Of the studies included in this systematic literature review; 1 study was conducted in the United Kingdom, 1 in the United States and 3 in Australia (see table 1 for descriptive summaries of included studies). Participant groups ranged from 17 participants from the same setting and from 7 to 14 participants from different settings. The studies by Biag (2016), Chapman, Buckley, Sheehan and Shochet (2014) and Bower, Van Kraayenoord and Carroll (2015) were all based on pupils in general, whereas the studies conducted by Flitcroft and Kelly (2016) and Anderson, Kerr-Roubicek and Rowling (2006), were based on specific groups of pupils; pupils experiencing managed moves and pupils with high mental health support needs. Although each study had a slightly different focus, all lie within the context of supporting the development of a sense of belonging for secondary school aged pupils. Interviews or focus groups were utilised within all 5 studies but were reported using different formats.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/ Year/ County</th>
<th>Aims and/or Research Questions (RQ)</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age range/Setting</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Biag (2016) USA</td>
<td>Aim: To examine the perspectives of school personnel on how they enact 3 dimensions of school connectedness: adults support, school safety and high academic standards.</td>
<td>17 out of 24 staff volunteered including: 12 teachers 1 school nurse 1 librarian 1 school counsellor 1 vice principal 1 principal</td>
<td>12-13 years Middle school which served an ethnically diverse, low income population of 7th and 8th graders.</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews Background survey</td>
<td>Adults were committed to; providing students with instructional, emotional and material support to help improve their experience at school; building caring relationships and supporting zero tolerance disciplinary approaches.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ 1: What kinds of supports do school adults extend to their students?  
RQ 2: How do school personnel address safety concerns?  
RQ 3: In what ways are students held to high academic standards?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/ Year/ County</th>
<th>Aims and/or Research Questions (RQ)</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age range/Setting</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2. Flitcroft & Kelly (2016) UK | Aim: To explore how schools create a sense of belonging for pupils involved in a managed move.  
RQ 1: What effective practice do schools currently use to create a sense of belonging for pupils in their schools?  
RQ 2: What effective practice do schools currently use to create a sense of belonging for ‘managed moved’ pupils in their schools?  
RQ 3: What are the current facilitators for creating a sense of belonging for pupils and ‘managed moved’ pupils? | 6 deputy head teachers  
1 Local Authority Officer | 12-16 years  
Mainstream high schools.  
All pupils and managed move pupils. | Appreciative Inquiry  
Focus groups  
Semi-structured interview  
Feedback meeting | Participants identified many aspects of belonging such as creating a school identity, developing partnerships and specific activities such as inter-form competitions and family assemblies. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/ Year/ County</th>
<th>Aims and/or Research Questions (RQ)</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age range/Setting</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Chapman, Buckley, Sheehan &amp; Shocet (2014)</td>
<td>AUS</td>
<td>RQ 4: How could schools further improve their practice of creating a sense of belonging for pupils and ‘managed moved’ pupils?</td>
<td>14 staff including: 12 health and physical education teachers 1 school based guidance officer 1 school based youth health nurse</td>
<td>12-16 years 2 public high schools (1 advantaged and 1 disadvantaged)</td>
<td>Teachers perceived students’ connectedness to be important in reducing problem behaviour. Connectedness included aspects of fairness and discipline, feeling valued, belonging and having teacher support, and being successfully engaged in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author/ Year/ County</td>
<td>Aims and/or Research Questions (RQ)</td>
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<td>Age range/Setting</td>
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<td>4. Anderson, Kerr-Roubicek &amp; Rowling (2006) AUS</td>
<td>Aim: To capture the understanding of school staff about connection to school, especially in relation to students with high mental health support needs.</td>
<td>12 staff including: Principal, School counsellor, School psychologist, Co-ordinator of pastoral care, Teachers</td>
<td>12-16 years</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Connecting to school can be a complex process, where interpersonal trust is critical. Results also showed that giving students a place to be and a place to develop personal and social relationships and coping strategies facilitate connection along with giving students a sense of identity and opportunities to be recognised and succeed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bower, Van Kraayenoord &amp; Carroll (2015)</td>
<td>Aim: To ascertain teacher’s perceptions of social connectedness in high school.</td>
<td>14 staff including: Head of Special Education Services</td>
<td>12-16 years</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>All three schools initiated efforts to develop social connectedness by recognising the importance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author/ Year/ County</td>
<td>Aims and/or Research Questions (RQ)</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Age range/Setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Head of department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>of whole school practices, teacher knowledge and actions to enhance students’ well-being, the promotion of students’ cultural and background knowledge, the development of students’ social and emotional skills, and fostering school-community interactions.</td>
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<td>Year level co-ordinators</td>
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<td>Senior school co-ordinator</td>
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<td>Teacher Aide</td>
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<td>Heads of curriculum</td>
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</table>
Synthesis

The thematic synthesis identified two global themes composed of several organising themes (see appendix 6). All themes, including basic themes, are outlined on the final thematic maps (appendix 7 and 8).

Global Theme One – Individual staff practice which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging

The first global theme (appendix 7), individual staff practice which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging, encompassed specific support felt to be offered by staff to develop pupils’ sense of school belonging, as well as the support offered through the development of positive pupil-teacher relationships.

Teacher connection

Teacher connection was an organising theme identified and participants suggested that the accessibility of staff can influence the extent to which a pupil feels a sense of belonging at school. For instance, participants suggested ‘an open-door policy’ and ‘encouraging students to drop-in whenever they needed support’ (Biag, 2016, p.43) ensured pupils felt connected to staff. This point was emphasised further by one participant saying, ‘I want them to know that I’m there’ (participant) (Biag, 2016, p.43). Having access to a key adult in school was also identified as a way that could help pupils develop a connection to a member of staff and in turn, support their sense of belonging. In particular, one participant noted:

*I find that as long as they’ve got at least one person they can connect with, then that’s like a life preserver that keeps them afloat, and then we try to build from there... there’s usually bound to be somebody they can hang on to* 


Participants from all studies highlighted that nurturing staff was also a successful way to develop a connection with pupils, ‘you’ve got to also be a friend to them, as well as be authoritative’ (male) (Chapman, Buckley, Sheehan & Shochet, 2014, p.421) and reminding pupils of their value was also viewed as particularly beneficial, ‘an important means of encouraging students to feel valued and supported was to show that they [staff] are interested in them, by talking to them and
getting to know them’ (Chapman et al., 2014, p.423). School staff also suggested that humorous, assertive, engaging, enthusiastic and happy staff, who are transparent in their approaches to students also promote positive student-teacher connections in schools which can lead to a sense of belonging. Finally, the development of positive relationships, via consistency, persistence, rapport building and developing trust, was also reported to support students to feel like they belong in school:

it can take a while to establish that positive relationship and today it could be another need and another issue… it is one step forward and two steps back you don’t pull back and you keep checking how they are going

(Kristina) (Anderson et al., 2006, p.11).

**Personal support**

Many participants discussed facilitating a sense of school belonging through providing pupils with emotional support, for example providing pupils with counselling when necessary (Biag, 2016) and being sensitive to pupils’ emotional states (Biag, 2016 and Bower, Van Kraayenoord & Carroll, 2015); ‘school personnel reported being sensitive to students’ emotional states and committed to helping them obtain appropriate supports’ (Biag, 2016, p.43). Normalisation, for pupils with mental health needs, also arose as a way to support a sense of belonging as many of the pupils were found to; ‘fear ‘I am stupid’ or ‘I am crazy’… they have this thing of wanting to be normal’ (Sandy) (Anderson et al., 2006, p.10).

Participants also described support offered on a practical level, for example taking pupils to nurses’ appointments and providing them with food (Biag, 2016) and allowing a pupil to wash their uniform at school (Anderson et al., 2006).

**Academic support**

The theme academic support described the more practical academic support offered to pupils which was felt to also develop a sense of belonging at school. Support described included supporting pupils in class (Anderson et al., 2006), assisting them with assignments (Biag, 2016) and providing a differentiated and scaffolded curriculum (Bower et al., 2015). It was also found that providing pupils with guidance in relation to career pathways was useful (Bower et al., 2015) and that
providing basic academic support, i.e. providing students with school supplies, ensured pupils were participating in lessons (Biag, 2016).

Global Theme Two – Aspects of school context which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging

The second global theme (appendix 8), incorporates the views of study participants as to what aspects of school context address pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging.

School culture

Upholding a positive school culture, through the use of policies and procedures, a nurturing ethos, a safe environment and having high academic expectations, was seen in the school staff responses as also helping pupils to develop a sense of belonging at school. It was suggested that zero-tolerance bullying procedures (Biag, 2016) and ‘student’s sense of rule fairness and their perceptions of the disciplinary practices within the school’ (Chapman et al., 2014, p.420) were important elements of school connectedness. It is possible that the zero-tolerance bullying policy described here may be facilitative to a school culture which may be responsive to the identification and intervention for bullying behaviour. The fact a zero-tolerance policy exists within a school and is tangible to the students, may make them feel safe particularly if it is part of the school culture and not just identified as a focus of concern intermittently throughout the school year.

Participants expressed that being flexible, in order to develop relationships with pupils (Anderson et al., 2006) and remaining fair in their approaches to pupils (Chapman et al., 2014) also contributed to a pupil’s sense of connection to their school. Participants were aware that the physical aspects of a school can also impact upon feelings of safety and belonging, and it was reported that smaller school populations and a clean and aesthetically pleasing physical environment, both contribute to a safer school environment (Biag, 2016). Finally, a positive school culture in which high academic expectations were upheld was also thought to influence a pupil’s sense of belonging and in relation to this staff were reported to hold high expectations for students and believe that every child could learn and succeed (Biag, 2016).
**A sense of school community**

A sense of school community was identified clearly by one participant as they described their school environment; ‘we try and see this place as a family’ (Sandy) (Anderson et al., 2006, p.10).

This sense of community within the school environment was felt to contribute to pupils’ sense of belonging:

all agreed that the presence of a positive, caring school community (which is described by some as representing ‘the heart’ of the school) was seen to be an enabling factor for connection for all students

(Anderson et al., 2006, p.6)

Having a strong network of staff, who all feel connected to one another, was raised as an important aspect of school community and in order to facilitate this, staff spoke of collegial support to develop their own skills and also connecting informally at lunch time and gathering for social events outside of school (Bower et al., 2015). It was also apparent that for a positive school community to be maintained, support must come from those in a position of power; ‘I guess it stems from the leadership within the staff across from the principal’ (Liam) (Anderson et al., 2006, p.6).

Participants also highlighted the importance of generating a school identity, so pupils felt part of something and therefore developed a sense of belonging, this was illustrated by practices such as the school uniform and whole school photographs (Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016). Finally, the development of peer support was also apparent within the organising theme of school community and participants suggested that peer friendships needed to be promoted and protected through school summer camps (Anderson et al., 2006) and through extra-curricular activities, particularly as; ‘out of class activities such as special interest, musical or sporting clubs assisted student relationships within the class’ (Bower et al., 2015, p.106).

**Links to other stakeholders**

Participants suggested that making links between home and school and outside agencies supports the development of a sense of school belonging for pupils. School staff were aware that creating a partnership with parents and engaging them with school was a successful way to promote pupil belonging and monthly breakfast
mornings for all students, teachers and parents was one way of achieving this (Bower et al., 2015). It was also reported that offering parents incentives, like food and locally based parent events, encourages parents to attend school functions (Biag, 2016). Finally, it was reported that encouraging pupils to take part in schemes within the local community, like Cadets and community sports coaching (Bower et al., 2015) and involving members of the local community i.e. cultural liaison officers and wrap around services (Bower et al., 2015) also supports pupils to feel like they belong in school.

**Classroom practices**

Strategies to ensure pupils feel connected to and motivated within their learning environment, and in turn develop a sense of belonging to their school, were also apparent in the participants’ views, with numerous participants commenting on the influence of the classroom practice within their schools. The basic theme of engaging lessons was supported by examples which related to teachers’ use of the media to engage their pupils during their lessons and making lessons active. A teacher suggested, ‘*kids need to be engaged, they need to be up and moving and doing something!*’ (teacher) (Biag, 2016, p.48). It was also thought that offering positive reinforcement and rewards (Biag, 2006) and providing pupils with opportunities for success (Chapman et al., 2014) also allows them to develop a successful connection to their classroom.

Participants also suggested that reminding pupils of their value is particularly beneficial in the classroom and it was explained; ‘an important means of encouraging students to feel valued and supported was to show that they [staff] are interested in them, by talking to them and getting to know them’ (Chapman et al., 2014, p.423).

**Preparation and support for pupil**

The theme preparation and support for pupil describes how sharing information with pupils in school was a useful way to include them and ensure they were kept up to date with all relevant information involving them; participants from one school highlighted that school notices and newsletters was a successful way of providing this information (Bower et al., 2015). Providing information appeared to be a two-way process; ‘developing a pupil profile to develop and facilitate the sharing of
information’ (Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016, p.307) was also deemed a useful way of providing staff with relevant information so they are fully informed about their pupils. Providing support in a person-centred way, bespoke to each pupil, was a key way of supporting them to feel connected to school, particularly when they experience transition to a new school; ‘preparations for pupils are individualised as each pupil will have different reasons for their managed move and the school will need to adapt according to the pupil’s background and any additional needs’ (Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016, p.306). Participants suggested that preparing pupils for transition, via the use of induction calendars, welcome letters and welcome assemblies, also encourages a sense of belonging upon arrival at their new school (Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016). Another basic theme which emerged within the global theme of preparation and support for pupil, was that of a fresh start and in relation to this, participants reported that offering pupils the chance to start again following a transition and treating each day as a new start, was a useful way of ensuring they remained connected to their school (Anderson et al., 2006).

Discussion

This systematic literature review has drawn on the experiences and practices of 66 school related staff including teachers, heads of departments, pastoral care staff, principals/head teachers, school nurses, a school librarian, school counsellors and a school psychologist, to gain an understanding of belonging and how this concept is translated into educational professionals’ everyday practice.

Across differing contexts, commonalities across the studies suggest that a sense of belonging in school is perceived to be facilitated in a variety of ways. Recurring themes emerging from the literature review focus on both support offered by individuals as well as support offered on a more systemic, whole school level, via school routines and procedures. Osterman (2000) concluded that, at the secondary level, changes needed to satisfy students’ needs for belongingness revolved around the school’s policies, and practices, cultural values and norms that dominate the school. Findings from the current literature review suggest that school related staff perceive a sense of school belonging to be enabled through individual practice and school climate and culture suggesting that practice in relation to school belonging may have developed.
Allen and Kern’s (2017) review of the quantitative literature suggests that school belonging is a complex multi-faceted construct that can be influenced by multiple levels and systems within a school and a multi-level framework to examine school belonging, the bio-psycho-socio-ecological model (BPSEM) is presented (see figure 1). Findings from the current review indicate that school related staff perceive belonging to be operating across the micro, meso and exo systems of this model; highlighting relationships with teachers and broader aspects of the school environment, including school policies and procedures, as key aspects of belonging. However, aspects of school belonging were not described at the macro level by participants in the reviewed studies. The Allen and Kern (2017) study was not included, as this review explores teacher views and therefore privileged qualitative studies.

Figure 1. Bio-psycho-socio-ecological model (BPSEM) of school belonging. From Allen and Kern (2017).
Allen and Kern (2017) found that teacher support had the strongest impact on a sense of belonging and they suggest that when students feel their teachers care about them, are fair, and are a resource when problems occur, they feel more connected to school. The views presented in this review illustrate how teachers and other school related staff enact this aspect of their role; offering personal support to pupils on an emotional level, developing positive relationships with pupils, developing a home-school partnership and having high academic expectations.

While the views of teachers and school related staff in this review focus on the teacher support aspect of the microsystem, the views of young people seem to privilege peer support. Young people place greater emphasis on their peer relationships in relation to school engagement (Holdsworth & Blanchard, 2006) and positive interactions between peers have been found to be a prominent site for the co-construction of a sense of school belonging (Craggs & Kelly, 2017; Craggs & Kelly, in press). However, it is not clear the extent to which teachers and school related staff see promoting peer relationships as a key element of pupils’ school experience as, when peer support was discussed within the reviewed papers, the focus was on promoting friendships through school summer camps and extra-curricular activities (Anderson et al., 2006; Bower et al., 2015).

Implications for practice

One of the main findings within this review was the importance placed on staff-pupil relationships. Teachers’ good relationships with pupils have consistently been shown to be linked to positive outcomes for children and young people, particularly for those pupils at risk for negative outcomes (McGrath & Van Bergen, 2015). Additionally, Fosen (2016) found that teachers predominantly formed good relationships with students who initiated contact with them. The majority of staff within this review were self-selecting and it is possible therefore that the importance of investing in positive relationships with pupils to create a sense of school belonging may not be reflected across staff groups as a whole. It seems essential therefore that all teachers and school staff are supported to develop an awareness of the importance of their relationships with all their pupils to avoid relational and belonging inequity in the school environment.
There are also implications for practice in relation to whole school approaches for supporting emotional well-being and mental health. Department for Education (DfE) guidance for school staff on mental health and behaviour refers to the ‘cultures and structures’ within a school (DfE, 2016) and suggests a committed senior management sets a culture that values all pupils allowing them to feel a sense of belonging. Stirling and Emery (2016) describe some of the research evidence and practical strategies which can be used by schools. At the secondary level they focus on staff wellbeing, viewing a change in school culture as not being a stand-alone project, facilitating support for school from outside agencies and the powerful and effective role of student voice. However, in their evaluation of the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL), Lendrum, Humphrey and Wigelsworth (2012) concluded that ‘the ‘will and skill’ of school staff is fundamental to school-based mental health promotion, and there is a need to develop teachers’ understanding, competence and confidence in this area (p.158). Furthermore, despite being enshrined in the Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations General Assembly, 1989), the degree to which pupil voice is imbedded within school cultures is variable (Bragg, 2007).

A further implication for practice in relation to the current review seems to be around supporting teachers and school related staff to understand and enact their role in promoting school belonging through influencing peer relationships. For example, Hamm, Farmer, Dadisman, Gravelle and Murray (2011) found that teacher attunement to peer group affiliations could be enhanced through professional development regarding pupil social dynamics and that through greater attunement to peer groups, students reported a more supportive and positive social environment. These authors hypothesised that the mechanisms involved were teachers being more likely to put students into more productive learning groups and teacher support and caring, particularly in relation to bullying.

**Conclusions, limitations and recommendations for further research**

This current review highlights that using belonging as a framework for practice may be considered by teaching staff to successfully support young people during their education and ensure they feel involved at school and a part of something important. Overall, practitioner experiences were positive and specific examples of individuals
supporting pupils to develop a sense of belonging were reported. Additionally, for a sense of belonging to be established a number of whole school aspects were addressed including; a commitment from leadership staff, a whole school approach, the communication of relevant information between staff and pupils and the engagement of the pupil’s parents.

