AUTHENTIC PARTICIPATION WITHIN SCHOOL-BASED ACTION RESEARCH

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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SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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Abstract

Action research (AR) is increasingly located in schools. Partnership and participation are key aspects of quality AR and this thesis considers how to bring about authentic co-researcher participation leading to positive change through AR in schools.

The first paper is a thematic synthesis of literature exploring how action researchers report on projects where adults and young people participate as co-researchers. The papers were selected and reviewed using a PRISMA framework and AR quality criteria. Papers judged high quality provided a show and tell of both process and participation. Review findings showed the importance of building trust and egalitarian relationships, and supporting people (with skill and resources) to enable co-researcher authentic participation. A model is suggested to support participation, considering the elements within context which support engagement. Clear exposition of co-researcher evaluation and reflections on participatory experience provide clarity for action researchers seeking to work with young people and adult co-researcher groups within future AR.

Paper two describes action research with seven school staff in a high school in the North of England. This paper explores co-researcher experiences of participating in action research using cooperative inquiry, in a project focused around improving primary to high school transition practice. Four inquiry cycles were followed by further evaluative workshops. Evaluation identified positive outcomes within themes of academic, organisational and social transition systems. This paper is focussed on critical reflection of the factors that facilitated partnership, mutual engagement and positive collaboration towards agreed outcomes. Learning from this cooperative inquiry supports the utility of participatory and collaborative approaches in development of understanding, systems and practice within schools.

The final paper focuses on disseminating this research, reflecting on how AR can be used in school to bring about positive change. The paper explores evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence within educational psychology and considers how educational psychologists, acting as change agents, can promote and facilitate AR as a positive approach to school systems change.
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May 2018
Declaration

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This research would not have been possible without the engagement and collaboration of the co-researching group. For a group of very busy school professionals I cannot fault their enthusiasm and commitment to the project. Thank you.

For my supervisor, Catherine Kelly, thank you for your unwavering support, ability to stay calm and positive in all situations and for providing constructive and inspirational feedback throughout the project.

I’m also grateful to my fellow trainee educational psychologists, for sharing the journey and providing mutual support along the way.

Thank you, also, to my family and friends for their support and continuous encouragement, which has kept me going during the course and allowed me to realise the career change I set out to make six years ago.
Introduction

‘Discourse and critical thinking are essential tools when it comes to securing progress. But in the end, unity and engaged participation are what make it happen.’

Aberjhani 2015

This introductory section offers a brief overview of the thesis as a whole. It provides details of the research aims and questions, the ontological position and epistemological approach as well as the experience and values of the author.

This research aims to inform practice for action researchers and others seeking to facilitate authentic participation in school-based action research. Action research (AR) is increasingly seen as an appropriate tool for change management within schools (Grundy, 1994). A body of work is emerging focusing on working with stakeholders (staff, pupils, parents etc) to effect change within school settings (Newton & Burgess, 2016). Action research differs from other research, sited, as it is within a participatory paradigm (Reason & Bradbury, 2008) with action researchers working with actors within their contexts. Bradbury-Huang (2010) amongst others argues that quality action research seeks to empower those individuals to be authentically involved at all stages of the research and for them to have the agency to effect change within their contexts. As Grundy (1994) suggests action research’s emphasis on developing understanding, acting on this further understanding and reflecting on this within practice is uniquely suited to support improvement within schools and this project sets out to explore the experiences of co-researchers when involved in education-based action research

The thesis is presented in three sections.
• Paper one, a systematic literature review, sets out to investigate the facilitators and barriers that support participation of co-researchers within action research. The focus for this review is education-based action research involving adults and adolescents.

• Paper two, an empirical study, applies the findings around facilitating participation within paper one to an empirical study, a school-based action research project. The report of the empirical paper outlines co-researcher experiences of participation within a cooperative inquiry to facilitate change to transition practice in a high school.

• Paper three is an account of dissemination and impact from this research. Journal submission was selected based on best fit for each paper. Paper one is seeking submission to Action Research, an international journal which focuses on the practice and theory of AR. Paper two is to be submitted to Educational Action Research, seeking to maximise the reach of this research to action researchers and professionals working within education.