Limitations of the review must be taken in to account. Firstly, as studies were undertaken in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia, the context specific nature of a sense of belonging may be constructed differently in different cultural contexts. Secondly, as with any qualitative piece of research, the researcher may selectively quote or summarise perspectives of practitioners. Finally, although the researcher feels that only including peer reviewed journal articles in the review ensured the most reliable research was utilised, extending the scope of the literature to include theses and book chapters could potentially have generated more findings and extended the breadth and depth of the review.

This review has highlighted the importance of understanding what it means to feel like you belong. However, the limited number of qualitative studies that elicited the views of staff in schools reveals a need to add to the depth and breadth of research in this area. Whilst a range of strategies to encourage the development of a sense of belonging have been identified, combining the views of staff and pupils is encouraged to further inform how schools can create a sense of belonging for their pupils.
References


Paper 2: Using Appreciative Inquiry to support the development of a sense of belonging for Looked After Children experiencing an atypical in-year transition to a new school.
Abstract

This action research within one local authority children’s services explores with a group of looked after young people and the Virtual School (a small multi-disciplinary team working to raise educational attainment and attendance) how best to support children in care develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

An action research process was employed using appreciative inquiry to gather participants’ views and develop action. Focus groups were used to generate and analyse data collaboratively.

The study identified numerous implications across the levels of individual casework and capacity building within schools including the importance of young people having at least one key person with whom they can build a trusting relationship, supporting young people to make friends, young people visiting their new school with a trusted person and having a positive and personalised induction to their new school. Reflection on action and practice highlighted the potential to work with schools to develop the ‘key worker’ role as well as incorporating new understandings into everyday practice.

Appreciative inquiry can support collaborative development of practice, bringing together the voice of the child and the voice of the adults who support them in education. Outcomes of the action research included prioritising work with children in transition, using the Personal Educational Plan (PEP) process to identify key workers and supporting children to develop and maintain friendships.

Key words

Action research; appreciative inquiry; looked after children; belonging; transition

Introduction

Belonging

Developing a sense of belonging has been described as an innate human need; a psychological drive to belong to groups (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). It has also been argued that belonging is one of our strongest forms of motivation (Bowlby, 1988) and has a significant impact on a range of factors associated with well-being;
including life satisfaction, cognitive performance and physical health (Allen & Bowles, 2012). In relation to the educational environment, belonging has been described as when students feel happy at school; feel like they get along with other students; feel like teachers care about them; feel fairly treated and feel safe at school (Libbey, 2007). Following a review of the literature, Osterman (2000) highlighted that pupils who experience a sense of belonging at school are more motivated, engaged in learning and committed to school, suggesting the need to belong is important for all pupils. However, belonging has been found to be especially important for the academic motivation, engagement, and performance of less advantaged pupils, whose need for a safe and supportive school climate is even more profound (Becker & Luthar, 2002).

**Looked after children**

Looked after children (all future references to child(ren)/young people/students in the paper are, unless otherwise stated, to looked-after children) have been identified as one of the most vulnerable groups within our society (Sempik, Ward, & Darker, 2008) experiencing poorer educational and longer-term outcomes than their non-looked after counterparts (Centre for Social Justice, 2015). However, there is considerable variation in responses to the care experience, with some children in care achieving positive adaptive outcomes while for others their difficulties may pre-date entry into care and, although often reduced, can persist once in care (Sebba, Berridge, Luke, Fletcher, Bell, Strand, Thomas, Sinclair & O’Higgins, 2015). These authors highlight the importance for practice of understanding risk factors for low educational performance.

**Transition**

There is a growing body of literature examining school transition and pupils’ sense of school belonging (Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016; Sancho & Cline, 2012). Brewin and Statham (2011) suggested that, for children who are looked after, school transition is likely to be particularly challenging because as a group they have poorer educational outcomes than other children and are at increased risk of not having developed secure attachments, potentially increasing the likelihood of experiencing problems at times of stress or change (Dent & Cameron, 2003).
Brewin and Statham (2011) examined transition to high school for looked after children and found many factors which support or hinder school transition - ranging from within-child factors (self-esteem and social skills) to systemic factors (multi-agency working and school admission policies). Despite a focus on improving stability for children who may already have experienced much upheaval in their lives, school transition at atypical times within the school year due to care placement changes or a breakdown of a school placement continues to be the experience of many looked after children (Social Exclusion Unit, 2003). Such transitions bring additional difficulties, for example uncomfortable questions from other pupils around the circumstances which necessitated their mid-year arrival (Harker, Dobel-Ober, Lawrence, Berridge & Sinclair, 2003) and are associated with poorer educational outcomes (Sebba et al., 2015).

Participatory research

While it is understood that the concept of belonging is beneficial to children, there appears to be a disparity between the understanding of its importance in research and in day-to-day life (Allen & Bowles, 2012). Additionally, Crosnoe (2011) argues that there is a significant difference between the theoretical and adult view of education and what it is really like for the children. Action Research (AR) places emphasis on equality and reducing power differentials between researcher and co-researchers and seeks to cite knowledge production in the context of practice (Bradbury-Huang, 2010). Appreciative Inquiry (AI) offers an affirmative approach for evaluating and envisioning future initiatives based on best practice and focuses the AR process around what works within an individual or system, rather than trying to fix what does not (Shuayb, Sharp, Judkins, & Hetherington, 2009). This research therefore involved young people and adults in an AI to support the development of a sense of belonging for looked after children experiencing an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Methodology

Design

A 5D appreciative inquiry cycle was used (see figure 2) to investigate how to support looked after children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school (Stavros, Godwin & Cooperrider, 2016).
The five stages are:

- **Defining**: enables participants to create a shared understanding of the topic of inquiry
- **Discovery**: explores the ‘best’ of what ‘is’ through the sharing of success stories; designed to empower participants.
- **Dream**: imagines what ‘could be’ through the consideration of strengths and potential; designed to uplift participants.
- **Design**: determines a positive future that ‘should be’ through devising ‘provocative propositions’ collaboratively.
- **Destiny**: creating what ‘will be’ through realising the positive future and planning what will be done.

![Appreciative Inquiry 5D Cycle](image)

**Figure 2. Appreciative Inquiry 5D Cycle. From Stavros, et al. (2016).**

**Participants**

The study used a purposeful convenience sampling strategy to select participants with specific experiences on the topic under question (Coolican, 2014). Data collection took place in the local authority (LA) where I completed a fieldwork placement. Participants (see table 2) were secondary school aged young people (YP) from the Children in Care Council (a pre-formed group of looked after children who met frequently) and professionals working within the Virtual School (VS), consisting of the headteacher, teachers, learning mentors and the school attendance officer. The VS participants also took part in an initial study the previous academic year. Six YP volunteered to take part in the research, however, two participants did
not continue after the first session, due to personal reasons and one participant was unable to attend the third session due to travel difficulties. Eight VS participants volunteered to take part. However, one participant changed roles and was therefore unable to continue with the study and the VS headteacher retired and the new post holder joined the AR during the course of the research. The change of the VS head teacher did not impact upon the group dynamics within the research process. After ethical approval was obtained (appendix 9 and 34) the YP and VS were informed about the study using information sheets (appendix 10 and 11 respectively) and provided with a consent form (appendix 13 and 14). Individuals with parental responsibility for the young people were also provided was an information sheet (appendix 12) and consent form (appendix 15). Providing information in this way ensured all participants understood the concept of and the commitment needed to the research, allowing informed consent to be obtained.

Table 2. Participant details  *All participants’ names are pseudonyms to preserve anonymity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Academic year group/Role</th>
<th>Number of in-year transitions experienced</th>
<th>Number of focus groups attended</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oshan</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadeeqa</td>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ella</td>
<td>Learning Mentor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>School attendance officer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Learning Mentor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>VS Headteacher 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clara</td>
<td>VS Headteacher 2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Procedure

The Research and Development in Organisations (RADIO) framework (Timmins, Shepherd & Kelly, 2003) was used to structure the research (see table 3).

Table 3. Research structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RADIO steps</th>
<th>Appreciative Inquiry activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Awareness of need</td>
<td>Phase 1 - Define</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Invitation to act</td>
<td>Discussion of initial research proposal, VS focus group, feedback and discussion of themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Clarifying organisational and cultural issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Identifying stakeholders in area of need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Agreeing focus of concern</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Negotiating framework for information gathering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gathering information</td>
<td>Phase 2 - Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Processing information with research stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Agreeing areas for future development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Action planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Implementation</td>
<td>Phase 3 – Implementation and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Evaluating action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 1 - Define

RADIO steps 1-4: Initial study

An initial focus group explored the views of the VS on how they support the development of a sense of belonging for looked after children when they experience transition to a new school. Thematic analysis revealed several facilitators and barriers to supporting the development of a sense of belonging during times of educational transition across two key areas for development; post 16 and atypical in year transitions (Greenwood, 2016).

RADIO steps 5-6: Agreeing focus of concern and negotiation

The focus of the current study was identified following feedback of the initial focus group themes to the VS. Atypical in-year transitions were highlighted as a priority
for the team. It was also agreed that YP would be invited to participate in this next phase of the research.

To ensure the YP felt as comfortable as possible when taking part in the AI, I attended an activity day for looked after children to initially meet the YP in an informal environment and answer any questions they had.

**Phase 2 - Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny**

**RADIO steps 7-10: Appreciative Inquiry**

Data gathering took place in two coordinated waves of discovery and dream focus groups, a combined design session and a VS planning destiny group (see figure 3).

![Diagram showing the process]

Figure 3. Data gathering and analysis process
Data gathering and analysis

The sessions with the YP consisted of two, 30-minute sessions and sessions with the VS consisted of three, one-hour sessions. There was also one joint 30-minute session with the YP and VS. The final focus group involved the VS generating a plan to implement the actions agreed throughout the AI process.

Focus group schedules (appendix 16, 17, 18 and 19) served as initial prompts but as AI is participatory in nature, the participants both generated and analysed the data through paired and whole group discussions (see table 4), defining the direction of the AI. I summarised key points raised and participants collaboratively analysed their data; categorising prominent themes that surfaced from their paired discussions and linking the data generated by the use of post-it notes to develop a mind map as a group. The resulting themes were then reflected back to the group giving participants the opportunity to adjust information where necessary. Joint analysis ensured participants opinions were accurately recorded and reflected in the results and allowed the participants to see the themes they generated at the conclusion of each focus group. Each focus group was also audio recorded to enable the clarification of discussion points and to extract individual quotes (Knibbs et al., 2010).

Table 4. Data generation, analysis and next steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Data generation</th>
<th>Data analysis and next steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discovery – YP</td>
<td>Paired discussion: share examples of when you were supported during a move to a new school.</td>
<td>Grouping activity with post-its, identifying emerging themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole group discussion during feedback.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Discovery – VS</td>
<td>Paired discussion: share examples of when a child has been supported to develop a sense of belonging when they experienced an atypical in-year transition.</td>
<td>Grouping activity with post-its, identifying emerging themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Data generation</td>
<td>Data analysis and next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dream – YP</td>
<td>Whole group activity to create large mind-map of desired future.-secondary</td>
<td>Grouping activity with post-its, identifying emerging themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on transition timeline; before, during and after transition and who can help</td>
<td>Review of previous session to check my interpretation of findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>at each stage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>atypical in-year transition, what might that look like?</td>
<td>Review of previous session to check my interpretation of findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole group discussion during feedback.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Design – Joint</td>
<td>Whole group presented with the draft propositions developed from the two ‘dream’ phases. Each participant selects their priority proposition and the group discusses in pairs ‘why this is the most important proposition to you?’</td>
<td>Notes on large poster paper throughout the session about the priority propositions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole group discussion during feedback.</td>
<td>Group to jointly organise the propositions in a way that is mutually agreed between the YP and VS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review of previous session to check my interpretation of findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Destiny – VS</td>
<td>Group asked to think about implications for practice from the priority propositions.</td>
<td>Priority implication is collaboratively analysed using a ‘fishbone’ diagram to identify actions and tasks required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify priority implication(s) and create action plan using ‘fishbone’ diagram.</td>
<td>Review of previous session to check my interpretation of findings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcome of Appreciative Inquiry

Session one, Discovery; Exploring what ‘is’ – YP

An introduction to AI was provided and to support the young people’s engagement with the definition of sense of belonging the researcher provided the description of school belonging by Goodenow (1993). The group were then asked to think about what belonging meant to them and discussed in pairs the ways in which they felt they had been supported to belong when they made an in-year transition to a new school. Participants then shared their success stories with the whole group and further discussion allowed for in-depth exploration. Participants made notes on post-its and transferred these to flip-chart paper to develop a collaborative mind map depicting the numerous support systems available to young people. Further discussion drew out the specific support the participants received in school, for example being eased into lessons on a part-time timetable (Harry), having a teacher they could talk to for help and being given support if they did not understand (Hadeeqa). The importance of support from other pupils throughout the transition process was raised by Harry and the group shared that kind pupils in class, having someone to show them around and buddy systems were useful. The group also discussed the importance of uniform, as it allows you to “represent your school” (Arthur) and the importance of school work, “it’s good to take work with you as it helps with revision” (Ben). The group then began to discuss working with other professionals and social workers were highlighted as another source of support as they “help you decide what would be best for you… get your point of view” (Oshan).

This discussion informed links between ‘teachers’, ‘social workers’ and ‘pupil help’ on the mind map highlighting that the support the YP received was somewhat interwoven (see appendix 20).

Session two, Discovery; Exploring what ‘is’ – VS

Participants were provided with an overview of AI and given time to discuss in pairs and write on post-it notes, examples of how young people are supported to feel like they belong during an atypical school transition. Participants then explored and discussed as a whole group how this process is facilitated in the LA. A data table was developed collaboratively which highlighted the specific areas in which support
was provided to pupils and participants generated specific titles to encapsulate areas of discussion. The table depicted a multi-element approach to mid-year transition and emphasised the importance of gathering the child’s views, wishes and feelings; planning; logistics; practical strategies and communication. Participants discussed the importance of the young person being part of the transition process throughout, to voice their views and expectations (Amanda). It was also deemed important to give the young person time to digest the information they receive. Group members talked about appropriate planning and explained that “bespoke support” (Rachel) was of great importance. The group also shared their thoughts around logistics and explained that leaving parties (Kate) and visits to the new school (Jessica) seem to work particularly well. The group began to discuss practical strategies used, in terms of key staff, taster visits and scripting, to support young people and finally, the importance of communication and the sharing of relevant information. Group analysis revealed the specific areas previously described and participants jointly grouped and structured the generated data (see appendix 21).

**Session three, Dream; Imagining what ‘could be’ – YP**

After a recap of the first session and a member checking exercise, the young people were offered the opportunity to consider their ‘ideal’ transition. As a whole group, participants were asked to try to find new ideas to support the development of a sense of belonging during an atypical school transition and were asked to consider what might happen before, during and after the transition takes place (appendix 22). As the young people engaged in discussion it became apparent that having supportive friends was the most important aspect of their preferred future; for example, having friends at a new school was felt to reduce the feelings of change (Joshua). The group also seemed to take a logistical slant whilst envisioning their preferred future and felt that receiving detailed information, about teachers’ full names and room numbers, information about the school layout and receiving child friendly Ofsted information would be particularly useful to them. Oshan also expressed that keeping the same teacher would be supportive, so they could develop a relationship and get to know them. Using the data from this session I generated five provocative propositions from the point of view of the YP to capture their ‘dream’ (see table 5).
Table 5. Provocative propositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provocative proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Developing friendships is important to us. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is important to plan for our individual needs without making us feel singled out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. We have someone we trust to visit our new school with. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. We have child friendly information about our new school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. We have been asked how we want to be supported on our first day at our new school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Our views are sought and we choose how we want to contribute to meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The purpose of meetings are clear and the relevant people are there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. We have a positive and personalised induction to our new school. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. We can find out information that is relevant to us about our new school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. We have the opportunity to think about our story of leaving our old school and starting our new school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. We have an opportunity to learn about and practise new routines for our new school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. We have at least one key person we can build a trusting relationship with. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The adults around us communicate well with each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provocative propositions in italic font were generated from the YP dream session, provocative propositions in standard font were generated from the VS dream session, * highlights priority propositions.

**Session four, Dream; Imagining what ‘could be’ – VS**

Following a re-cap of the first session and member checking, the VS were asked to imagine what the ‘dream’ in-year transition would look like for the young people with whom they work, with unlimited time, resources and funding. Working in pairs they envisaged their preferred future. Participants appeared energised and generated ideas including the receiving school adapting to the needs of the young person (Jessica), giving the young person the time and space to explore their new school prior to arrival, by means of taking photos and allowing the young person to be in charge of the camera (Clara). Participants also considered how the young person could become more involved in the planning of their transition, down to being involved in the purchase of their new uniform (Ella). Discussion also centred around the ability to normalise the transition, by doing the new school route each week and the new school staff visiting the young person prior to the move (Amanda).
However, these points were raised with an awareness that not all ideas will suit all young people, the support must be tailored to their individual needs (Rachel).

Grouping post-it notes at the end of the session revealed three priority areas: meetings; person centred practice and practical strategies (see appendix 23). The data was developed collaboratively and following the session I developed eight provocative propositions (see table 5), again from the point of view of the YP. A poster was also developed (see appendix 24) to provide the YP with information about the VS participants prior to them meeting in the joint session.

Session five – Design; Determining what ‘should be’ – Joint

Following a recap of the two previous sessions and a member checking exercise, participants were presented with the provocative propositions from both groups, given time to read them and make any alterations they deemed necessary. However, participants felt that the statements reflected their discussions well and no changes were made. The propositions were displayed (appendix 25) and each participant was asked to individually select the one they viewed as their priority. This process resulted in four priority propositions being highlighted (appendix 26 and table 5). Participants then discussed their choices in adult-child pairs.

Each pair gave feedback; main themes were having a key person to support the young person, friendship, logistics and a personalised, bespoke approach (appendix 27). Upon further exploration, one VS participant seemed to encapsulate the group’s thoughts with the following statement;

they’re all about trusting somebody aren’t they… someone to trust whether it’s to visit, whether it’s to have them there, whether it’s friends… they’re all on the same theme about people being at the school to help (Rachel)

Prior to the joint focus group, strategies to mitigate any power differentials were considered by the researcher to ensure valid data elicitation. These strategies included ensuring all participants had the opportunity to express their views and allowing the YP to give their feedback prior to the VS adult participants.
Session six – Destiny; Creating what ‘will be’ – VS

After a review of the AI process and a recap of the previous session, the group were presented with the four priority propositions (see table 5) and asked to think about the implications for practice in relation to these and what this meant for the VS. Group discussion was structured to allow the participants to consider implications for practice at the individual case work level and the school capacity building level (appendix 28). A detailed action plan was modelled for one implication ‘developing the key worker role’ using a fishbone diagram as a planning tool (Ishikawa, 1976) (appendix 29). The VS co-researchers identified the following actions in order to develop the role of the key person during in-year transition:

- Joint training
- Continuing professional development (CPD) events
- Networks - sharing practice
- Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings, coaching/modelling for Designated Teachers (DTs)
- Information mailings
- Virtual school guidelines/good practice – to set the standards
- Case studies

The following were also identified as indicators of impact:

- When a transition occurs, the process is imbedded
- Positive feedback on the process from young people
- Check-up with schools after some time
- Becomes custom practice for all children and young people
- Schools become the trainers in the future
- Good practice

Phase 3 – Implementation and evaluation

RADIO steps 11-12: Implementation and evaluation

Further contact was made with the VS in the following academic year, in order to evaluate learning and changes to practice. VS participants were asked to evaluate the process and impact of the AI (see appendix 30) and consider examples of how
taking part in the AI had influenced their work and their thoughts on the AI process. Four co-researchers were able to complete evaluations (see table 6). I also attended a second activity day with the YP in order to update them on the outcome of the AI and to say one final thank you and goodbye.

Table 6. VS reflections on practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications for practice of the four priority propositions</th>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implications for case work</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers can nurture friendships – child choose own friend from a pool</td>
<td>In PEPs this is quite often set as an action for teachers in settling a child who changed school. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage foster carers to be proactive in finding friends in the local area</td>
<td>Foster carers are encouraged to promote Brownies etc to build local friends, especially if they go to school in a different area. (Liz). Carers do try to do this but at times need to be prompted this is often done within a PEP. (Kate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sticking to the idea/plan and discussing the plan together to promote trust; discussing adaptations can lead to trust</td>
<td>Type of intervention and how it happens discussed and agreed with child/young person before work commences. Regular reviews and changes made where appropriate. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Key person and foster carer make it easy for the young people to join clubs and groups</td>
<td>In high school, teachers are encouraged to take children to the clubs or to arrange meetings with the organisers rather than hoping the children will pick up all the information from assembly or form tutor notices. (Liz) Facilitate/support YP to get there [to clubs] at the right time. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learning mentors to assist with social skills work for longer term friendships</td>
<td>Played socially speaking game – YP chose a friend to join in plus a good role model. (Jessica) Sometimes… they are requested not to be involved but work more in the background to help support schools. (Kate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Implications for practice of the four priority propositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key person is always addressed in PEP meetings/transition work. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported YP to new school until taxi came into play. Helped to familiarise new journey for a highly anxious YP with a familiar person. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have transported several children in the early stages so that there is a familiar face, not just a taxi driver. Exact arrangements and promptness reduce anxiety. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to detail helps. (Kate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Implications for capacity building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is an area of focus for DT network and at corporate parenting board. (Clara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key person is not always active but is becoming more so. (Kate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One school has been proactive in helping a child choose friends carefully and in avoiding negative influences. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built into working with schools to support inclusion. Now using provision mapping to record cycles with schools. (Clara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A meeting is held with DT/class teacher and child before work commences and shared with school at review stage. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is becoming more of a culture in some schools, but we still have the pastoral/SEN divide. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Implications for practice of the four priority propositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set up DT network. VS toolkit in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draft form. (Clara)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Implications for case work and for capacity building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing good practice in other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schools. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning mentor worked closely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with fostering child and family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worker. (Jessica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We are still trying to emphasise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the importance of this…we have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to show how they [schools] can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do it with little resources, it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doesn’t have to be full time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have recently been involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with a child where this started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informally, was stepped up but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now has reduced again. Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can lead on this. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I drop in on a weekly basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Jessica)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition at all levels has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>been prioritised in our learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mentor work. (Clara)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Key person

- Educate schools for this to become non-negotiable
- Understanding the role of the key person and their responsibilities
- Knowing why it is important
- Finding the right person
- Allow the young person to have a voice, this needs to be established early and could be chosen by young person – make the people available
- Someone who sees them anyway
- How does the key person check-in – planned, subtle or a meeting?

### To develop the role of the key person during an atypical in-year
### Implications for practice of the four priority propositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition for looked after children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Joint training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CPD events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Networks - sharing practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- PEP meetings, coaching/modelling for DTs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Information mailings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Virtual school guidelines/good practice – set the standard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Case studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example reflections on practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition lasts for longer than some people think. (Liz)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Your thoughts on the appreciative inquiry process.

Well worth the time spent on a quality piece of work with realistic, practical outcomes which have impacted directly on our pupils. (Clara)

This has been an interesting process and was particularly good when the young people were involved. It has highlighted many areas where we can still work on raising awareness in schools to encourage them to be extra welcoming. Helping children to find friends is very difficult in the longer term and should be something that we continue to work on after the settling in period as this is what will be most likely to allow a child to be happy in the new environment. (Liz)

This has made me see how much is being done and where there are still gaps to improve. (Kate)

I have found this exercise useful being able to evaluate our work both as a team and individually. Some of the practice mentioned would have happened before we did this work, but it has been an encouraging exercise to look at our practice and make changes if/where necessary. Thank you, for all your hard work! (Jessica)

### Discussion

This study aimed to explore, with a group of looked after YP and VS staff how to support looked after children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. The findings largely resonate with the literature base around supporting children when they experience transition to a new school. Developing a level of trust with the people around them was particularly
important for the YP involved, including highly valuing friendship during school transition (Libbey, 2007). Using AI within an AR framework generated useful findings and as the research came to an end, reflections on the process, outcomes and impact of the AI were considered.

**Process**

AR creates collaborative opportunities for co-researchers to study issues important to their lives, affording a key role in knowledge production and action towards change (Galletta & Jones, 2010). To minimise any potential power differences between the VS and the YP, I engaged in a variety of processes prior to and during the AI. In the first instance, I met with the YP before their first FG to ensure they were aware of who they would be working with; this also gave the YP the opportunity to ask any questions or raise any concerns they had. Initiating, building and maintaining this relationship is viewed as a critical process to working collaboratively with YP in AR and this collaboration ensures that actions are meaningful, successful, and sustainable (McHugh & Kowalski, 2010).

In addition to meeting with the YP prior to the AI commencing, I also attempted to minimise power differentials by ensuring their FGs took place before that of the VS. I felt that informing the YP that their views would be gathered and fed back to the VS would instil in them a sense of control and ownership within the research process. Strategies to reduce any perceived power differences in the joint session included a very clear structure, adhering to timing and giving all participants the opportunity to give their point of view. The VS were briefed prior to the joint FG to ensure they were aware of the proposed structure and potential direction it would take. It is also felt that because the YP and I had developed rapport during the previous two sessions, the YP entered the joint FG with more confidence.

**Outcomes**

Changes in perspective for the VS staff occurred at various points in the AR, particularly following discussions around individual practice which led to group reflection on the team as a whole. During the dream phase the YP expressed their wish for successful visits to their new school with someone they trust, speaking to someone with prior knowledge of the new school, having tour guides and detailed maps of their new school and having their new teacher’s full names, room numbers...
and photographs; all somewhat logistical wishes. Following this session, the points raised by the YP were discussed with the VS at the end of their dream session (to not influence discussion) and upon group reflection Rachel highlighted,

that’s interesting because they didn’t go on the emotional side, they went on more the practical side…cause their worry is suddenly I’ve ended up in a new area, in a new school, new, new, new and I don’t know… so to them getting those needs met first, practical things, is actually the number one thing… whereas for us we always think it is the social and emotional…that’s quite interesting (Rachel)

At this stage, the VS appeared to shift perspective from expecting that pupils would want to talk about for example needing to feel safe in school, to recognising the power of practicality when YP experience a mid-year transition. The young people’s ‘dreams’ seemed to be a way of reducing potential anxiety via organisation and planning. Also important to the YP was school uniform which allows you to ‘represent your school’ (Arthur).

School staff’s focus on the practical was also apparent in Flitcroft and Kelly’s (2016) study where understandings of creating a sense of school belonging focused again on school uniforms and also whole school photographs and welcome assemblies. While these seem plausible and may well function to support the development of a sense of school belonging, for the pupils in this study the focus was on being able to quickly learn how things work at their new school.

Additionally, a focus on the key worker role and developing friendships seems to exemplify how the YP and VS see the concept of a sense of school belonging as being embodied in relationships. The VS seemed to develop an understanding of the importance of providing pupils with the opportunity to form a relationship with a key member of staff. VS staff envisaged training with schools to support a number of staff to take on a keyworker role and be prepared should a child arrive at an atypical time in the academic year. They also felt that having a number of staff available to carry out a key worker role would allow other reciprocal relationships to also develop naturally over time rather than staff and pupils being ‘allocated’ to each other. VS staff also seemed to develop a greater awareness of the importance of peer friendships during atypical school transition, with Liz highlighting her learning
around helping children to find friends. She suggested that this is very difficult in the longer term and should be something that the VS continue to work on, even after the settling in period, ‘as this is what will be most likely to allow a child to be happy in the new environment’ (Liz).

It is also thought that a change in perspective for the YP may have occurred during the AI. During the discovery session, Joshua explained that he felt like adults do not listen to YP and that adults talk about YP in meetings as if they were not there. However, in the AR Joshua was able to successfully take part in the joint focus group with the VS and engage in discussions well, perhaps indicating that he understood that his views would be considered and taken seriously. McMurray, Connolly, Preston-Shoot and Wigley (2011) suggested that children in care search for emotional commitments and a level of trust and belonging from the adults around them and this example may potentially highlight the trust that had been established between Joshua and I, enabling him to feel able to express his views when he met the VS staff.

**Impact**

The impact of the research focuses on the knowledge constructed with the YP and VS co-researchers; in particular the four priority propositions identified in the joint focus group (see table 5). Impact also focuses on the changes to practice as a result of this knowledge, as well as what was gained from participation in the AI process.

Throughout the AI, it was highlighted that the YP gave particular focus to practicality and detail during an in-year transition, by discussing logistical and somewhat organisational ‘dreams’. These included knowing their teachers’ full names and room numbers, receiving information about the new school layout and being given child friendly Ofsted information. The VS also focused on detail, suggesting that attention to detail during in-year transition meetings should be given and appropriate information shared with all relevant individuals. On a number of occasions, the VS highlighted that Personal Education Plan (PEP) meetings are one way in which this new learning can be promoted and imbedded. For example, attention to detail in PEP meetings is emphasised and actions are set within PEP meetings focusing on the role of the key worker. Although this practice appeared to
be in place prior to this research, it seems evident that attending to detail is now on the VS agenda, ‘The attention to detail helps’ (Kate).

Change to practice as a result of this research also lies within the generation of relevant professional networks. In particular, the DT network has been enacted and put into place within the LA. Systemic change within the LA is dependent upon the distribution, implementation and application of the outcomes generated by the VS and requires a commitment to this implementation by all participants, especially those in positions of responsibility; in this case the VS head teacher (Shuayb et al., 2009; Flitcroft & Kelly, 2016). Although other strategic plans are yet to be arranged, I am aware that the VS head teacher is motivated and driven to put in place more strategic action that was generated in the planning stage of this research and is positive about the upcoming networks that are due to be arranged within the LA.

A further change to practice following this research is around the role of the key worker in schools within the LA. It was felt that the key worker role within schools occurred in an ad hoc rather than systematic manner and Jessica highlighted that she ‘drops in on a weekly basis to the YP’, suggesting that at the current time the VS were also taking on the keyworker role within some schools in the LA. Authority wide training for DTs was planned to further develop key worker roles within schools. Tilbury, Creed, Buys, Osmond and Crawford (2014) suggest a child’s perceived level of support influences their school engagement and that children who receive support from adults around them are more likely to be positively connected with their school and in turn feel like they belong; Jessica may therefore be fulfilling this role to ensure the YP remain connected to their school and develop a sense of belonging.

Finally, further impact of the research, focusing on what was gained from participation in the AI process, can be gleaned from the VS co-researcher’s evaluation on the AI process. Reflections highlight that the VS found AI to be a useful tool to evaluate their work, to appreciate what they already do and to identify areas for development. It was also highlighted that it ‘was particularly good when the young people were involved’ (Liz) and that the research was ‘well worth the time… a quality piece of work with realistic, practical outcomes which have impacted directly on our pupils’ (Clara). The VS also seem to have developed a
greater appreciation of the impact of peer friendships within mid-year transitions and suggested that this is ‘something that we continue to work on after the settling in period as this is what will be most likely to allow a child to be happy in the new environment’ (Liz).

**Limitations and further directions**

Inevitably, there are limitations to the outcomes of the study and experiences and insights that have been discussed in this research may only be applicable to the participants who provided them. However, the research did aim to gather the views of individuals and can therefore serve as a starting point for further research in this area. As secondary school aged pupils were involved, differing results may also be found if working with children of primary school age.

Further research could expand on this study by incorporating the views of school staff and carers who support YP in care on a daily basis.

**Conclusion**

AI has been shown to have the potential to raise the topic of belonging during the mid-year transition of looked after children, from one of individual concern to one of a whole team concern. AI is a useful practice that has been shown to support collaboration and help bring together the voice of the child and the voice of the adults who support them in their educational transitions. Outcomes of the AI highlight areas of development within the LA and it is hoped that the VS co-researchers’ learning, regarding a sense of belonging in terms of relationships between YP and adults, will demonstrate the value in considering belonging for YP in care at the child, school, practitioner and LA levels.
References


Paper Three: The dissemination of evidence to professional practice
**Introduction**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and outline the dissemination to professional practice of the research reported in this thesis. The research discussed is a systematic literature review of studies identifying views around school belonging and how school related staff promote a sense of belonging and engagement for their pupils; and an action research (AR) project utilising appreciative inquiry (AI) exploring how to support looked after children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. Within AR, knowledge generation and action are collaborative processes between participants and researcher, therefore this paper will provide an overview of evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence and of effective research dissemination, before narrowing to address implications for AR. A summary of implications of the research is presented at different levels, followed by the dissemination and impact strategy.

**Section A: Overview of the concepts of evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence**

**Evidence-based practice**

Evidence-based practice (EBP) has been defined by the American Psychological Association (APA) (2006) as “the integration of the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics culture and preferences” (p.273). EBP is a requirement of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and practitioner psychologists must “be able to engage in evidence-based and evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures” (Health and Care Professions Council, 2016, standard 12.1). EBP ensures effectiveness, provides safety and cost effectiveness of interventions (APA, 2006) and following its growth in health contexts, EBP has gathered momentum across a wide range of professional areas, including social policy and education (Frederickson, 2002). EBP seeks to clarify causal and comparative questions; for instance, does an approach cause beneficial effects and which approach is likely to achieve the most desirable outcomes? (Bower & Gillbody, 2010). The philosophy behind EBP accepts that a variety of research evidence exists, upon which professional practice should be informed and a hierarchy of research evidence has
been proposed (Scott, Shaw & Joughin, 2001), placing the strongest body of research at the top:

1. Several systematic reviews of randomised controlled trials
2. Systematic review of randomised controlled trials
3. Randomised controlled trials
4. Quasi-experimental trials
5. Case control and cohort studies
6. Expert consensus opinion
7. Individual opinion

The hierarchy recognises rigorous scientific research, including randomised controlled trials (RCTs), as the most trustworthy evidence source (Scott et al., 2001). RCTs have often been regarded as the ‘gold standard’ in research evidence (Fox, 2003), as they involve a large number of participants being randomly allocated to control and experimental groups, in order to explore intervention efficacy (Frederickson, 2002). However, Barkham and Mellor-Clark (2003) question the relevance of efficacy research to real world practice as the context within which the intervention will be implemented is somewhat overlooked. Effectiveness research on the other hand, takes into account the population beyond the controlled condition and has high external validity due to measuring the effect of an intervention across settings and within routine practice (Barkham & Mellor-Clark, 2003). Effectiveness research also facilitates the safe trialling of new techniques, which can add to the evidence base (Barkham, Hardy & Mellor-Clark, 2010). From a conceptual viewpoint, Barkham and Mellor-Clark (2003) see “efficacy research as underpinning the evidence-based paradigm while both effectiveness and practice research are components of practice-based evidence” (p. 320).

**Practice-based evidence**

Practice-based evidence (PBE) aims to build a practitioner-led evidence base via the safe trialling of novel and innovative techniques (Woods, McArdle & Tabassum, 2014) and Fox (2003) suggests that PBE centres upon three key propositions:

1. The pursuit of knowledge should be a context-dependent process driven by local issues
2. Research activity should acknowledge the limitations of seeking universal rules via nomothetic methods.

3. Theory-building should have direct relevance to practice settings.

A key axiom of the PBE paradigm is that practitioners can exercise choice within their practice settings. This is a fundamental difference between EBP, as evidenced in a RCT, where sources of variance are tightly controlled (Barkham & Mellor-Clark, 2003). PBE focuses on improvements in practice (Barkham & Mellor-Clark, 2003) and educational psychologists (EPs) may be in a unique position to contribute to PBE by producing ecologically valid evidence. The APA (2006) supports the use of PBE and argues that it is important that practitioners do not assume interventions are ineffective due to a lack of evidence base. PBE therefore allows EPs to utilise a variety of interventions and techniques that may be effective, by successfully combining current research and professional experience.

EBP and PBE can both be viewed as aiming to enhance the evidence base and improve practice and they may be seen as two complementary approaches (Barkham et al., 2010). As AR aims to effect change by researching ‘with’ practitioners, as opposed to researching ‘about’ practice (Bradbury-Huang, 2010) it takes a slightly different perspective when generating knowledge; “its purpose is not primarily or solely to understand social arrangements, but also to effect desired change as a path to generating knowledge and empowering stakeholders” (Bradbury-Huang, 2010, p. 93). AR is about involving participants in the creation of knowledge in order to build capacity to effect change and is viewed as representing a “transformative orientation to knowledge creation” (Bradbury-Huang, 2010, p. 93).

Section B: A review of current literature in relation to the effective dissemination and notions of research impact

Research dissemination has been described using a variety of terms, including diffusion, implementation and knowledge transfer (Wilson, Petticrew, Calnan, & Nazareth, 2010), however its central focus is on the availability of knowledge to its target audience and the opportunity for the audience to engage with the evidence presented. Wilson et al. (2010) have defined research dissemination as:
a planned process that involves consideration of target audiences and the setting in which research findings are to be received and, where appropriate, communicating and interacting with wide policy and health service audiences in ways that will facilitate research uptake in decision-making processes and practice. (p. 2)

Without carefully considering how to effectively disseminate findings, it is impossible for research to develop knowledge, refine theory and benefit practitioners (Thyer, 2001) and it is problematic to assume that once research evidence is ascertained, it will be disseminated automatically (Dingfelder & Mandell, 2011). Even though research dissemination is high on the UK and international agenda (Wilson et al., 2001) the use of evidence to inform practice is not well embedded (Lilienfeld, Ammirati & David, 2012). Researchers therefore need to utilise appropriate methods to communicate their research findings in order to narrow the gap between research and practice.