_Preliminary work and project agreement_

I undertook preliminary research in 2016 with the aim of working with a particular school on an action research project over the following two years. The project explored whether a focus on belonging supported young people who face multiple and in year school transitions. Following a preliminary focus group study (reported as university based assignment A1) plans were put in place for a number of staff to become involved in an action research project. However, both of the key members of staff in school were subsequently long-term absent from school and school reported...
that they did not have the resources to continue with the project.

My supervisor presented the proposed research topic area and approach (action research) at a deputy head’s meeting in the local authority where she is a practicing educational psychologist. Two schools expressed an interest in exploring the project further. One school in particular had made year 6-7 transition a priority strand of work and, following further exploration, leaders in school agreed the resources for the action research project.

**Ontology, epistemology, axiology.**

Action research was selected as the paradigm for inquiry based on the researcher’s ontological and epistemological position and informed by the researcher’s axiology and previous experience.

I am personally and politically committed to empowering people; holding a strong belief in making space for those voices which may be marginalised and less heard. Having worked in the field of homelessness and rights within the third/charity sector prior to retraining to work in education, my values are rooted in a belief in collective action, social justice and empowerment. These values informed my desire to conduct research with people rather than on people. It led to the decision to conduct action research focusing on reducing the barriers for all to participate and thinking about applying this both within the experiences of young people as they transition into high school and the experiences of participants who become involved as co-researchers in action research.

Alongside these values the author’s previous experience of change management
informed the way in which the project was negotiated. Experience informed the need for clear contracting for project resources and the flexibility required to enable everyone to stay engaged throughout the project. An understanding of change management frameworks (Cameron & Green, 2009) and extensive experience of working with groups supported this work.

Macguire (2006) argues that through action research, co-researchers are connected politically, philosophically and personally. This rejects the idea of researcher as objective observer, believing in a subjective-objective knowing where we understand in a more holistic sense through our interpretation of our experiences within a particular context (Heron & Reason, 2001). For AR, understanding through action and meaning-making with others, is intrinsic to the process of knowledge creation (Heron & Reason, 1997). Acknowledging my position as co-researcher and action researcher, I sought to be transparent about values, sharing my belief in empowerment as a vehicle for change and in multiple truths based on our individual perspectives (constructionist ontology). We encouraged discussion of the what, why and how of our practice and propositional knowledge (theory/knowledge) for the purposes agreed within our inquiry (Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

A belief in understanding through interactions, within the AR group, between systems across school and those impacted by our actions led to the suggested paradigm for inquiry. Participatory action research through cooperative inquiry, has at its heart the idea of ‘critical subjectivity’, the idea that our experiences are part of our knowing of ourselves and through this we can make positive change happen (Heron & Reason, 2008).
Underpinning this participatory research is the idea that such a process may be emancipatory for those involved (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2008). This requires attention to the process of the action research project, ensuring democracy, reducing power imbalances within the group, establishing a process free from oppression and remembering that individuals and groups who may experience significant barriers to realising their potential are at the heart of the focus for positive change (Heron & Reason, 2008). It is on this basis that children and young people were an important part of the action research proposal, leading to a literature review focused on action research which involved both adults and young people in school.

This project intended to explore understanding where we accept that ‘truth’ and ‘knowledge’ are context dependent and co-constructed with others, a social constructionist epistemology. Working within this socially constructed participatory paradigm, the idea of change through action and reflection supports a standpoint where our versions of reality are self-constructed and located in the context in which we exist (Craib, 1997). This accepts that change within systems is possible, that a new reality can be created which can support pupils through their transition. It is argued this action research paradigm is only ontologically and epistemologically congruent where the work is produced in an authentically participative process (Baldwin, 2006). In this way ‘reality’ is co-created with the co-researchers and provides meaning to individuals and the group within their context. The participants within the research brought their own perceptions of transition practice and of change within the research and these perceptions governed both our actions and reflections.

Feminist critiques of positivist methodologies also inform my epistemology. Willig
(2013) questions the notion of the researcher as purely objective observer, suggesting that many researchers will allow their personal bias to influence the research question, the methodology or interpretation of results. During this project I was conscious of maintaining awareness of the potential influence from position, opinions and knowledge on the outcomes for the research project and the thesis (Willig, 2013). Alongside clarity of ethics and method, self-reflection throughout the project attempted to understand and explain the possible influences on research process and findings (Reason & Bradbury. 2008a).