Harmsworth, Turpin, Rees and Pell (2001) propose that the term dissemination can be best described as the “delivering and receiving of a message”, “the engagement of an individual in a process” and “the transfer of a process or product” (p. 3) and suggest it is helpful to think about dissemination in three different stages: 1. dissemination for awareness; 2. dissemination for understanding and 3. dissemination for action. Harmsworth et al. (2001) propose researchers who undertake these three stages will pass through each in turn to disseminate their research. The first stage, dissemination for awareness, involves sharing research findings with target audiences that do not require a detailed knowledge of the research, but more an awareness of the outcomes. Harmsworth et al. (2001) suggest that creating an awareness of research existence will help the ‘word of mouth’ dissemination and helps the researcher build an identity and profile in the research community. The second stage, dissemination for understanding, involves directly targeting several audiences that may benefit from what the research has to offer and providing them with a deeper understanding of research findings. The final stage, dissemination for action, involves targeting audiences that can ‘influence’ and ‘bring about’ change to policy or practice within their organisations, as a result of the adoption of approaches offered by the research. These audiences will need to be equipped with the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding of the research in
order to achieve real change. Harmsworth et al. (2001) then suggest that researchers consider what it is they want to disseminate, who their audience will be and what they want to offer, followed by a consideration of timing of dissemination and the most effective approach to disseminate using appropriate models.

The literature around models of dissemination has been reviewed by Ward, House and Hamer (2009) who identified five common components of knowledge transfer: problem identification and communication; knowledge/research development and selection; analysis of context; knowledge transfer activities or interventions; and knowledge/research utilisation. Ward et al. (2009) also identified three types of knowledge transfer processes: a linear process; a cyclical process; and a dynamic multidirectional process. From this review, a conceptual framework of the knowledge transfer process was developed illustrating the five components and how they are connected via a complex, multidirectional set of interactions (Ward et al., 2009, p. 12). The framework allows for individual components to occur simultaneously or in any given order and to occur more than once during the process of knowledge transfer (Ward et al., 2009). However, it was suggested that the framework provides a foundation for gathering evidence, and that future empirical work refines the importance of each of the five components.

A systematic scoping review of conceptual dissemination frameworks was carried out by Wilson et al. (2010) and 33 frameworks were identified; 20 of these were designed for use by researchers to guide their dissemination activities. Of the included frameworks, 28 were underpinned by one or more of three theoretical approaches including persuasive communication (looking at who shares what information with whom and to what effect), diffusion of innovations theory (looking at how, why and at what rate practices spread through specific populations) and social marketing (looking at marketing and advertising principles to promote non-commercial services or research-based knowledge). Wilson et al. (2010) concluded that although a number of theoretically-informed frameworks are available to researchers to help guide their dissemination, given the current emphasis on enhancing research knowledge uptake, researchers should consider the impact of their research when adopting a theoretically-informed approach to their research dissemination.
**Action research dissemination**

As action research (AR) aims to effect change by researching ‘with’ participants (Bradbury-Huang, 2010) it is intended that dissemination occurs concurrently throughout the research process between the researcher and co-researchers. Sommer (2009) states, “I learned through practice that intense participation with the end users of the information aided in the dissemination and utilization of research findings” (p. 228); the impact of AR is therefore likely to be high as findings have been generated in partnership with the end users. Sommer (2009) suggests action researchers have a special obligation to disseminate findings and must communicate their research to participants and to other lay people. Sommer (2009) suggests journals, books, mailing lists, associations, and conferences emphasising AR, makes dissemination beyond the participatory group easier for action researchers, given that findings may be applicable in other contexts.

Sommer (2009) proposed a tripartite framework to discuss the implications for dissemination of AR, based on Lewin’s (1946) three goals of AR which includes the need to: advance knowledge (by publishing in journals); improve a concrete situation (by producing applied articles that are more accessible to the general public); and improve methodology (by reflecting on the approaches used throughout the AR).

**Section C: A summary of the policy/practice/research development and implications from the research at; the research site, organisational level, professional level**

This thesis comprised a systematic literature review (SLR) identifying views around school belonging and how school related staff promote a sense of belonging for their pupils; and an action research (AR) project utilising appreciative inquiry (AI) exploring how one local authority (LA) could extend practice to support looked after children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. The researcher aimed to make a contribution to knowledge within the field of school belonging and transition by configuring existing research in the area of belonging and exploring practice through AR. The outcomes may be of interest to other LAs who want to develop their practice in these areas.
The following sections outline implications of the research at the research site, organisational level and professional level. These three levels can also be thought of within AR as first, second and third person inquiry (Torbert, 2001). First person inquiry involves the researcher and co-researcher adopting an inquiring approach into ‘their own assumptions, perspectives and action, seeking to behave awarely and choicefully in a given context, and to develop their practice in some way’ (Marshall, 2011, p. 3). Second person inquiry involves people coming together to inquire into issues of mutual interest (Marshall, 2011), for example within the co-researcher group and third person inquiry involves promoting sustained, engaged inquiry in a wider community of some kind, for example the wider local authority and Educational and School Psychologists (EP/SPs) (Marshall, 2011).

**Research site**

The findings from the configurative literature review, have potential future relevance for the practice of school related staff, as both individual staff practice and aspects of school context were thought by participants to impact upon a pupils’ sense of school belonging. The findings suggest that by school related staff being accessible, positive and transparent in their approaches to pupils, and by the school context being supportive, providing a sense of school community and positive school culture, a sense of school belonging is likely to be created for pupils. As school belonging is viewed as a whole school concept and one that can be facilitated by individual staff members, it seems important for school staff and senior leaders to consider both the impact of the behaviour of individual staff members and the impact of the school environment on pupils’ sense of belonging. In order for school belonging to become a whole school initiative, school staff must first look at their own practice and at the context within which they provide education and care to their pupils.

The Action Research brought about changes in understanding and practice for the Virtual School (VS). Feedback from the VS highlighted that the AI was valued by the team; ‘well worth the time… a quality piece of work with realistic, practical outcomes which have impacted directly on our pupils’ (Clara). VS staff appeared to value the time spent on evaluating both their individual and group practice as a team and having the opportunity to work with the young people (YP) from the Children in
Care Council; ‘This has been an interesting process and was particularly good when the young people were involved’ (Liz). Following the empirical study, the VS headteacher now has regular meetings with the Children in Care Council to further develop practice. Future cycles of AI may also be beneficial to the VS in order to continue to develop their knowledge and explore further areas of interest in their role.

Implications for the YP lie within gathering the voice of the child. All YP have the right to be involved in making decisions that will affect their lives (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989) and utilising the voice of the child within this research has the potential to empower YP and give them confidence to express their views around aspects of their education that they feel need addressing. Capturing the views of YP will ensure that research is of benefit to other children and young people and to policy makers and practitioners working in the field (Daly, 2009).

**Organisational level**

The AI groups, including the YP from the Children in Care Council and the VS, generated knowledge within each phase of the AI. Through discussion and reflection on existing areas of good practice and the development of ideas and actions based on a preferred future, implications at the organisational level were around school belonging being part of a shared agenda within the LA. An outcome generated within the joint focus group highlighted the potential of the VS to work with schools in the LA to develop the ‘key worker’ role, especially when supporting looked after children during an atypical in-year transition to a new school. VS staff discussed potential training to further improve the role of the key worker within the LA, demonstrating the value in considering belonging for YP in care at the child, school, practitioner and LA levels. The VS devised an action plan in the final focus group, in order to drive the training forward and prioritise aspects of the training that needed planning first. The next step for the VS is to gauge interest in schools within the LA about the key worker training at their networking event, with a view to begin training with schools in the upcoming academic year.

The findings of the systematic literature review also create implications for practice at the organisational level. It would be useful for school related staff to know there is
a small evidence base regarding strategies and approaches for supporting all pupils to develop a sense of belonging in the school environment. Some of the themes identified in the literature review may also be of interest to parents and carers and outside agencies and could support them when addressing pupils’ needs in relation to school belonging.

**Professional level**

There are also implications at the wider professional level. For example, findings from the literature review are likely to be of interest to Educational and School Psychologists (EP/SPs), as it provides an overview of the current literature in the area of school belonging and identifies two main areas of importance to teachers and other school professionals: individual staff practice and aspects of school context which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging. Whilst Osterman (2000) suggested that, at the secondary level, changes needed to satisfy students’ needs for belongingness revolved around the school’s policies, practices, cultural values and norms, findings from the literature review suggest practice in relation to school belonging may have developed. As the literature review gave an indication of how the notion of school belonging is framed by school related professionals, this may encourage more EP/SPs to work with school staff to develop their policies and practice around a sense of belonging to ensure this area of pupil support continues to progress.

The second paper is the first study around belonging and transition of children in care, using AI and focusing on pupil and staff participation. Findings identified by the YP may be particularly important for EP/SPs to bear in mind when completing future casework around school transition and considering organisational change. Factors identified as impacting upon the success of in-year transition will also be useful for professionals to consider when deciding on support to offer YP. Ultimately, the most important findings from the empirical study highlight the unique nature of the experience; all YP should receive bespoke support tailored to their needs and wishes. The empirical study may also be of interest to other LAs in offering a point of reference when developing practice around pupil support during school transition; emerging findings offer a starting point for future discussions.
As this thesis was commissioned through England’s Department for Education (DfE) National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL) ITEP award, it allowed for the development of a partnership between the LA and the university. Implications arise here in relation to future communications and joined up working and highlights how AI, within the empirical study, allows real world research to empower LAs to develop their practice using AR.

**Section D: A strategy for promoting and evaluating the dissemination and impact of the research**

It is important to consider a strategy for promoting and evaluating the dissemination of research findings and the impact of research, in order to bridge the gap between research and practice. Therefore, whilst writing the literature review and the empirical study, I gave consideration to the research findings I wanted to disseminate and the various audiences I would disseminate to, including: teachers, schools, the LA and EP/SPs. I plan to disseminate findings from the thesis through the three stages of dissemination as proposed by Harmsworth et al. (2001).

The first stage is dissemination for awareness and involves sharing the research findings with audiences to raise awareness of the research. To begin this process, I will continue to raise the research topic within consultations through my role as a trainee Educational Psychologist and inform relevant staff in schools about the research that has been conducted and about the positive impact it could have on school practice. As my trainee colleagues are also aware of the research, I hope that ‘word of mouth’ dissemination will occur at this stage and filter through to other LAs in England. I will also disseminate within the LA where I will work as of September 2018, through the EP team and through staff within children’s services.

The second stage is dissemination for understanding and involves targeting several audiences that may benefit from what the research has to offer and providing a deeper understanding of research findings. This has partly been met as my supervisor and I presented at a Northwest LA annual inclusion matters conference, that explored resilience, connectedness and belonging (appendix 31). Attendance at this conference allowed me to present research findings to a variety of school staff and EPs within the Northwest of England. Positive feedback was gathered from attendees about the potential impact on school practice. I also plan to present within
the LA where the research took place; I will work with the VS and present alongside them at their Designated Teacher (DT) conference. It is also hoped the YP from the AI will become involved, giving them a sense of ownership over the research. I also plan to present at the Collaborative Action Network Conference (CARN) in October 2018.

One of the aims of disseminating AR is to develop knowledge (Sommer, 2009) and I hope to achieve this and further develop audience understanding by disseminating the research findings through publication. The literature review and the empirical study have been prepared in accordance with publication guidelines from two journals, including Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (appendix 32) and Educational Action Research (appendix 33) respectively.

The third stage is dissemination for action and involves targeting audiences that can ‘influence’ and ‘bring about’ change to policy or practice within an organisation, as a result of adopting the approaches offered by the research. Dissemination is viewed as successful when educational practice changes in response to the disseminated excellent practice (Harmsworth et al., 2001) and as the empirical study resulted in the VS creating an action plan to develop training based on the role of the ‘key worker’ in schools, it is hoped to engage schools in developing practice through this training. Although key worker training input is intended for the DT conference in the next academic year, the VS learning mentors are currently focusing on supporting transition for their year 6 pupils during the summer term and will continue this support in the first half of the autumn term in year 7. The VS are also using learning from the empirical study in a post-16 transition project, highlighting that approaches offered by the research are being adopted.

**Evaluating impact**

The impact of the research dissemination can be considered at a local and more distant level. Local impact may be evaluated in terms of analysis of data in relation to staff training and recording how many schools sign up to the ‘key worker’ training due to be offered by the VS; this will highlight interest within the LA and the extent to which the concept is viewed as important to school leaders. It may also be beneficial to evaluate of the types of support offered by the VS and school staff during atypical in-year transitions within the LA. Finally, local impact could also be
evaluated through providing opportunities for YP and school related staff to reflect on the transition process as a result of the research, with VS staff providing supervision to school staff to support this process. At a more distant level, if papers are successfully published, impact could be evaluated by tracking the number of research citations per paper via ResearchGate. Distant impact could also incorporate exploring systemic changes within the LA and school settings in relation to belonging and transition and monitoring actions developed following the ‘key worker’ training offered by the VS.
References


Appendix 1: PRISMA diagram

361 records identified through database searching

4 records identified through other sources

328 records remaining after duplicates removed

328 records screened via title and abstract

320 records excluded

8 full-text articles assessed for eligibility

3 full-text articles excluded, with reference to exclusion criteria

5 qualitative studies included in synthesis
Appendix 2: Review framework for qualitative evaluation/investigation research

Author(s): 
Title: 
Journal Reference:

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<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<th>Agree coeff.</th>
<th>R1</th>
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<td>e.g. schedules, transcripts, thematic maps.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><em>Max 14</em></td>
<td>Mean coeff.</td>
<td>Mean coeff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Thematic Synthesis - Photographic evidence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Photographic evidence</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Free inductive line-by-line coding of the findings of each included study</td>
<td>Manual annotation of paper copy of findings of each included study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Organisation of the free codes into related areas to construct descriptive themes</td>
<td>Grouping of post-it notes to generate in descriptive themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Development of deductive analytical themes</td>
<td>Data extracts reviewed within each theme to ensure they were distinct and represented the data extracts. Final thematic maps constructed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Thematic Synthesis - Example code and extracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Extracts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key adult</td>
<td>“another preparation schools felt they could make was having a key adult for the pupil” (Flitcroft &amp; Kelly, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“participants indicated that many high-risk students are those that do not have supportive adult relationships outside of the school, and that therefore the development of such relationships within the school environment is particularly important” (Chapman et al., 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“they need to know there’s someone there that when they do this stuff, is going to say, I can help you” (Chapman et al., 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“here… school (is) a place where someone cares for them and you get that sense that when things go (they) can talk to someone – whether that somebody is a teacher or a mate” (Anderson et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“… even having one teacher that they feel that they can go to when they’re not feeling safe and so forth” (Anderson et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I find that as long as they’ve got at least one person they can connect with, then that’s like a life preserver that keeps them afloat, and then we try to build from there… there’s usually bound to be somebody they can hang on to” (Anderson et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“a single contact person when students enrolled” (Bower et al., 2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 5. Thematic Synthesis - Codes and themes table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Basic Theme</th>
<th>Organising Theme</th>
<th>Global Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visits to doctors</td>
<td>Pupil support on a practical level</td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing uniform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity to emotional states</td>
<td>Pupil support on an emotional level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normalisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School supplies/equipment</td>
<td>In school</td>
<td></td>
<td>Academic support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with carer pathways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In class support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help with assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiated curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scaffolded curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework support</td>
<td>Out of school</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support offered by staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After school club</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-curricular activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff being available</td>
<td>Accessibility of staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key adult</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturing staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff building confidence in pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency of approach</td>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapport building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher connection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Teacher connection            |                                                  |                  |                               |

<p>| Positive relationships        |                                                  |                  |                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Basic Theme</th>
<th>Organising Theme</th>
<th>Global Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School newsletter</td>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation and support for pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student notices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil profile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign posting for pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person-centred</td>
<td>Person-centred</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bespoke support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance to start again</td>
<td>Fresh start</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation and support for pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New day, new start</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction calendar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff fully informed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarify school suitability</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare pupil for transition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging lessons</td>
<td>Engaging lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support offered through school routines and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School enjoyment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling valued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive reinforcement</td>
<td>Positive reinforcement and rewards</td>
<td>Classroom provision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic connection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing success</td>
<td>Opportunities for success</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-bullying policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary policy</td>
<td>Policies and procedures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring pupil progress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairness of approach</td>
<td>Positive and nurturing ethos</td>
<td>School culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed atmosphere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small school size</td>
<td>School environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on pupil future</td>
<td>High academic expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being aspirational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong staff network</td>
<td>Staff connectedness</td>
<td>School community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff confidence</th>
<th>School community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head teacher involved</td>
<td>Principal involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads of department involved</td>
<td>Leadership support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating school identity</td>
<td>School identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School uniform</td>
<td>Peer support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School photos</td>
<td>Peer mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social networks</td>
<td>Social networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer connection</td>
<td>Parent partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent partnership</td>
<td>Parenting classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving location of parent meetings</td>
<td>Offering parents incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic participation</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadets</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community sports coaching</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City council representative</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School guidance officers</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaison officers</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural liaison officers</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis care support</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap around services</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Links to other stakeholders
Appendix 6: Global and organising themes

Global Theme One: Individual staff practice which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging

- Teacher connection
- Personal support
- Academic support

Global Theme Two: Aspects of school context which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging

- School culture
- A sense of school community
- Links to other stakeholders
- Classroom practices
- Preparation and support for pupil
Appendix 7: Global Theme One Thematic Map

- Pupil support on an emotional level
- Pupil support on a practical level
- Personal support
- In school
- Academic support
- Out of school
- Individual staff practice which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging
- Accessibility of staff
- Teacher connection
- Positive relationships
- Transparency
- Positive staff qualities
Appendix 8: Global Theme Two Thematic Map

Preparation and support for pupil

- Information sharing
- Person-centred
- Fresh start

Classroom practices

- Engaging lessons
- Positive reinforcement and rewards
- Opportunities for success
- Policies and procedures

Aspects of school context which addresses pupils’ needs to experience a sense of belonging

- High academic expectations
- School environment

School culture

- Positive and nurturing ethos

Links to other stakeholders

- Home-school partnership
- Work experience
- Peer support

A sense of school community

- Staff connectedness
- School identity
- Leadership support

Multi-agency support
Appendix 9: Ethical approval

Dear Leanne

Ref: PGR-7659014-RP

**Project Title:** Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

I am pleased to confirm that your ethics application has now been approved by the School Research Integrity Committee (RIC) against a pre-approved UREC template.

If anything untoward happens during your research then please ensure you make your supervisor aware who can then raise it with the RIC on your behalf.

**This approval is confirmation only for the Ethical Approval application.**

Regards
Georgia Irving
Appendix 10. YP information sheet

Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Participant Information Sheet

Hi, my name is Leanne and I am inviting you to take part in my research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what will happen. Please have a read the following information carefully and talk about it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like some more information. Take your time to decide whether or not you want to take part and thank you for reading this!

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to gather young people’s and professional’s views of belonging and how this can be supported when care experienced young people change schools in-year so action can be taken to make things better. An Appreciative Inquiry process will be used with a group of young people like yourself and the Looked after children education team, which means we will all be working together to look at the things that have worked or been positive in the past to help make things better for the future.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You will be asked to take part in three-four focus groups, sometime in the next school year 2016/17, sharing your experiences of changing schools with myself and other care experienced young people and also the Looked after children education team. The focus groups will each last 1 hour and they will be highly interactive. The research will take place at a location, time and date suitable for your group.

What happens to the data collected?

The data will be analysed by myself AND the participants. We will all identify themes from the activities and discussions and I will keep a fieldwork diary. All focus groups will be audio recorded and the data will then be written up and submitted to the University of Manchester as a thesis in May 2018.

How is confidentiality maintained?

All recorded data will only be listened to by myself. All data will be anonymised and the digital recordings will be deleted after the study is complete.
What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

Who can I contact for further information?

I will be happy to answer any additional questions you may have about this research. You can contact me, Leanne Greenwood via email at:

leanne.greenwood@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

You may also contact my university supervisor Dr Catherine Kelly at the University of Manchester via email at:

catherine.kelly@manchester.ac.uk

Thank you very much for considering taking part in this research!
Appendix 11. VS information sheet

Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study as part of a student project exploring young people’s and professionals’ views of belonging in relation to looked after children during school transition, which will form part of a Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Leanne Greenwood
c/o Dr Catherine Kelly
Manchester Institute of Education
The University of Manchester
Manchester, M13 9PL

Title of the Research

Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked after children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to gather young people’s and professional’s views of belonging and how this can be facilitated when looked after children experience school transition. Data gathering will take place using an Appreciative Inquiry process with looked after children and the Looked after children education team in order to explore how and in what ways developing a sense of belonging can be supported when looked after children experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen as you are a professional working within the Looked after children Education team within the Local Authority in which the researcher will carry out their research.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You will be asked to take part in a series of focus groups that will follow the appreciative inquiry framework, sometime in the next academic year 2016/17, sharing your experiences
of changing schools with myself and other members of the group. There will be 5-6 focus groups and will each last 1 hour, they will be highly interactive and we will generate and analyse data together.

What happens to the data collected?

The data collected in the focus groups will be analysed by participants themselves. Participants will identify themes from the activities and discussions and the researcher will keep a fieldwork diary. All focus groups will be audio recorded so the researcher can reflect on discussion points. At the start of each focus group the researcher will summarise points from the previous meeting and also discuss points raised at the focus group with the Looked after children in order to support the ongoing process. The data will then be written up and submitted to the University of Manchester as a thesis by May 2018.

How is confidentiality maintained?

All recorded data will only be listened to by the researcher. All data will be anonymised and the digital recordings will be deleted after the study is complete. All data and personal information will be stored securely and safely and will only be accessible by the researcher and their project supervisor.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. However, once the focus group begins, if you choose to leave, your data will be anonymised and potentially used in the research in order to ensure the focus group essence is maintained.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

No, there will be no compensation for taking part in the research.

What is the duration of the research?

The research will consist of four-five focus group which will last approximately 1 hour.

Where will the research be conducted?

The research will take place at a location, time and date convenient for your group.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The research is being conducted as part of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Manchester. Under the supervision of Dr Catherine Kelly, the research is likely to be presented for publication after completion in 2018.

Contact for further information

Leanne Greenwood: leanne.greenwood@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

Catherine Kelly: catherine.kelly@manchester.ac.uk
What if something goes wrong?

You should contact the trainee, Leanne Greenwood, at the above email in the first instance. If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093
Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Participant Information Sheet

[Name of young person participant will be inserted] is being invited to take part in a research study as part of a student project exploring young people’s and professionals’ views of belonging in relation to looked after children during school transition, which will form part of a Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish for [name of young person participant will be inserted] to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Leanne Greenwood
c/o Dr Catherine Kelly
Manchester Institute of Education
The University of Manchester, Manchester, M13 9PL

Title of the Research

Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked after children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to gather young people’s and professional’s views of belonging and how this can be facilitated when looked after children experience school transition. Data gathering will take place using an Appreciative Inquiry process with looked after children and the Looked after children education team in order to explore how and in what ways developing a sense of belonging can be supported when looked after children experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Why has my child been chosen?

[Name of young person participant will be inserted] has been chosen as they are a part of the Children in Care Council within the Local Authority in which the researcher will carry out their research.

What would they be asked to do if they took part?

They will be asked to take part in a series of focus groups that will follow the appreciative inquiry framework, sometime in the next academic year 2016/17, sharing their experiences
of changing schools with myself and other members of the group. There will be three-four focus groups and will each last 1 hour, they will be highly interactive and we will generate and analyse data together.

**What happens to the data collected?**

The data collected in the focus groups will be analysed by participants themselves. Participants will identify themes from the activities and discussions and the researcher will keep a fieldwork diary. All focus groups will be audio recorded so the researcher can reflect on discussion points. At the start of each focus group the researcher will summarise points from the previous meeting and also discuss points raised at the focus group with the Looked after children education team in order to support the ongoing process. The data will then be written up and submitted to the University of Manchester as a thesis by May 2018.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**

All recorded data will only be listened to by the researcher. All data will be anonymised and the digital recordings will be deleted after the study is complete. All data and personal information will be stored securely and safely and will only be accessible by the researcher and their project supervisor.

**What happens if I do not want [name of young person participant will be inserted] to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not [name of young person participant will be inserted] takes part. If you agree, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you give consent for [name of young person participant will be inserted] to take part, you are still free to withdraw them at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself or them. However, once the focus group begins, if you withdraw, their data will be anonymised and potentially used in the research in order to ensure the focus group essence is maintained.

**Will [name of young person participant will be inserted] be paid for participating in the research?**

No, there will be no compensation for taking part in the research.

**What is the duration of the research?**

The research will consist of three-four focus group which will last approximately 1 hour.

**Where will the research be conducted?**

The research will take place at a location, time and date convenient for the group.

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

The research is being conducted as part of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Manchester. Under the supervision of Dr Catherine Kelly, the research is likely to be presented for publication after completion in 2018.
Contact for further information

Leanne Greenwood: leanne.greenwood@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Catherine Kelly: catherine.kelly@manchester.ac.uk

What if something goes wrong?

You should contact the trainee, Leanne Greenwood, at the above email in the first instance. If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to ‘The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL’, by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093
Appendix 13. YP consent form

*Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.*

**CONSENT FORM**

If you are happy to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please Initial Box</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I understand that the focus groups will be audio recorded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers for future studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I agree to take part in the above project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of participant</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<th>Name of person taking consent</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</table>

101
Appendix 14. VS consent form

Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below

I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

I understand that the focus groups will be audio recorded.

I agree to the use of anonymous quotes.

I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers for future studies.

I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree to take part in the above project

Name of participant _______________________________ Date ___________ Signature ___________

Name of person taking consent _______________________________ Date ___________ Signature ___________

Please Initial Box

____________________________________________________________________________________

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Appendix 15. Parental responsibility consent form

Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy for [name of young person participant will be inserted] to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below

Please Initial Box

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that [name of young person participant will be inserted] participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the focus groups will be audio recorded.

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes.

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers for future studies.

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree for [name of young person participant will be inserted] to take part in the above project

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of person taking consent</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Appendix 16. Discovery Cycle Draft Focus Group Schedule

(NB: Participants’ discussions will shape the direction of the AI and the questions outlined below will serve as initial prompts)

1. Discovery Cycle

Introduction
- Appreciative Inquiry process outlined
- Purpose of focus group outlined
- Discuss confidentiality, anonymity, consent and right to withdraw
- Explain the concept of the ‘discovery’ cycle: explores the ‘best’ of what ‘is’ through the sharing of success stories – designed to empower participants

Discovery
- When it works well, what does it look like when pupils who are looked after are supported to develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition?
- What are the best parts of those activities that work?
- Can you think of a time when a you experienced a successful atypical in-year transition or supported a YP during their atypical in-year transition?
- What stands out as helping to make it a success?

VS only
- Tell me about how you perceive your role in supporting YP to develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition?
- Is there anything about the LA that helps you fulfil these roles?
- What skills enable you to engage with YP during school transition?

Summary
- Check participants feel like the joint organisation of the data and identification of emerging themes reflects the discussions
- Provide opportunities for participants to add more information
- Provide opportunities for participants to ask questions
- Explain what will happen to the data after the session
Appendix 17. Dream Cycle Draft Focus Group Schedule

(NB: Participants’ discussions will shape the direction of the AI and the questions outlined below will serve as initial prompts)

2. Dream Cycle

Introduction

- Summarise discovery cycle data and check with participants that this is accurate
- Reminder of AI process
- Discuss confidentiality, anonymity, consent and right to withdraw
- Explain the concept of the ‘dream’ cycle: imagines what ‘could be’ through the consideration of strengths and potential – designed to uplift participants.

Dream

- If you could imagine the LA and schools developing an ‘ideal’ package to support you or the YP you work with during an atypical in-year transition, what might that look like?
  - What might help facilitate that support?
  - Who might be involved in facilitating that support?
  - How could you or the YP access the support?
  - How may you or the YP feel about the support?
- What is already going on in the LA that may be seen as already supporting the ‘ideal’ situation? (remind participants of ideas discussed at discovery phase)
- How might other key players, including parents and carers, help develop that support?

VS only
- Discuss YP dream ideas

Summary

- Check participants feel like the joint organisation of the data and identification of emerging themes reflects the discussions
- Provide opportunities for participants to add more information
- Provide opportunities for participants to ask questions
- Explain what will happen to the data after the session
- Thank participants for their time and commitment to the FG
- Invite feedback on the AI process so far
Appendix 18. Design Cycle Focus Group Schedule

(NB: Participants’ discussions will shape the direction of the AI and the questions outlined below will serve as initial prompts)

3. Design Cycle – 30 minutes

5 minutes - Introduction

- Discuss confidentiality, anonymity, consent and right to withdraw
- Reminder of AI process
- Summarise dream cycle data and check with participants that this is accurate
- Explain the concept of the ‘design’ cycle: determines what ‘should be’, a positive future, through discussing ‘provocative propositions’ collaboratively.

20 minutes - Design

- Recap dreams identified in previous FGs
- Having identified the ‘ideal’ transition package during the dream cycle, is there anything more that you could do or add in?
- Read out the 13 provocative propositions that are placed on the walls around the room
  - Ask all the young people to choose the one that is most important to them and place a post-it note on it with their initials on it
  - Ask all the adults to choose the one that is most important to them and place a post-it note on it with their initials on it
- Ask the young people first, and then the adults, to take the proposition from the wall that they have chosen and sit back down with it in front of them. Young people and adults should pair up if they have chosen the same proposition. Pair up any individuals i.e. where a proposition had only 1 vote.
- Ask, “Why this is the most important proposition to you? Do you want to change the proposition in any way? What might help to achieve this proposition? What may be needed?”
  - Discuss as a pair for 5 minutes and then feedback to the group.
- Leanne to make notes on large poster paper throughout the session about the priority propositions and the group will jointly organise the propositions in a way that is mutually agreed between the YP and VS.

5 minutes - Summary

- Check participants feel like the joint organisation of the data and identification of emerging themes reflects the discussions
- Provide opportunities for participants to add more information
- Provide opportunities for participants to ask questions
- Explain what will happen to the data after the session
- Thank participants for their time and commitment to the FG
- Invite feedback on the AI process so far
Appendix 19. Destiny Cycle Draft Focus Group Schedule

(NB: Participants’ discussions will shape the direction of the AI and the questions outlined below will serve as initial prompts)

4. Destiny Cycle

Introduction
- Summarise design cycle data and check with participants that this is accurate – propositions chosen will be used to move forward and work on to turn into an action plan
- Reminder of AI process
- Discuss confidentiality, anonymity, consent and right to withdraw
- Explain the concept of the ‘destiny’ cycle: creating what ‘will be’ through realising the positive future and planning what will be done – create an action plan

Destiny
- Discussion of the provocative propositions chosen in the last FG – think about what the implications for your team are, for developing practice in schools?
- Take feedback – consider framework to sort into – implications for case work, on an individual basis and implications for capacity building in schools
- Prioritise the implications in order to move forward – use coloured stickers to vote for their priority implication
- Identify priority implication(s) and create action plan using Fishbone Diagram
- Next steps – monitoring phone call to team manager in October 2017 to review plan

Summary
- Check participants feel like the joint organisation of the data and action plan reflects the discussions
- Provide opportunities for participants to add more information
- Provide opportunities for participants to ask questions
- Explain what will happen to the data after the session
- Thank participants for their time and commitment to the FG
- Invite feedback on the AI process
Appendix 20. YP Discovery group analysis
Appendix 21. VS Discovery group analysis
Appendix 22. YP Dream group analysis
Appendix 23. VS Dream group analysis
Appendix 24. YP Information poster

My name is Ella. I enjoy going out with my friends, collecting old chandeliers! Gardening, and doing up my house. When I have enough time (and money) I go to my favourite place called El Gouna in Egypt.

My name is Rachel and I enjoy travelling, yoga and socialising with my friends.

My name is Liz and I like going for walks, training at the gym and watching Coronation Street.

My name is Amanda and I enjoy going to the beach and spending time with my friends.

My name is Lucy. I enjoy spending time with my family and watching my two children play football at the weekend.

My name is Jessica and I enjoy making special occasion cakes and decorating them. I also enjoy spending time with friends and family.

My name is Clara and I enjoy spending time playing with my grandchildren. I love cooking and eating what I have made!

My name is Kate. I like riding my horse who is called Jazz. I also like spending time with my three children & my dog Bramble.

My name is Beth and I am now enjoying my retirement!
Appendix 25. Propositions
Appendix 26. Priority propositions

- We have at least one key person we can build a trusting relationship with.
- Developing friendships is important to us.
- We have someone we trust to visit our new school with.
- We have a positive and personalised induction to our new school.
Appendix 27. Design group analysis

Joint For
3

- Adult of
- Child
- "Key Person"

1. We have at least one Key Person.
   We can build a trusting relationship with.

2. Developing friendships is important to us.
   (may not have many friends)
   - CYP 2
   - Adult 2
   - Adult 3

3. We have someone we trust to visit our new school with.
   - CYP 1
   - Adult 6
   - Relative of friend
   - Use you trust to show you the school properly

4. We have a positive and personalised induction to our new school.
   - Makes us unique, positive, thing.

Trust - Seems to be the Common Theme!??

- Ask you with Someone who is in the same class as you would be.
- Most sports clubs - People can put forward a club idea and create it themselves.
- If there are enough people!
Appendix 28. Destiny group analysis
Appendix 29. Fishbone diagram
Appendix 30. VS evaluation form

**Developing a sense of belonging when looked after children experience an atypical transition to a new school.**

The final stage of an appreciative inquiry is to evaluate learning and changes to practice. I would be grateful therefore if you could take a little time to consider examples of how taking part in the appreciative inquiry has influenced your work and your thoughts on the appreciative inquiry process.

The priority propositions identified in the Design Focus Group with the children and young people were:

1. We have at least one key person we can build a trusting relationship with.
2. Developing friendships is important to us.
3. We have someone we trust to visit our new school with.
4. We have a positive and personalised induction to our new school.

Implications for practice of these propositions were generated in the final focus group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Implications of the propositions</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reflections on practice</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implications for case work</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers can nurture friendships – child choose own friend from a pool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage foster carers to be proactive in finding friends in the local area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sticking to the idea/plan and discussing the plan together to promote trust; discussing adaptations can lead to trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make it easy for the young people to join clubs and groups – key person and foster carer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning mentors to assist with social skills work for longer term friendships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key person to be proactive in finding friends with/for the young person and organising groups/clubs around the child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A. Thinking about your work since the appreciative inquiry please share any developments to practice for example particular conversations with teachers, carers, children or other professionals; specific interventions or different approaches tried.**
- Key person and foster carer make it easy for the young people to join clubs and groups
- Transport; consider the ‘how’ and go through possible issues
- Remove obstacles – discuss as a team how to pre-empt e.g. games kit under uniform

### Implications for capacity building

- Key person – helping schools to become fully inclusive by ensuring that **all** children have a key person
- Friendship – educate students regarding importance, process for supporting friendships to develop
- APDR cycles, effect a change of whole school ethos so that this becomes a priority
- Special welcome pack in the receiving school for in-year transition
- Welcoming environment
- Induction – what they can manage, what’s needed, ask them, be realistic about what’s on offer
- Training reception staff to be welcoming
- CPD – Networks, sharing practice, CPD events, PEP meetings, coaching/modelling for DTs, info mailings, Virtual school guidelines/good practice guidance – set the standards, case studies

### Implications for case work AND for capacity building

- A group to go to at lunch time that’s not the SEN area – like-minded people/hobbies - scaffolding to help this
- Someone from the leaving school to talk through difficulties and
worries etc. – especially in high school

- **Key person**
  - Educate schools for this to become non-negotiable
  - Understanding the role of the key person and their responsibilities
  - Knowing why it is important
  - Finding the right person
  - Allow the young person to have a voice, this needs to be established early and could be chosen by young person – make the people available
  - Someone who sees them anyway
  - How does the key person check-in – planned, subtle or a meeting

- **To develop the role of the key person during an atypical in-year transition for looked after children**
  - Joint training
  - CPD events
  - Networks - sharing practice
  - PEP meetings, coaching/modelling for DTs
  - Information mailings
  - Virtual school guidelines/good practice – set the standard
  - Case studies

---

**B. Your thoughts on the appreciative inquiry process.**
Creating a sense of school belonging for vulnerable pupils - how are we doing?
Pupil perspectives and staff perspectives

Sense of belonging
- A psychological drive to belong to groups
- An innate human need

A sense of school belonging
- Pupils are more motivated, engaged and dedicated to their education
- What helps to create a sense of school belonging for pupils?
Two literature reviews:
- Adolescents’ experiences of school belonging: a qualitative meta-synthesis
- A systematic literature review to explore how staff in schools describe how a sense of belonging is created for their pupils.

Two empirical studies:
- School belonging: Listening to the voices of secondary school students who have undergone managed moves
- Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Adolescents’ experiences of school belonging
A sense of belonging is suggested to be particularly important during the changing priorities and expectations of adolescence (Allen and Kern 2017).