**Paper One: Systematic Literature Review.**

My research within this participatory paradigm started with a thematic synthesis of studies where action researchers worked with both adults and adolescents to effect change in educational settings. The aim of the study was to identify factors, which facilitated or hindered authentic participation within the co-researching group, to inform action research practice within paper two.

Searches within the systematic literature review revealed a number of papers where action researchers worked on projects with young people or with groups of school-based professionals (adults), however few studies identified the factors which supported partnership when both adults and young people were involved. The paper used a thematic synthesis approach to report findings across seven school-based action research studies involving both adults and pupils as co-researchers. Research questions were refined throughout the initial stages of the search process leading to searches based on the following questions

LR RQ1 What factors (inquiry methods, interpersonal) support authentic
participation of both adults and adolescents as co-researchers in action research within educational contexts?

LR RQ2 To what extent were these factors evaluated within the research? Findings from paper one identified that understanding and responding to the needs of the co-researchers to participate, building trust and understanding and paying attention to any power imbalances can have a positive effect on participation, outcomes for the project and agency of individual co-researchers.

**Paper 2: Action research project**

The empirical paper took the above findings from the systematic literature review regarding the facilitators and barriers to participation and applied this to a high school action research project. The researcher spent time ahead of the project and at the initial workshop building relationships and ground rules with the group. Initial activities were focused on building trust and understanding between group members. All group members paid attention to any power discrepancies, negotiating egalitarian relationships throughout the project.

The initial project proposal was to involve both staff and young people in parallel (interdependent) cooperative inquiry investigations. The involvement of the young people was not possible within the context and timeframe available, reinforcing the point that participation is context dependent. Involvement of young people in school’s transition practice change is planned for a future stage of this ongoing school-based co-operative inquiry project. The inquiry focus was agreed with co-researchers. The school-based co-researchers agreed a guiding question: How can we build on existing good practice to improve transition practice within academic, social and institutional systems? I proposed cooperative inquiry as the action research
framework, based as it is on collaboration, with a clear focus on the ways in which researchers can facilitate greater participation (Heron & Reason, 2001). Evaluation of the project used a model suggested by Piggot-Irvine, Rowe & Ferkins (2015), conceptualizing stages of the process, and evaluating both outcomes/impact and the participation for the co-researching group. The focus of this report of the project is on the participatory experiences of the co-researching group.

**T3: Disseminating the research**

Finally this thesis explores themes around dissemination. The focus is on maximising impact from this research by way of planned and evaluated dissemination activities. The report details future dissemination activities for the systematic literature review and the completed and planned dissemination which was part of the action research project.
References

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https://doi.org/10.1080/09650799400200007

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T1: Authentic participation in school-based action research with adults and adolescent co-researchers

Prepared in accordance with author guidelines for the Action Research Journal
T1 Abstract

The number of action research papers generated is steadily increasing leading to an interest in quality criteria for action research. Many quality frameworks emphasise the importance of building authentic participation and this has been explored considering how to enable either adult or children’s participation as co-researchers. However, there is less consideration of how action researchers work with both adults and children and young people (CYP) together.

The aim of this study was to systematically retrieve and review empirical studies on action research where researchers, adults and adolescents work together. Using the PRISMA framework papers were screened for inclusion/exclusion. Application of quality and relevance choice points resulted in seven studies which were subjected to thematic synthesis.

The action research papers reviewed demonstrated a range of approaches, with those judged high quality providing a show and tell of process and participation. Findings on participation showed the importance of building trust and egalitarian relationships and understanding co-researcher needs for participation within their context, supporting people to access their role as co-researchers. The synthesized findings are represented in a model which summarises the key elements which contribute to facilitating participation. Greater evidence of participation, in the form of clear evaluation/reflection on the adult/adolescent co-researcher participatory experience would support best practice within future action research.