So what does research tells us about how adolescents themselves experience school belonging?
Slide 7

**Qualitative metasynthesis**

- Cross-disciplinary
- Integrative
- Interpretative

---

Slide 8

**Synthesizing the studies**

- Only a small number of studies (8)
- Studies derived from four countries: UK (3); USA (3); Australia (1) and Sweden (1), involving 138 participants in total, with study sample sizes ranging from 5 to 44
- Contextually diverse
- Nevertheless, conceptual similarities in the way adolescents' experiences of school belonging were presented across the studies

---

Slide 9

**Common concepts**

School belonging was experienced by the adolescents in the included studies as:

- an intersubjective and relational phenomenon
- linked with knowledge and acceptance of individual identity by the school community
- associated with specific experiences of in-group membership
- related to feelings of safety and security
Slide 10

**Adolescents’ sense of school belonging**

‘feeling safe to be yourself in and through relationships with others in the school setting’

---

Slide 11

**How do staff in high schools describe how schools address pupils’ needs to experience belonging?**

- Support offered by individual staff within school
  - Teacher connection
  - Personal and academic support
- Support offered on a more systemic level, via school routines and procedures.
  - School culture and community
  - Links to other stakeholders.
  - Classroom provision
  - Preparation and support for transition

---

Slide 12

**How do staff in high schools describe how schools address pupils’ needs to experience belonging?**

- Implications for practice
  - Staff-pupil relationships
  - Whole school approaches for supporting well-being and mental health
  - Promoting school belonging through influencing peer relationships?
Slide 13

School belonging: Listening to the voices of secondary school students who have undergone managed moves

- Managed move protocols - a positive alternative?
- Research suggests greater personalization needed
- Research questions:
  - How do secondary school students who have undergone a managed move experience school belonging?
  - What did they feel helped them to experience a sense of school belonging following their managed moves?

Slide 14

Method

- Participants: 4 managed move pupils who had been attending their receiver schools for a period of at least six weeks; no ongoing CAMHS involvement
- Individual phenomenological interviews (collaborative interviews with an unforced flow of questions (Major & Savin-Baden, 2013, p. 221; p. 359) were conducted with each participant. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

Slide 15

Findings

School belonging for managed move pupils was associated with:

- Making friends and feeling safe
- Feeling known, understood and accepted as a person in receiver school
- Appropriate and timely provision of support for any additional needs
- Supportive/unsupportive school-based protocols/practices
Implications for practice

- Importance of leveraging ‘everyday’ opportunities - e.g.
  - Staff taking low-key steps to promote friendships
  - Staff showing curiosity about and encouraging participants’ individual skills and interests - possibly through extra-curricular activities
- Timely support for additional needs
- Avoiding protocols which make pupils feel that they are ‘on trial’

Developing a sense of belonging when looked after children experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.

Action research using Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

- Virtual school staff
- A group of looked after young people
- Atypical in-year transition
- Focus-group
- Collaborative analysis

Discovery - Exploring what ‘is’

- Being eased into lessons
- Teacher and pupil support
- Buddy systems
- Uniform and school work
- Voice of the child
- Planning and bespoke support
- Leaving parties, visits to new school, scripts

Dream – Imagining what ‘could be’

- Supportive friends
- Teachers full-names and room numbers
- School layout and Ofsted information
- Adapt to needs of pupil
- Time and space to explore new school – photos
- Purchasing uniform
Slide 19

**Action research**

- Design - *Determining what ‘should be’*
  - Developing friendships is important to us
  - We have someone we trust to visit our new school with
  - We have a positive and personalised induction to our new school
  - We have at least one key person we can build a trusting relationship with

Slide 20

**Action research**

- Destiny - *Creating what ‘will be’*
  - Implications for individual casework
    - Nurture friendships
    - Stick to the plan
    - Social skills work
  - Implications for capacity building within schools
    - Key person
    - Educate about friendships
    - APDR cycles
    - CPD

Slide 21

**Action research**

- Impact of AI
  - Supports collaborative practice – pupils and adults
  - Useful tool to evaluate practice and identify areas for development
  - ‘Well worth the time… it was a quality piece of work with realistic, practical outcomes which have impacted directly on our pupils’
Summary

- Feeling known, understood and accepted
- Relationships with adults and friendships
- Being part of a group
- Feeling safe

Creating a sense of school belonging
Appendix 32. Target Journal Submission Requirements 1

About the journal

*Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* is an international, peer reviewed journal, publishing high-quality, original research. Please see the journal’s Aims & Scope for information about its focus and peer-review policy.

Please note that this journal only publishes manuscripts in English.

Peer review

Taylor & Francis is committed to peer-review integrity and upholding the highest standards of review. Once your paper has been assessed for suitability by the editor, it will then be double blind peer-reviewed by independent, anonymous expert referees. Find out more about what to expect during peer review and read our guidance on publishing ethics.

Preparing your paper

Structure

Manuscripts should be compiled in the following order: title page; abstract; keywords; main text; acknowledgements; references; appendices (as appropriate); table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages); figure caption(s) (as a list).

Word limits

Please include a word count for your paper.
A typical article for this journal should be no more than 8000 words; this limit includes tables, references, figure captions, footnotes, endnotes.

Style guidelines

Please refer to these style guidelines when preparing your paper, rather than any published articles or a sample copy.

Please use British -ise spelling style consistently throughout your manuscript.

Please use single quotation marks, except where 'a quotation is "within" a quotation'. Please note that long quotations should be indented without quotation marks.

Formatting and templates

Papers may be submitted in any standard format, including Word and LaTeX. Figures should be saved separately from the text. To assist you in preparing your paper, we provide formatting templates.
A LaTeX template is available for this journal.

Word templates are available for this journal. Please save the template to your hard drive, ready for use.

If you are not able to use the templates via the links (or if you have any other template queries) please contact authortemplate@tandf.co.uk

References

Please use this reference style guide when preparing your paper. An EndNote output style is also available to assist you.

Checklist: what to include

1. **Author details.** Please include all authors’ full names, affiliations, postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses on the title page. Where available, please also include ORCID identifiers and social media handles (Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn). One author will need to be identified as the corresponding author, with their email address normally displayed in the article PDF (depending on the journal) and the online article. Authors’ affiliations are the affiliations where the research was conducted. If any of the named co-authors moves affiliation during the peer-review process, the new affiliation can be given as a footnote. Please note that no changes to affiliation can be made after your paper is accepted. Read more on authorship.

2. A non-structured **abstract** of no more than 150 words. Read tips on writing your abstract.

3. **Graphical abstract** (Optional). This is an image to give readers a clear idea of the content of your article. It should be a maximum width of 525 pixels. If your image is narrower than 525 pixels, please place it on a white background 525 pixels wide to ensure the dimensions are maintained. Save the graphical abstract as a .jpg, .png, or .gif. Please do not embed it in the manuscript file but save it as a separate file, labelled GraphicalAbstract1.

4. You can opt to include a **video abstract** with your article. Find out how these can help your work reach a wider audience, and what to think about when filming.

5. **4 to 5 keywords.** Read making your article more discoverable, including information on choosing a title and search engine optimization.

6. **Funding details.** Please supply all details required by your funding and grant-awarding bodies as follows:
   - For single agency grants: This work was supported by the [Funding Agency] under Grant [number xxxx].
   - For multiple agency grants: This work was supported by the [funding Agency 1]; under Grant [number xxxx]; [Funding Agency 2] under Grant [number xxxx]; and [Funding Agency 3] under Grant [number xxxx].

7. **Disclosure statement.** This is to acknowledge any financial interest or benefit that has arisen from the direct applications of your research. Further guidance on what is a conflict of interest and how to disclose it.

8. **Geolocation information.** Submitting a geolocation information section, as a separate paragraph before your acknowledgements, means we can index your
paper’s study area accurately in JournalMap’s geographic literature database and make your article more discoverable to others.

9. **Supplemental online material.** Supplemental material can be a video, dataset, files set, sound file or anything which supports (and is pertinent to) your paper. We publish supplemental material online via Figshare. Find out more about supplemental material and how to submit it with your article.

10. **Figures.** Figures should be high quality (1200 dpi for line art, 600 dpi for grayscale and 300 dpi for color, at the correct size). Figures should be saved as TIFF, PostScript or EPS files. More information on how to prepare artwork.

11. **Tables.** Tables should present new information rather than duplicating what is in the text. Readers should be able to interpret the table without reference to the text. Please supply editable files.

12. **Equations.** If you are submitting your manuscript as a Word document, please ensure that equations are editable. More information about mathematical symbols and equations.

13. **Units.** Please use SI units (non-italicized).

**Using third-party material in your paper**

You must obtain the necessary permission to reuse third-party material in your article. The use of short extracts of text and some other types of material is usually permitted, on a limited basis, for the purposes of criticism and review without securing formal permission. If you wish to include any material in your paper for which you do not hold copyright, and which is not covered by this informal agreement, you will need to obtain written permission from the copyright owner prior to submission. More information on requesting permission to reproduce work(s) under copyright.
Appendix 33. Target Journal Submission Requirements 2

About the Journal

*Educational Action Research* is an international, peer-reviewed journal publishing high-quality, original research. Please see the journal's Aims & Scope for information about its focus and peer-review policy.

Please note that this journal only publishes manuscripts in English.

*Educational Action Research* accepts the following types of article: original articles, review articles, book reviews.

Two kinds of paper are particularly welcome: [1] accounts of action research and development studies; and [2] contributions to the debate on the theory and practice of action research and associated methodologies. Readability and honest engagement with problematic issues will be among the criteria against which contributions will be judged. The journal can be construed as carrying out, through its contributors and reviewers, action research on the characteristics of effective reporting, and the Editors will, therefore, welcome exploratory forms of presentation.

Books for review should be sent to our Book Review Editor: Mark Hadfield, School of Social Science, Cardiff University, Glamorgan Building, King Edward VII Avenue, Cardiff, CF10 3WT, UK. Email: hadfieldm@cardiff.ac.uk

Peer Review

Taylor & Francis is committed to peer-review integrity and upholding the highest standards of review. Once your paper has been assessed for suitability by the editor, it will then be double blind peer reviewed by independent, anonymous expert referees. Find out more about what to expect during peer review and read our guidance on publishing ethics.

Preparing Your Paper

Structure

Your paper should be compiled in the following order: title page; abstract; keywords; main text introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion; acknowledgments; declaration of interest statement; references; appendices (as appropriate); table(s) with caption(s) (on individual pages); figures; figure captions (as a list).

Word Limits

Please include a word count for your paper.
A typical paper for this journal should be between 5000 and 8000 words, inclusive of references.

**Style Guidelines**

Please refer to these quick style guidelines when preparing your paper, rather than any published articles or a sample copy.

Any spelling style is acceptable so long as it is consistent within the manuscript.

Please use single quotation marks, except where ‘a quotation is “within” a quotation’. Please note that long quotations should be indented without quotation marks.

All pages should be numbered. Footnotes to the text should be avoided. Section headings should be concise.

**Formatting and Templates**

Papers may be submitted in Word or LaTeX formats. Figures should be saved separately from the text. To assist you in preparing your paper, we provide formatting template(s).

Word templates are available for this journal. Please save the template to your hard drive, ready for use.

A LaTeX template is available for this journal. Please save the LaTeX template to your hard drive and open it, ready for use, by clicking on the icon in Windows Explorer.

If you are not able to use the template via the links (or if you have any other template queries) please contact authortemplate@tandf.co.uk.

**References**

Please use this reference guide when preparing your paper.

An EndNote output style is also available to assist you.

**Checklist: What to Include**

1. **Author details.** Please include all authors’ full names, affiliations, postal addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses on the cover page. Where available, please also include ORCiDs and social media handles (Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn). One author will need to be identified as the corresponding author, with their email address normally displayed in the article PDF (depending on the journal) and the online article. Authors’ affiliations are the affiliations where the research was conducted. If any of the named co-authors moves affiliation during the peer-review
process, the new affiliation can be given as a footnote. Please note that no changes to affiliation can be made after your paper is accepted. Read more on authorship.

2. An unstructured abstract of no more than 150 to 250 words. Read tips on writing your abstract.

3. You can opt to include a video abstract with your article. Find out how these can help your work reach a wider audience, and what to think about when filming.

4. Between 3 and 6 keywords. Read making your article more discoverable, including information on choosing a title and search engine optimization.

5. Funding details. Please supply all details required by your funding and grant-awarding bodies as follows:
   - For single agency grants
     This work was supported by the [Funding Agency] under Grant [number xxxx].
   - For multiple agency grants
     This work was supported by the [Funding Agency #1] under Grant [number xxxx]; [Funding Agency #2] under Grant [number xxxx]; and [Funding Agency #3] under Grant [number xxxx].

6. Disclosure statement. This is to acknowledge any financial interest or benefit that has arisen from the direct applications of your research. Further guidance on what is a conflict of interest and how to disclose it.

7. Geolocation information. Submitting a geolocation information section, as a separate paragraph before your acknowledgements, means we can index your paper’s study area accurately in JournalMap’s geographic literature database and make your article more discoverable to others. More information.

8. Supplemental online material. Supplemental material can be a video, dataset, files, sound file, or anything which supports (and is pertinent to) your paper. We publish supplemental material online via Figshare. Find out more about supplemental material and how to submit it with your article.

9. Figures. Figures should be high quality (1200 dpi for line art, 600 dpi for grayscale and 300 dpi for colour, at the correct size). Figures should be supplied in one of our preferred file formats: EPS, PS, JPEG, GIF, or Microsoft Word (DOC or DOCX). For information relating to other file types, please consult our Submission of electronic artwork document.

10. Tables. Tables should present new information rather than duplicating what is in the text. Readers should be able to interpret the table without reference to the text. Please supply editable files.

11. Equations. If you are submitting your manuscript as a Word document, please ensure that equations are editable. More information about mathematical symbols and equations.

12. Units. Please use SI units (non-italicized).

Using Third-Party Material in your Paper

You must obtain the necessary permission to reuse third-party material in your article. The use of short extracts of text and some other types of material is usually permitted, on a limited basis, for the purposes of criticism and review without securing formal permission. If you wish to include any material in your paper for which you do not hold copyright, and which is not covered by this informal agreement, you will need to obtain written permission from the copyright owner prior to submission. More information on requesting permission to reproduce work(s) under copyright.
Appendix 34. Ethics forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIA reference</th>
<th>Date received</th>
<th>Date approved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Manchester Institute of Education

Ethical Approval Application Form

This ethical approval application form has been revised to incorporate changes made to the new University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) Form. It has been designed to incorporate prompts for information needed to ascertain whether the proposed research matches MIE’s research template pre-approved by UREC and to facilitate completion of the form to a standard that will allow speedier review, and approvals, by RIC members. Please follow all directions contained in this document.

SECTION 1: Student Details /Identification of the person responsible for the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Student:</th>
<th>Leanne Nichola Greenwood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student ID (quoted on library/ swipe card):</td>
<td>7659014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Leanne.greenwood@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk">Leanne.greenwood@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Supervisor:</td>
<td>Catherine Kelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk">Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme (PhD, Prof Doc, MEd, PGCE, MSc, BA etc):</td>
<td>Professional Doctorate - D.Ed.Ch.Psychol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full/Part-time</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of Research Project:</td>
<td>Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Recruitment and Data Collection | **Start Date:** On receipt of confirmation of ethical approval  
**End Date:** January 2018 |
| Location(s) where the project will be carried out: | Bury Local Authority |
| Student Signature: | L. Greenwood |
| Supervisor Signature:** | ** Date: |

** Supervisor signature confirms that the student has the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to carry out the study in an appropriate manner

**SECTION 2: PROJECT DETAILS**

(Please write your answers in the boxes provided. Boxes will expand to fit answers as necessary)

1. **Aims and Objectives of the Project**

1.1 **Research Question**

State the principal research question(s).

Through the use of appreciative inquiry, what factors are identified as having the greatest impact on how developing a sense of belonging can be supported for LAC when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school?

1.2 **Academic justification**
2. **Methodology**

2.1 **Project Design:**

Please briefly outline the design and methodological approach of the project, including the theoretical framework that informs it.

This proposed research will adopt an action research design and use Appreciative Inquiry, involving focus groups, within this. The research aims to identify how to support looked after children successfully develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. It is hoped that this research will make a positive contribution to informing LA and school development regarding transition for LAC. The study aims to use Appreciative Inquiry to develop service delivery and evaluate its approach to professional development, with the view of adding to the research base to inform educators and policy makers on how best to support this group of vulnerable young people feel like they belong when they experience transition within education. Appreciative Inquiry enables people with a common goal to co-construct their desired future using four stages, discovery, dream, design and destiny.

2.2 **Data Collection Methods:**

Describe the research procedures/activities as they affect the study participant and any other parties involved. Which of the following will your research involve and what will you be asking your participants to do.

2.2.1. **Interviews**

Yes [X] No [ ]
If Yes, describe how these are to be conducted (Append your interview guide):

Six focus groups will be used to gather data during this study in order to obtain the participants detailed views within a short period of time (Appendix 4 for Focus Group sequence). The participants for each focus group (FG) can be seen below:

FG 1 – 5 Looked after children
FG 2 – 8 adults
FG 3 – 5 Looked after children
FG 4 – 8 adults
FG 5 – 5 Looked after children and 8 adults
FG 6 – 8 adults

Each focus group containing any looked after children will last 30 minutes and each focus group containing only the adults will last 1 hour. It is of interest to this study to obtain a variety of views on how best to support looked after children experiencing transition to a new school so that best practice can be elicited. The researcher will act as the focus group moderator and will provide the questions to explore areas of discussion and encourage the interaction between all participants. The focus group will be recorded using a digital recorder and during the focus group relevant notes will be taken in order to support the feedback to participants. Participants will also be provided with post-it notes and encouraged to write down salient points which can be grouped by the participants and researcher into emerging themes. Once the Appreciative Inquiry is complete the LAC ed. team will complete a review focus group where they will discuss the usefulness of Appreciative Inquiry and also a review of actions meeting, where the actions that were agreed at the end of the Appreciative Inquiry will be reviewed.

2.2.2. Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Yes, how will these be delivered to and collected from participants? (Append your draft questionnaire(s)):

2.2.3. Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Yes, describe the context for the observation and what participants will be engaged in. (Append copy of any observation framework or other data collection guide to be used):

2.2.4. Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Yes, describe the context for use of the diary and what participants will be asked to do. (Append copy of the Diary instructions and format):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5. Intervention</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.6. Assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.7. Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.8. Does data collection use video or still image?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If Yes, complete the VASTRE documentation** - Available from:
http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/stillimage/research/

2.2.9 Research Experience

Please state your experience in conducting these research interventions or assessments (where applicable) and methodologies outlined above - provide supporting evidence (e.g. course unit code).

I have taken part in a focus group during a lecture session at University whilst studying on the doctoral programme. I have received teaching on focus groups within our 'Research in educational and child psychology' unit. I have also completed an Assignment that used a focus group as the primary data gathering method.

2.3 Sampling

What type of sampling method do you propose to use?

| 2.3.1. Statistical | Yes | No | X |
2.3.2. Other

Yes [X]  No [ ]

If Yes, describe the type, your justification for taking this approach and proposed sample size:

Purposeful convenience sampling of professionals and looked after children within one local authority (13 proposed participants). This sampling method will be used as participants will likely make a significant contribution to the data collection due to their specific experiences and expertise on the topic under research.

2.4 Analysis method

What type of analyses do you propose to use to explore this data?

2.4.1. Quantitative analyses

Yes [ ]  No [X]

If Yes, please give details:

2.4.2. Qualitative analyses

Yes [X]  No [ ]

If Yes, please give details:

Content analysis will be used to analyse the data obtained from the focus groups.

2.5 Ethical Issues
Briefly state the main ethical issues raised by the methodology outlined above.

This study will follow all guidelines set out by The University of Manchester School of Environment, Education and Development research integrity and ethics policy (2014) and the researcher will comply with the Health and Care Professions Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (Health and Care Professionals Council, 2012) and the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2009). A Research Risk and Ethics Assessment (RREA) form has been completed. An ethical consideration relevant to this study is that of confidentiality during the focus groups and so participants will be reminded not to use specific names of schools, children or adults with whom they work and they will also be reminded that all recorded data will be deleted once transcription has taken place. It will also be arranged that someone will be available to debrief with LAC after each of the focus groups are completed, if needed. All focus group sessions will be carefully structured in order to minimise and manage any power differences, especially with those focus groups involving adults and children.

3. Participant Details

3.1 Characteristics of participants

Please specify the characteristics of the participants you wish to recruit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>Children (5) and adults (8)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sex</td>
<td>Male and Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age group(s)</td>
<td>Children (10 - 16years) and adults (25 years +)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location(s)</td>
<td>Bury Local Authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Vulnerable groups

3.2.1. Will your project include participants from either of the following groups?

(Tick as appropriate)

- [X] Children under 16 in school, youth club or other accredited organisation.
- [ ] Adults with learning difficulties in familiar, supportive environments
- [ ] NONE OF THE ABOVE (go to item 4.)

3.2.2. Inclusion of vulnerable groups
3.2.3. Research in UK with vulnerable groups

Please confirm you have relevant clearance for working with vulnerable groups from DBS and/or other relevant sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DBS*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Other, please describe

*NB: You will need a DBS application through the University. Any work related DBS clearance is not valid for your University research.

3.2.4. Please confirm that you will notify the Administrator for Ethics and Fieldwork (AEF) immediately if your DBS status changes.

I will immediately notify the AEF if my DBS status changes

4. Recruitment

4.1 Permissions

Do you have permission to collect data from an organisational fieldwork site from...

4.1.1. The organisation where the research will take place
(e.g. School head etc)?

Yes [X]

NA [ ]

4.1.2. Sub-settings within the organisation (e.g. class teacher etc)?

Yes [X]

NA [ ]

If Yes, append letter/email confirming access to this application

To follow. Verbally agreed with the Children’s Rights Officer regarding accessing potential LAC participants and with the Manager of the Looked After Children’s Education Team regarding accessing potential adult participants. This team have also taken part in a pilot focus group in April 2016.

4.2 Participant recruitment

4.2.1. How will your pool of potential participants be identified? (tick all that apply)

Letters/emails and follow up phone calls to organisations

Posters/Advertisements

Website/Internet (including Facebook/other social media)

Known or named client groups (students, etc).

Networks and recommendations [X]

Person in a position of authority in organisation

Directory/database/register in public domain

Describe the nature of these routes to identify your pool of potential participants.

My university supervisor works in the local authority at which I undertook my last placement and has regular contact with the team I propose to work with during this study.
4.2.2. Who will the potential participants be?

- Persons unknown to the researcher
- Client groups (students, etc) within an organisation known by the researcher
- **Persons accessed through networks and recommendations**
- Persons nominated by a position of authority
- Other (describe here):

Indicate whether there is any existing relationship between yourself and the source/group of potential participants.

The adults for this research also took part in my last assignment, which was a pilot study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.2.3. How will you approach potential participants? (tick all that apply)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website/internet (including Facebook/other social media site)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation at meeting or similar</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (describe here):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicate how information about your study will be delivered to potential participants and how they will (directly or indirectly) let you know they would like to take part in your research.
4.2.4 How will you ensure those interested in the research are fully informed about the study and what will be expected of them if they take part?

Information giving will be undertaken through:

- [ ] Letter
- [ ] Email
- [ ] Website/internet (including Facebook/other social media site)
- [ ] Telephone
- [ ] Information sheet (covering headings in University template)
- [ ] Presentation at meeting or similar
- [ ] Other (describe here):

Append text of recruitment letters / emails / information sheet to this application

Information giving will be undertaken by:

- [ ] the researcher
- [ ] someone in a position of authority
- [ ] a neutral third party to known or named client groups
- [ ] Other (describe here):

Provide details on how you will fully inform potential participants about your study:

Information sheet detailing the study will be provided to all participants.

4.2.5 Information accessibility
4.2.6 Decision period

How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the study? If you are proposing a decision period of less than 2 weeks, full justification for this approach should be given.

2 weeks

4.2.7 Incentives

State any payment or any other incentive that is being made to any study participant. Specify and state the level of payment to be made and/or the source of the funds/gift/free service to be used and the justification for it.

No incentives will be provided.

4.2.8 Avoiding coercion

How will your recruitment methods avoid putting any overt or covert pressure on vulnerable individuals to consent (children, junior colleagues, adults with learning disabilities)?

All participants will be provided with an information sheet and consent form before the research takes place and will also be given time to consider these and ask any questions they have. Participants will be given the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

4.3 Consent

4.3.1 How will participants’ consent to take part be recorded?
Please confirm:

- My consent taking procedures are relevant to each participating group
- The consent taking procedures follow the guidance provided in the University of Manchester Consent Form Template

Append text of consent forms/consent taking procedure to this application.

4.3.2 Special arrangements

Please outline any special consent taking arrangements relevant to your research study.

NA

5. Participation in the research

5.1 Duration

How long will each participant be expected to take part in activities?

- Adults - 3 X 1 hour and 1 X 30 mins
- Children - 3 X 30 mins

5.2 Benefits to participation

Are there any benefits to participation for participants (beyond incentive noted above)?

No

5.3 Deficits to participation
6. Risks and Safeguards

Please outline any adverse effects or risks for participants in respect of the methods you have indicated in Section 2B [Interview; Questionnaire; Interventions; Assessments; Observation; Diary keeping; Other activity]

6.1 Physical risks

6.1.1 Potential

What is the potential for adverse effects of a physical nature; risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, inconvenience, or change in lifestyle / normal routine for participants?

No risk

6.1.2 Safeguards

What precautions or measures have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?

NA

6.2 Psychological risks

6.2.1 Potential

Will any topics discussed (questionnaire, group discussion or individual interview) potentially be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the project?

Perhaps a slight risk that LAC reflecting on creating a sense of belonging could potentially be upsetting.

6.2.2 Safeguards

...
6.3 Risks for you as researcher

It is important that the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience, of a physical or psychological nature to you as the researcher have been assessed. **This is a requirement by law.** Risks to you are identified as part of the RREA/FRA process. Ensure this assessment has been completed by either:

a. a completed and approved Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA), or
b. a signed Low Risk Fieldwork Declaration in Section D of RREA form.

What **precautions or measures** have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?

Risk minimised by accessing participants from an already established reference group who are used to giving their views on the experience of being looked after and in order to mitigate any potential upset someone will be available to debrief.

Briefly state here the conclusions of your assessment and append a copy of your approved FRA form (if required), in addition to your RREA, to this application:

No risk to myself as the researcher.

6.4 Early termination of the research

6.4.1 Criteria

What are the criteria for electively stopping the research prematurely?

If participants request to withdraw.

6.4.2 Please confirm, by ticking here, that:

X any adverse event requiring radical change of method/design or abandonment will be reported in the first instance to your research supervisor and then to the MIE RIC Chair.
7. **Data Protection and confidentiality**

7.1 **Data activities and storage of personal data**

Will the study use any of the following activities at any stage?

- Electronic transfer by email or computer networks
- Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers
- Publication of direct quotations from respondents
- Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals
- Use of audio/visual recording devices
- Sharing data with other organisations
- Export of data outside EU

Will the study store **personal** data on any of the following?

- Manual files
- Home or other personal computers
- Laptop computers

7.2 **Confidentiality of personal data**

What measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data? *Give details of whether any encryption or other anonymisation procedures have been used and at what stage?*

Participants will remain anonymous when transcription of the focus group takes place.

7.3 **Research monitoring and auditing** Please confirm:

The student researcher’s supervisor(s) will monitor the research

*If other arrangements apply please specify:*

7.4 **Data Protection**
Please provide confirmation that you will employ measures that comply with the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy (UDPP)?

**Data Protection Act:** I confirm that all Data collected will be:

- [X] Fairly and lawfully processed
- [X] Processed for limited purposes as outlined in this application and only used in the way(s) for which consent has been given.
- [X] Adequate for the purpose, relevant and not excessive
- [X] Accurate
- [X] Not kept longer than necessary
- [X] Processed in accordance with the participant’s rights
- [X] Secure – on an encrypted storage device
- [X] Only transferred to other settings with appropriate protection.

**University Data Protection Policy (UDPP):** I confirm

- [X] My data and its storage will comply with the UDPP
- [X] Paper copies of data and encrypted storage devices will be stored in a locked draw or cupboard

*For UG research:* On completion of my research, the data will be kept until the study has been completed and will then be shredded/destroyed

*For PGT/PGR research:* On completion of my research, the data will be passed to my supervisor for archiving at the University for a period of 5 years after which it will be shredded/destroyed

7.5 **Privacy during data analysis** Please confirm:

- [X] Analysis will be undertaken by the student researcher
- [X] Analysis will take place in a private study area

*If other arrangements apply please describe:*
7.6 Custody and control of the data  Please confirm:

- The student researcher’s supervisor will have custody of the data
- The student researcher will have control of the data

If other arrangements apply please describe:

7.7 Access to the data

- The student researcher will have access to the data
- The student’s supervisor(s) will have access to anonymised data

If other/additional arrangements apply, please describe:

7.8 Use of data in future studies

Will the data be stored for use in future studies?  Yes  X No  
If Yes, confirm this is addressed in the information giving/consent taking process by ticking here.  X
8. Reporting Arrangements

8.1 Dissemination

How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of the study?

(Tick all that apply)

X Peer reviewed scientific journals

Book / Chapter contribution

Published review (ESRC, Cochrane)

X Internal report

Conference presentation

X Thesis/dissertation

Other e.g. Creative works (describe here):

8.2 Participant and community feedback

How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn? (Tick all that apply)

X Written feedback to research participants

X Presentation to participants or relevant community groups

Other e.g. Video/Website (describe here):

9. Research Sponsorship

9.1 External funding

Are you in receipt of any external funding for your study? (tick one)

X External Funding

No external funding

If you have funding please provide details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>National College of Teaching and Learning (NCTL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK Contact</td>
<td>DfE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

153
9.2 Sponsoring organisation

Who will be responsible for governance and insuring the study? (tick one)

- The University of Manchester [X]
- Other organisation [ ]

If not UoM, provide details of who will act as sponsor of the research and their insurance details

10. Conflict of Interest

Have any conflicts of interest been identified in relation to this project? (tick at least one option)

- Payment for doing this research?
  
  If so, how much and on what basis?

- Direct personal involvement in the research of a spouse/funder?
  
  If so, please provide details:

- Does your department/the University receive payment (apart from costs)?
  
  If so, please provide details:
Thank you
This is the end of the form

Please use the checklist below to ensure that you append all necessary supporting documents

CHECKLIST

Please tick to indicate whether the document is APPENDED OR NOT APPLICABLE for this application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Appended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection instruments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft copy of each data collection instrument named in Q2.2 (Questionnaire, Interview guide, etc)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video and Still Image Recording Declaration (VASTRE)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant recruitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter(s) of permission to conduct research within each organisation</td>
<td>To follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment advertisement(s) specified in Q4.2.1 (poster/email/letter/presentation)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Information giving – one for each participant type specified in Q3.1 (Information sheet/letter/email/script)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent taking – one for each participant type specified in Q3.1 (Consent form or alternative procedure)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork risk assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork Risk Assessment Form (approved)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RREA form Low Risk Fieldwork Declaration (Section C) completed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Application for Approval of Minor Amendment\(^1\) to a Research Study

**Details of proposed amendment (please give as much detail as possible)**

6 participants now to be recruited to ensure enough participants are available, taking into account the possibility that a child may be absent on the day of the focus group.

An initial warm up session of 20 minutes will take place prior to the 1\(^{st}\) focus group with the children, this is to ensure all the children feel comfortable with the research and can ask any questions they may have before the focus group begins. This session will straddle a natural break for drinks and snacks before the focus group begins.

**Second Amendment (03/03/17)**

1 child participant has opted not to attend the focus group meetings and the researcher will therefore do 1 30 minute interview with them to gather their views. The interview will take place with the child and with their mentor present, at a time that is already arranged for the child and mentor to meet; this will ensure the child is familiar with the time and date and no more is asked of them.

**Supervisor Declaration**

I agree that the amendment proposed does not change the character of this research or the participant groups.

I confirm that the research risk assessment for the study as MEDIUM remains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor's signature*</th>
<th>Date.</th>
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Please send applications for amendment to ethical approval for MEDIUM risk research to the Manchester Institute Administrator for Ethics and Fieldwork at ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk who will pass on the request to the RIC member who authorised the original application wherever possible.

---

\(^1\) Minor amendments are those that do not alter the character of the research or the participant groups
RESEARCH RISK AND ETHICS ASSESSMENT

Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester

The Manchester Institute of Education is committed to developing and supporting the highest standards of research in education and its associated fields. The Research Risk and Ethics Assessment (RREA) resource has been created in order to maintain these high academic standards and associated codes of good research practice. The research portfolio within the Manchester Institute of Education (MIE) covers a wide range of fields and perspectives. Research within each of these areas places responsibilities of a differing nature on supervisors and students subject to course, level, focus and participants. The aim of the Research Risk and Ethics Assessment is to assist supervisors and students in assessing these factors.

The Manchester Institute of Education has determined three levels of Research Risk each of which has a number of associated criteria and have implications for the degree of ethical review required. In general, the research risk level is considered to be:

- **High** IF the research focuses on groups within society in need of special support, or where it may be non-standard, or if there is a possibility the research may be contentious in one or more ways.
- **Medium** IF the research follows standard procedures and established research methodologies and is considered non-contentious.
- **Low** IF the research is of a routine nature and is considered non-contentious².

The form guides you in assessing the research against each of these risk levels in turn. Agreement to proceed with research at each of these levels is provided by an appropriate University Research Ethics Committee, a MIE Research Integrity Committee member, or by the supervisor/tutor respectively.

**How to complete the Research Risk and Ethics Assessment (RREA) form.**

This form should be completed, in consultation with the MIE Ethical Practice Policy Guidelines³, by Manchester Institute of Education students and their supervisors in all cases, except where a pre-approved assignment template currently exists⁴. A separate *Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA) form* must be completed if you will be making fieldwork visits but are not able to agree with ALL the criteria in the LOW Risk Fieldwork Statement (Section C). This is so you can plan how safety issues will be responded to during fieldwork visits. The FRA form is available on the MIE ethics intranet. Instructions on this and subsequent stages of the RREA process are provided within each of the following sections.

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² A reasonable person would agree that the study includes no issues of public or private objection, or of a sensitive nature.
³ http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/
⁴ For courses with approved templates see: http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/
ANY student

- Section A – Summary of Research Proposal (page 1)
- Section B – Description of Research (page 2)
- Section C – LOW risk Fieldwork Declaration (page 3)
- Sections D.0-D.1 – Criteria for HIGH risk research (page 6)
- Section D.2 – Criteria for MEDIUM risk research (page 7)
- Section D.3 – Criteria for LOW risk research (page 8)

LOW Risk UG / PGT / Doctorate Pilot studies/Research Papers only

- Section E.1 – Criteria for LOW risk ethical approval (page 10)

Supervisors and tutor approvals of LOW risk student research

- Section E.2 – Supervisor confirmation that research matches LOW risk criteria (page 11)

Minor amendments to MEDIUM OR LOW risk approvals

- Section F.1 – Minor Amendments to MEDIUM OR LOW risk approvals (page 12)

It may be appropriate for supervisors and students to review and discuss responses to these questions together from the outset.

RESEARCH RISK AND ETHICS ASSESSMENT
Manchester Institute of Education, University of Manchester

To be completed by AEF administrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIA reference</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Date received</strong></td>
<td><strong>Date approved</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SECTION A - SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL
This section should be completed by the person undertaking the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1. Name of Person/Student:</th>
<th>Leanne Nichola Greenwood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2. Student ID (quoted on library/swipe card):</td>
<td>7659014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3. Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:leanne.greenwood26@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk">leanne.greenwood26@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4. Name of Supervisor:</td>
<td>Catherine Kelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5. Supervisor email address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk">Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**A6. Programme (e.g. PhD, MEd, MSc, PGCE, BA etc):**

Professional Doctorate - D.Ed.Ch.Psychol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A7. Year of Study</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>A8. Full/Part-time</th>
<th>Full</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D.Ed.Ch.Psychol</td>
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<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A10. Title of Project:</th>
<th>Using Appreciative Inquiry to support Looked After Children develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A11. Project Submission Date:</th>
<th>May 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A12. Fieldwork visit dates</th>
<th>Start Date:</th>
<th>Completion Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upon ethical approval</td>
<td>January 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A13. Geographic location(s) where the project will be carried out:</th>
<th>Bury Local Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A14. Student Signature:</th>
<th>L. Greenwood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The following section to be completed by the SUPERVISOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A15. Assessed Risk Level</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>HRA reqd.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| A16. Supervisor Signature | |
|---------------------------||

| A17. Date | |
|-----------||

**SECTION B – DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH**

This section should be completed by the person undertaking the research.

**B1.** Provide an outline description of the planned research (250 words max).
**Principal Research Question(s):**

Through the use of appreciative inquiry, what factors are identified as having the greatest impact on how developing a sense of belonging can be supported for LAC when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school?

**Academic justification:**

The majority of research into school belonging and transition is based on a general population of pupils with limited research taking into account looked after children (LAC). One recent exception is Brewin & Statham (2011) who found multiple factors which supported and hindered the transition from primary to secondary school for LAC. Despite this, there appears to be very little research exploring the notion of belonging within school transition of LAC and in particular how school staff, looked after children and other key players, including carers and social workers, currently view and engage with the concepts of school belonging. More specifically research is needed into how LAC experiencing an atypical in-year transition to a new school can be supported by staff in order to feel like they belong and what factors could successfully support this. Therefore, the proposed research seeks to identify how staff in the looked after children education field...

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**B2. The principal research methods and methodologies are (250 words max):**
**Project Design:** This proposed research will adopt an action research design and use Appreciative Inquiry, involving focus groups, within this. The research aims to identify how to support looked after children successfully develop a sense of belonging when they experience an atypical in-year transition to a new school. It is hoped that this research will make a positive contribution to informing LA and school development regarding transition for LAC. The study aims to use Appreciative Inquiry to develop service delivery and evaluate its approach to professional development, with the view of adding to the research base to inform educators and policy makers on how best to support this group of vulnerable young people feel like they belong when they experience transition within education. Appreciative Inquiry enables people with a common goal to co-construct their desired future using four stages, discovery, dream, design and destiny.