Key Words: Authentic participation, action research, adults and adolescent co-researchers, quality criteria, thematic synthesis.
Introduction

Action Research (AR) is defined as ‘An orientation to knowledge creation that arises in a context of practice and requires researchers to work with practitioners’ (Bradbury-Huang, 2010, p.93). AR is seen as a family of research methods evolved from post-positivist challenges to the orthodoxy of research conducted on subjects. AR proposes a philosophy built upon principles of empowerment and participation through equal partnerships (Reason & Bradbury, 2008a). In fact McTaggart (1997) questions whether a project can be called AR where it does not demonstrate and reflect on how participation is enacted throughout the project.

AR scholars have historically encouraged the views of those frequently voiceless within decision-making (Galletta & Jones, 2010), empowering community member as co-researchers and creating equal partnerships for inquiry (Smith, Bratini, Chambers, Jenssen & Romero, 2010). One group often voiceless in research, is children and young people (Kim, 2016). More recently, in the context of the children’s rights agenda (UNHCR, 1989), attempts have been made to elicit the voice of children in research. A variety of UK governmental documents and guidance (Department for Children, Schools & Families, 2004; Department for Education, 2014), maintain the importance of children’s voice within their key contexts (Kim, 2016), with a particular focus on school. This led to increased participatory research exploring children’s voice within schools (e.g. Davison, 2013; Killroy, 2013). This systematic literature review investigates the process for participation and the evaluation of participatory experience when researchers work with both adults and YP in an educational context.
Quality within action research

A number of authors have attempted to define characteristics of quality AR (e.g. Chen, Huang, Zen, 2017) in response to criticism of the application of traditional research quality standards to AR (Burns, 2007). There is debate regarding the need to further define quality in the AR field or remain ‘expansive and inclusive’ to all approaches within the AR family (Reason & Bradbury, 2008, p. 697). In attempting to make transparent the qualities of AR, core features have been defined including partnership and participation, with a focus on ‘the quality of the relationships we form with primary stakeholders and the extent to which all stakeholders are appropriately involved in the design and assessment of inquiry and change’ (Bradbury-Huang, 2010, p. 98) (see appendix 6).

From a different standpoint Piggot-Irvine, Rowe, and Ferkins (2015) outlined ‘indicator domains’ of AR projects to aide AR evaluation (p. 549). The authors described commonly found steps from within varied AR families including:

- Initial project steps,
- Process for conducting AR ,
- The outcomes and
- Impacts.

Nuanced differences between the two frameworks are apparent. Bradbury-Huang (2010) emphasises quality choice-points whereas Piggot-Irvine et al (2015), focus on AR process. Piggot- Irvine et al. go on to espouse the importance of chronicling co-researchers’ perspective change whereas Bradbury-Huang argues that author reflexivity allows another level of understanding around changes in perspective Both
conceptual frameworks agree the importance of conducting research *with* rather than *on* people.

**Authentic participation in action research**

Accepting the centrality of participation within AR, Bradbury-Huang (2010) contended ‘the extent of participation we are referring to (is) a continuum from consultation with stakeholders to stakeholders as full co-researchers’ (p.102). Quality AR demonstrates how co-reaching participants are involved at all stages of the research.

McTaggart (1997) describes ‘authentic participation’ as ‘Ownership, that is, responsible agency in the production of knowledge and improvement in practice ... Mere involvement implies none of this and creates the risk of co-option and exploitation in the realisation of the plans of others’ (1997, p. 28). Gaventa and Cornwall (2008) go further, suggesting that authentic participation requires amelioration of contextual power disparities to avoid powerless groups echoing the views of those more dominant. This is important within the context of an historic, cultural position which neglects children’s voice within decision-making (Hart, 1992). Gaventa and Cornwall argue for attention to other power imbalances (e.g. race, gender, sexuality) to ensure conditions exist to empower participants to have a meaningful voice within the research process.

**Models of participation**

To militate against tokenistic participation, researchers have suggested frameworks for authentic participation (Arnstein, 1969; Hart, 1992). Hart (1992) developed
Arnstein’s (1969) hierarchical ladder of citizen participation for youth participation. Within both models, the bottom of the ladder represents simply reporting participant voice without any real participation. Arnstein argues that participation at the top of the ladder allows participants ‘citizen control’ while Hart contends that the highest level of participation is where children initiate the agenda and share decisions with adults. There is a subtle difference relating to empowering others to work effectively together (Hart, 1992) or to relinquishing control to participants (Arnstein, 1969).

Criticism of Hart (1992) and Arnstein’s (1969) models focus on their hierarchical structure, maintaining that authentic participation comes from negotiating the type of participation within the group not from imposing a participatory structure. Treseder (1997) outlined a non-hierarchical approach, acknowledging that the path to participation may not be sequenced in a linear way, recognising there are degrees of participation, which are equally justifiable, as they are context dependent and negotiated with the group. For example, full control of decision-making by YP is unlikely within a school context.

More recently, Davison (2013) presented a model based on a grounded theory of how teachers enable pupils with social and emotional needs to participate in the decision-making processes surrounding their special educational needs. She summarised findings into different stages of development in supporting pupils to fully participate to express their views.
Figure 1 Stages of development in supporting pupils to express their views

From E. Davison (2013) Finding a Voice: An exploration into how teachers enable pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties to participate in the processes surrounding their special educational needs.

**Rationale for this study**

There are a number of participatory frameworks describing how to work effectively with YP (Davison, 2013, Hart, 1992) or with adults (Arnstein, 1969; Cook, 2012). Whilst there appears to be shared language and conceptualisation between these models, it is hypothesised there may be key areas for consideration when action researchers engage with both adults and children as co-researchers together within their context (i.e. education). There is a small, emerging body of AR which involves both adults and children/YP, however, a gap exists in the literature regarding
synthesis of AR in general (Chen et al., 2017) and findings around facilitating participation with adults and children as co-researchers in particular. Previous models of participation focus on describing what type of participation is in play, whereas this paper brings together findings, by way of thematic synthesis to explore the conditions which support participation in educational AR with adults/YP.

This report focuses on AR where YP (between the ages of 11-18) and adults in educational contexts are co-researchers, offering findings useful for other action researchers hoping to optimise participation within diverse co-researching groups.

The following questions are explored:

1) What factors support authentic participation of both adults and adolescents as co-researchers in action research within educational contexts?

2) To what extent were these factors evaluated within the research?

**Methodology**

*Literature search strategy*

Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses framework (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff & Altman, 2009) papers were initially identified and screened for inclusion. Studies were sourced between November 2016 and April 2017 using appropriate academic databases; ‘PsychINFO’, ‘EBSCOHost’, ‘ASSIA’ and ‘ERIC’, alongside Google Scholar, University of Manchester Library
search and reference harvesting. Reference search terms include ‘Adolescent AND Adult AND Action research AND School’ making use of alternative search terms to maximise appropriate journal articles (see appendix 3). Searches were limited to 2006-2017, based on findings that AR involving YP was a more recent phenomenon (LPC Consulting, 2012). To enhance the quality of papers for review only peer-reviewed journals were included.

Initial searches identified 852 papers. Following elimination of duplicate articles, studies were screened by title and information, then by abstract to answer the following questions:

- Is it a report of action research?
- Does it include both adult and adolescent participants (aged 11-17) as co-researchers (not simply adolescents as a data source)?
- Is the research based within an educational context?

Forty-seven studies were fully investigated and thirty-four of these failed to meet inclusion/exclusion criteria (appendix 4). The majority of papers were excluded due to limited adolescent participation, solely using YP as a data source.

**The researcher**

This literature review forms part of a doctoral thesis and is intended to inform practice for an AR project around primary to high school transition, involving staff and pupils at a secondary school.
**Quality assessment**

The remaining 13 papers were assessed for quality using Bradbury-Huang’s quality criteria for AR (2010) and for relevance to the scope of this paper. Relevance judged i) the extent of participation and ii) reflections/evaluation on participation from co-researchers (see appendix 5). Bradbury-Huang (2010) indicates that it is rare that any one AR report successfully responds to all AR quality choice-points equally and papers in this review were judged to have either met partially met or not met each choice point. Papers were rated high, medium or low against quality criteria and only those rated medium or high were selected. Papers were judged relevant if scoring at least partially met against both the extent and evaluation of participation. Table 1 (7 selected papers) and appendix 6 (all 13 reviewed papers) detail the characteristics, quality and relevance criteria applied to the papers. One could argue that the wide range of action research approaches within the sample negates the possibility of applying a standard set of criteria across approaches within these papers (Clausen, 2005). Yet, Piggot Irving and Zornes (2016) argue that flexibility and openness are critical to using any meta-approach within AR as it allows for exploration of cultural, epistemological and other differences. Using Bradbury-Huang’s (2010) AR quality standard, designed to encompass the broad spectrum of research found within the AR stable, allowed for valid comparison whilst acknowledging the variety of methods, and contexts within AR.
Figure 2: The PRISMA framework illustrating the sequential steps in the review process.