**Data Collection Methods:** Six focus group will be used to gather data during this study in order to obtain the participants detailed views within a short period of time (Appendix 4 for Focus Group sequence). The participants for each focus group (FG) can be seen below:

- FG 1 – 5 Looked after children
- FG 2 – 8 adults
- FG 3 – 5 Looked after children
- FG 4 – 8 adults
- FG 5 – 5 Looked after children and 8 adults
- FG 6 – 8 adults

Each focus group containing any looked after children will last 30 minutes and each focus group containing only the adults will last 1 hour. It is of interest to this study to obtain a variety of views on how best to support looked after children experiencing transition to a new school so that best practice can be elicited. The researcher will act as the focus group moderator and will provide the questions to explore areas of discussion and encourage the interaction between all participants. The focus group will be recorded using a digital recorder and during the focus group relevant notes will be taken in order to support the feedback to participants. Participants will also be provided with post-it notes and encouraged to write down salient points which can be grouped by the participants and researcher into emerging themes. Once the Appreciative Inquiry is complete the LAC ed. team will complete a review focus group where they will discuss the usefulness of Appreciative Inquiry and also a review of actions meeting, where the actions that were agreed at the end of the Appreciative Inquiry will be reviewed.

See Appendix 3-3e for focus groups and meetings schedules

**Sampling:** Purposeful convenience sampling of professionals and looked after children within one local authority (13 proposed participants - 8 adults and 5 children).

**Method(s) of Analysis:** Content analysis will be used to analyse the data obtained from the Appreciative Inquiry.

NB: If your research methods include collection of image or video data, you must complete the Video And Still image REsearch (VASTRE) document (regardless of research risk). See http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/stillimageresearch/
B3. Please indicate which of the following groups are expected to participate in this research:

- Children under 16, other than those in school, youth club, or other accredited organisations.
- Adults with learning difficulties, other than those in familiar, supportive environments.
- Adults who are unable to self-consent
- Adults with mental illness/terminal illness/dementia/residential care home
- Adults or children in emergency situations
- Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the researcher
- Prisoners
- Young Offenders
- Other vulnerable groups (please detail)

OR

- None of the above groups are involved in this study

B4. Total number of expected research participants.  

Number of different participant groups
(e.g. Teacher, parents, pupils = 3 groups requiring differentiated information/consent sheets)

13  

B5. The research will take place (tick all that apply):

- within the UK
- within the researcher’s home country if outside the UK

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5 The person with learning difficulties has appropriate support within the setting from accredited support workers or family members.
6 The researcher’s ‘home country’ is defined as one in which (1) the researcher holds a current passport through birthright or foreign birth registration, (2) a country where the researcher has resident status, or (3) where the researcher holds a permit or visa to work, has a contract of employment, and is not a UK tax-payer.
wholly or partly outside the UK and not in the home country of the researcher*

* You must complete a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form

C. LOW Risk Fieldwork Statement and Declaration

If you are making fieldwork visits, BUT CANNOT TICK ALL the low risk fieldwork criteria in the Statement below, YOU MUST COMPLETE THE SEPARATE FIELDWORK RISK ASSESSMENT (FRA) FORM.

C.1 Fieldwork visits7 (If you will not make any fieldwork visits, tick the alternative items in C.2)

Fieldwork Statement

I confirm:

X I will not travel outside the UK or my home nation.
X I will not visit any country where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has issued a warning against travel8
X the fieldwork does not require overnight stays in hotels or other types of public temporary accommodation.
X public and private travel to and from the research location(s) are familiar to me and offer no discernable risk.
X I will not travel through, or work in research locations which have known hazards to health or safety such as unlit areas, derelict areas, cliffs, or local endemic diseases.
X I will carry only necessary personal items when travelling to, and within, research locations.
X no specific vaccinations are required / I have had specific vaccinations required to undertake this research.
X first aid provision and a trained first aider are available where appropriate.
X I will only operate machinery / electrical equipment / workplace vehicles, or handle / work with animals, at the research location(s) where I have clear competence to do so / will be under close supervision from a qualified person.

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7 Fieldwork visits involve travel to research locations off campus to collect data.
8 This can be checked on this website http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/
the fieldwork will be carried out within normal working hours\(^9\) at a time convenient to participants.

I will not give out personal telephone information to participants, or owners of secondary data resources, in relation to the research project.

I am fully aware of, and sensitive to cultural and religious practices of participant groups, and will act accordingly.

this research will not involve fieldwork visits to private homes, other than to those of friends or relatives.

this research will not involve fieldwork visits to organisations’ premises, other than those with which I have an existing established relationship through placement, employment or volunteering.

I will provide a regularly updated fieldwork visit schedule to a nominated University contact, unless visits only involve travel to the homes of friends or relatives.

I will carry a Manchester Institute of Education Emergency Contact Information Card during all fieldwork visits, unless visits only involve travel to the homes of friends or relatives.

\[\text{OR}\]

I am making fieldwork visits but I am unable to tick ALL the criteria above, I have therefore completed a separate full Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA).

Go to Section D page 6

C.2 No Fieldwork visits

Fieldwork Statement

I confirm:

- this research does not involve fieldwork visits of any kind
- I will not give out personal telephone information to participants, or owners of secondary data resources, in relation to the research project

LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration:

\[\text{9 For example, in the UK normal working hours are between 8am and 6pm Mon-Fri inclusive.}\]
Students and Supervisors please complete C.3 / C.4 respectively

### C.3 Student Declaration:

By signing this declaration, I declare that the completed statement above is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I will complete any actions that I have indicated I will complete.

**Signature:**

L. Greenwood

**Name (in capitals):**

LEANNE NICHOLA GREENWOOD

**Date:** 13/07/2016

### C.4 Supervisor Declaration:

By signing this declaration, I confirm that I have reviewed the health and safety aspects of this research with this student and that the completed statement above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

**Signature:**

**Name (in capitals):**

Dr CATHERINE KELLY

**Date:**
SECTION D – RESEARCH RISK ASSESSMENT

The following sections should be completed by the person undertaking the research in discussion with their supervisor/tutor.

D.0 – Criteria for research classified as HIGH RISK – Health Research Authority (HRA) review

- The study involves primary research with adults who are unable to self consent
- The study involves primary research with NHS patients
- The study involves primary research with prisoners/young offenders

Students - If any of these options apply, you should complete an HRA application. See your supervisor for further guidance.

Supervisors – Forward this RREA form to ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk when you are satisfied that the project requires approval through the HRA operated Integrated Research Application System (IRAS).

D.1 – Criteria for research classified as HIGH RISK (tick any that apply)

I confirm that this research:

- involves vulnerable or potentially vulnerable individuals or groups as indicated in B3
- addresses themes or issues in respect of participant’s personal experience which may be of a sensitive nature (i.e. the research has the potential to create a degree of discomfort or anxiety amongst one or more participants)
- cannot be completed without data collection or associated activities which place the participants at personal risk
- requires participant informed consent and/or withdrawal procedures which are not consistent with accepted University practice
- addresses an area where access to personal records (e.g. medical), in collaboration with an authorised person, is not possible
- involves data collection on an area of public or social objection (e.g. terrorism, paedophilia)
- makes use of video or other images captured by the researcher, and/or research study participants, where the researcher cannot guarantee controlled access to authorised viewing.

If ONE OR MORE of the HIGH risk criteria have been selected DO NOT COMPLETE FURTHER SECTIONS OF THIS FORM. Ethical approval must be sought from a UREC committee. In all other cases, go on to Section D.2.

For full details see http://www.hra.nhs.uk/resources/applying-for-reviews/
ACTIONS – HIGH RISK RESEARCH

1. You and your supervisor should first agree this risk assessment.
2. You should then complete the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) form (available on the MIE (RIC) ethics intranet site\(^{11}\)) and all supporting documents\(^{12}\), and give these to your supervisor for review and feedback.
3. When satisfied with the application, your supervisor will submit:
   1. This completed RREA form
   2. Your completed UREC form – appending ALL supporting documents.
   3. Your completed and approved Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA) form - where indicated

These documents should be submitted by your supervisor to:
Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk

In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are complete and correct. The Ethics Administrator will arrange School authorisation for your documents to be submitted to UREC.

D.2 – Criteria for research classified as MEDIUM RISK (tick any that apply)

I confirm that this:

- [X] is research involving children or other vulnerable groups which involves direct contact with participants\(^{13}\).
- study is on a subject that a reasonable person would agree addresses issues of legitimate interest, where there is a possibility that the topic may result in distress or upset in rare instances.
- is research which involves substantial direct contact\(^{14}\) with adults in non-professional roles (eg parents).
- is research which focuses on data collection from professionals responding to questions outside of their professional concerns.
- is research with practitioners involving topics of a sensitive nature which are not personal to these participants.
- involves visits to site(s) where a specific risk to participants has been identified, and the researcher may not be closely supervised throughout

---

\(^{11}\) http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/

\(^{12}\) ‘Supporting documents’ include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires / interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms.

\(^{13}\) This does not include research in locations where children are present if they are not the focus of the research.

\(^{14}\) For example in focus group or one to one interview in private locations, and not ‘market research’ which is characterised by brief interaction with randomly selected individuals in public locations
If ONE OR MORE of the **MEDIUM risk** criteria have been selected, DO NOT COMPLETE FURTHER SECTIONS OF THIS FORM. Ethical approval must be sought from the Manchester Institute of Education (MIE) Research Integrity Committee (RIC). In all other cases, go on to Section D.3.

**ACTIONS – MEDIUM RISK RESEARCH**

1. You and your supervisor should first agree this risk assessment.
2. You should then complete the MIE Ethical Approval Application form (available on the MIE Ethics Intranet)\(^{15}\) and all supporting documents\(^ {16}\), and give these to your supervisor for review and feedback.
3. When satisfied with the application, your supervisor will submit:
   1. This completed RREA form
   2. Your completed MIE form – appending ALL supporting documents.
   3. Your completed and approved Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA) form - where indicated

These documents should be submitted by your supervisor to:

Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk

In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are complete and correct. The Ethics Administrator will arrange review of your documents to be undertaken by a member of the MIE Research Integrity Committee and approval against our UREC Ethics Templates.

---

**D3 – Criteria for research classified as LOW RISK**

**D 3.1 NO human participants**

I confirm that this research (tick as appropriate):

- is Secondary research (i.e. it will use material that has already been published or is in the public domain).
- is Secondary data analysis (i.e. it will involve data from an established data archive)

If you have ticked one of the options in D3.1 above, and D3.2 **does not apply**, you should now complete section D3.3 below.

**D3.2 Human participants**

I confirm that this (tick as appropriate):

- research does not constitute high nor medium risk to the participants, as indicated by the criteria provided in sections D.0, D.1 and D.2 respectively.
- a reasonable person would agree that the study addresses issues of legitimate interest without being in any way likely to inflame opinion or cause distress\(^{17}\)

---

\(^{15}\) This document and guidance can downloaded from http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/

\(^{16}\) Supporting documents’ include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires / interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms.

\(^{17}\) A reasonable person would agree that the study includes no issues of public or private objection, or of a sensitive nature.
is research on my practice (involving data collection on issues relating to my professional role, or for comparison against national or other targets or standards) in a setting where I am employed or on a placement.

is research on the professional practice of others in professional roles and is conducted in my work / placement setting.

is Market research (i.e. the research may involve data collection from the general public approached or observed in public locations for the purposes of market investigation).

is research using a questionnaire completed and returned by participants who will have no direct contact with me.

is part of a research methods course and participant groups are limited to peers, colleagues, family members and friends.

is a Pilot Study

D 3.3 Research context

I confirm (tick as appropriate):

I am not in a position to coerce potential participants/secondary data owners

the research involves no vulnerable group (as indicated in question B3).

Doctoral THESIS Students ONLY

UG / PGT / Doctorate Pilot study or Research papers involving ONLY LOW RISK CRITERIA, go to Section E.1.

If ONE OR MORE of the LOW risk criteria above have been selected, ethical approval must be sought from the Manchester Institute of Education (MIE) Research Integrity Committee (RIC).

ACTIONS – LOW RISK DOCTORAL RESEARCH

1. You and your supervisor should first agree this risk assessment.
2. You should then complete the MIE Ethical Approval Application form (available on the MIE Ethics Intranet)\(^\text{18}\) and all supporting documents\(^\text{19}\), and give these to your supervisor for review and feedback.
3. When satisfied with the application, your supervisor will submit:
   1. This completed RREA form
   2. Your completed MIE form – appending ALL supporting documents.
   3. Your completed and approved Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA) form - where indicated

These documents should be submitted by your supervisor to:
Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk

\(^\text{18}\) This document and guidance can downloaded from http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/

\(^\text{19}\) ‘Supporting documents’ include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires / interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms.
In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are complete and correct. The Ethics Administrator will arrange review of your documents to be completed by a member of the MIE Research Integrity Committee for approval against our UREC Templates.

**SECTION E. Ethical Approval Application for LOW risk research**

**UG / PGT Research OR Doctorate Pilot Studies/Research Papers**

Section E.1 to be completed by students. Section E.2 to be completed by supervisors/tutors

---

### E. 1 Research ethics criteria

Tick as appropriate and/or indicate NA against items in bold where they do not apply to this research.

I confirm:

**Codes of Practice**

- [ ] I have read and understood the Manchester Institute of Education Ethical Practice and Policy Guidelines
- [ ] I will abide by the Manchester Institute of Education’s Ethical Protocol detailed therein
- [ ] I am aware of and will abide by any organisation’s codes of conduct relevant to this research

**Researcher skills/checks**

- [ ] all necessary training procedures for this research have been completed
- [ ] all appropriate permissions have been obtained to use any database or resource to be analysed in Secondary research
- [ ] all relevant enhanced DBS or other checks have been completed
- [ ] I will inform the Ethics Administrator if my DBS (or related) status changes
- [ ] permission to be on the site to conduct research has been received

**Rights of participants**

- [ ] participant information sheets (PIS), consent forms, questionnaires, and all other documentation relevant to this research have been discussed with supervisor/tutor named in A.5
- [ ] PIS and consent forms have been confirmed with the supervisor named in A.5, as covering required headings illustrated in the MIE Participant Information and consent templates, AND that they are written in an accessible way for each proposed participant group.
I understand the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy and all data will be handled confidentially and securely, including storage on encrypted devices.

Research Integrity

- No data will be collected before ethical approval of the study is confirmed by my supervisor/tutor.
- I will immediately report any issues arising during the course of the study that conflict with the MIE protocol, to my supervisor who has signed the ethics approval, and suspend data collection pending advice from that supervisor/tutor.
- I will report any proposed deviation from the research specification outlined in this assessment to my supervisor/tutor to update the current assessment or clarify any need for further approvals BEFORE such changes are made.

Research output

- The only publication/output from this research on my practice or research methods study will be my assignment or dissertation.
- The only publication/output from this research on professional practice / market research / questionnaire survey will be my assignment or dissertation unless consent has been obtained from participants for further dissemination.

**ACTION: LOW RISK RESEARCH**

1. You should email your final, completed RREA form (with ALL required supporting documents appended to it, including your research proposal, or equivalent document giving full details of the research) to your supervisor.
2. Your supervisor will first agree that this is LOW risk research. They will then, confirm that your proposed research matches our LOW RISK ethics criteria and that in doing so, that it is approved under our UREC ethics templates.
3. Your supervisor will send you an email to confirm this assessment.
4. The ethics administrator will send formal confirmation of approval once all relevant documents have been received.
E.2 Supervisor confirmation that research matches LOW risk criteria above.

When satisfied that the assessment is correct, supervisors should complete this section.

SUPERVISOR ACTION: LOW RISK RESEARCH

1. **Confirm** items in **bold** by **ticking** or marking as **NA** if not applicable to this research, and one or more of the specific research criteria as appropriate.

   I confirm:
   
   This submission has been discussed and agreed with the student undertaking the research.
   
   The student has had appropriate training and has the skills to undertake this study, or has close, qualified supervision in place.
   
   The research activities outlined in the proposal involve **no substantive risks to the student researcher or potential participants**.

   **AND** one or more of the following as appropriate:
   
   - This research will not address issues of public or social objection, or of a sensitive nature.
   - Information giving and consent taking processes follow Manchester Institute of Education guidance.
   - Where fieldwork **visits** do not correspond to **ALL** items in the LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration, a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form has been completed and approved.
   - This secondary research assignment/project has appropriate resource or database access permissions.
   - I will act as custodian for data used for any study that results in a publication (Masters/PhD dissertation or other output) and will arrange for archiving of data with MIE for a minimum period of 5 years.

   **Confirm** that the proposed research matches the low risk ethics criteria (indicated in E.1) and that the documents supplied are complete and correct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number submitted</th>
<th>Documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Completed <strong>RREA form</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student research <strong>proposal, or equivalent</strong>, on which the assessment is based<strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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20 Fieldwork **visits** involve travel to research locations off campus to collect data.

21 For audit purposes, a person unfamiliar with the research outlined in Section B must be able to ascertain the full details of the student project, therefore the study proposal or an equivalent document giving full details (eg assignment description) is required.
Completed and approved **Fieldwork Risk Assessment** form - where indicated

**Supporting documents:**

- Draft questionnaire / interview topic guide / other data collection tools
- Recruitment email / advertisement
- Participant Information Sheet / page / letter (PIS) for each group
- Consent form (or alternative) for each participant group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervisor’s signature:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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</thead>
</table>

3. **Submit** for confirmation of Approval to ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk:

To validate this confirmation of approval a full set of documents must be submitted electronically for archiving and audit.

**NB:** The Ethics Administrator **can only provide formal confirmation** of ethical approval via email to both student and supervisor when a **complete set** of documents are supplied. Copies of all documents should be retained by the supervisor.

**F.1 Minor amendments to LOW risk research design**

Any minor amendment to low risk approved research submissions should be detailed below.

LOW risk research amendments should be checked and agreed by the supervisor as constituting a ‘minor’ change then signed-off below. Substantial changes to research will require a reassessment and revised ethical approvals. This revised copy of the RREA showing the approved amendments, and any amended/additional supporting documents, should be forwarded electronically to the ethics administrator at ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk.

The Ethics Administrator will provide formal acknowledgement of approval of the change by email. A copy should be retained by the supervisor.

**To be completed if/when applicable:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minor amendment to assessed research agreed (1):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Details of amendment</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 Minor deviations from previously approved research submissions are defined as those which neither change the nature of the study nor deviate from any participatory research groups previously identified. Supervisors should contact a member of the MIE Research Integrity Committee for advice if in doubt.
This section will record any applications made during the life time of the Project regarding minor changes from what was approved.

| Supervisor's signature: | Date: |