The seven selected papers were part of an in-depth qualitative review which was considered purposive rather than exhaustive (Thomas & Harden, 2008). The purpose of the synthesis is to interpret the findings rather than explain correlations, causality to lead to predictions. Protocols for systematic review in qualitative research have been the subject of debates about their legitimacy with concerns focused on the effectiveness of synthesizing findings that pertain to specific contexts. Study methods in this area are at an early stage of development (Thomas & Harden 2008) as are methodologies for the systematic review of AR (Chen et al, 2017).

Thomas and Harden’s (2008) proposed thematic synthesis process was exploited to complete the analysis, ensuring alignment of selected studies to research questions and extracting ‘key concepts’ as findings for the synthesis (p.7). Data was extracted from throughout the seven papers uncovering first descriptive and then analytic themes. AR, unlike more traditional research often contains reflections on the
process by the researchers throughout the report. Appendix 7 demonstrates the stages from initial coding through descriptive to analytic themes and finally to the thematic network as displayed below (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Thomas & Harden, 2008).

Findings were subject to further scrutiny by the author and supervisor considering and agreeing individual coding and final themes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/ year/ country</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Participation and Partnership</th>
<th>Quality and relevance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith (2010)</td>
<td>557 pupils (aged 12 – 15) 24 staff</td>
<td>To explore social and emotional health and wellbeing of pupils in school. Central to the paper was notions of pupil participation, equality and power processes as negotiated between staff and pupils</td>
<td>Action research groups with pupils and adults in each school to plan research. Data gathering through semi-structured interviews with pupils and adults. Used experiential school walks with pupils, and written work and weekly diaries or journals with pupils. Adult-only research forum in each school. Thematic analysis of findings</td>
<td>Partnership between researchers, staff and pupils for research design. Not clear how all pupils or adults are involved in data collection. Implies author only data analysis.</td>
<td>Quality criteria: Medium Met 2 Partially met 4 Not met 1 Relevance i) Met ii) Partially met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enright and O’Sullivan (2010)</td>
<td>41 pupils (aged 15-19) 1 teacher</td>
<td>Working with a teacher and a group of high school female pupils to negotiate the PE curriculum. To explore whether this makes PE more meaningful to pupils</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research. Data gathering through journals from pupils and audio recording of curriculum design workshops. Plus individual/group interviews with 5 pupils. Thematic analysis of findings</td>
<td>Pupils and teacher are involved as co-researchers, designing the curriculum and conducting data analysis. However they are not involved in research design, agreeing objectives or project dissemination</td>
<td>Quality criteria: Medium Met 3 Partially met 3 Not met 1 Relevance: i) Met ii) Partially met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galletta and Jones (2010)</td>
<td>24 Middle school pupils (age 11-14)</td>
<td>Trainee teachers working with middle and high school pupils in action research. Agreed research objective: To understand how</td>
<td>Participatory Action research. The authors facilitate research groups of trainee teachers, high school and middle school</td>
<td>Trainee teachers facilitating groups of middle and high school pupils in action research</td>
<td>Quality criteria: High Met 5 Partially met 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Research Purpose</td>
<td>Methods</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Authorship</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.A</td>
<td>9 High school pupils (age 14-19)</td>
<td>Students who in turn facilitate the middle school pupils to complete video interviews with pupils and teachers at their school.</td>
<td>Initially data analysis co-constructed with group but completed by research authors. AR group involved in dissemination.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodnough (2014)</td>
<td>10 high school pupils (age 16-19)</td>
<td>To investigate the processes which may emerge between pupils and adults in youth action research? Also to explore group insights of involvement in YAR</td>
<td>Youth action research embedded within a case study design. Data collection by way of large-scale survey, interviews, ethnographic observations and a journal. Inductive data analysis, with YP and adults working together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lind (2007)</td>
<td>4 pupils (aged 14 – 19)</td>
<td>To understand the meaning of adolescent involvement in mental health promotion through their participation as partners in rather than solely as objects of a mental health nursing project.</td>
<td>Action research using appreciative inquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
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<td>school nurse</td>
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<td>Study</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Setting</td>
<td>Approach</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Lind (2013)     | Canada   | 4 Pupils (aged 14-19) 3 school staff | To identify and promote capacity building experiences, promoting collaborative action in an alternative high school setting | Action research using appreciative inquiry | Action research workshops with co-researchers, 10 focus groups and 2 interviews. | Group co-constructed research design, data collection, data analysis and involved in dissemination. | | High | Met 4 3  
|                 |          |              |         |          |                |                |                  | Relevance:  
|                 |          |              |         |          |                |                |                  | i) met  
|                 |          |              |         |          |                |                |                  | ii) met  |
| Roberts Brown and Edwards (2015) | Tanzania | 36 pupils (aged 10 – 15) 9 school staff | Investigating use of participatory action research in Tanzanian schools. Further aim of knowledge/skill development for teachers in using participative models of teaching through incorporating pupil voice in curricula design. | Participatory action research for curriculum design. Data collection through curriculum design workshops with teachers and students. Also includes, interviews and observation of classroom practices | Pupils and teachers worked together with curriculum design workshops. Research objectives and design set by author. Researcher conducts focus groups at the end for evaluation and completes data analysis. Group involved in disseminating findings from curriculum workshops | | Medium | Partially met 7  
|                 |          |              |         |          |                |                |                  | Relevance:  
|                 |          |              |         |          |                |                |                  | i) Partially met  
|                 |          |              |         |          |                |                |                  | ii) Partially met  |
Findings

Overview of studies included

Six of the reviewed papers are AR project reports whilst Lind (2007) is a reflection on the process of AR. All papers are involved in educational research; two papers (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010; Roberts, Brown & Edwards, 2015) are specifically focused on teacher/pupil curriculum design. The remaining five papers describe adult/adolescent involvement in projects exploring educational policy/decision-making.

Quality evaluations of the studies revealed that four of the seven papers met the majority of Bradbury-Huang’s (2010) quality choice-points, the remaining three papers at least partially met the majority of the criteria (see table 1). Considering the papers in terms of their relevance to the research, only Lind (2007) included comprehensive evidence of authentic participation and an evaluation of participants’ experience. Evidence of participation varied from a full description of co-researcher involvement throughout the project (Galletta & Jones 2010; Lind 2013) to a short description of participation within methodology sections (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010).

Lind (2007) and Goodnough (2010) included an evaluation containing reflections from both adults and adolescents on their experiences of participation. Whilst Roberts, Brown and Edwards (2015) conducted a focus group with teachers and students on their experience, participation was not a reported focus group theme. Neither Lind (2013) nor Galletta and Jones (2010) evaluate participation with co-researchers, however both participant and author reflections on the practice of participation are interspersed throughout their reports. Enright and O’Sullivan (2010) reported on student reflections of participation in the decision-making process.
process. Overall the emphasis on reflections/evaluation of participation focused on the way in which adolescent involvement was facilitated.

**Thematic Synthesis**

![Thematic Map]

Figure 3: Thematic Map

Key:  
Organising theme, Analytic theme, Descriptive theme

Trust, egalitarianism and shared understanding facilitate participation.

One theme, which occurred in all papers, described how paying attention to the qualities of relationships, such as building trust, helped to encourage participation. ‘The researcher made frequent visits to the research site enabling her to develop rapport and trust with members of
the youth action research group ‘(Goodnough, 2014 p. 368).

Lind (2013) cited a number of elements enabling co-researcher trust, ‘principal investigator
tasks included the development of trust through honesty, genuineness, consistency, reliability,
demonstrated caring, inclusion of self as a person, and inclusive involvement of the other
collaborators to build the integrity of this study.’ (p. 453). Conversely Duckett et al (2010)
reflected that a lack of trust impacted on development within the project ‘Teachers… had
warned us that pupils could not be trusted and they were likely to exaggerate or make stories
up just to get attention’ (p.74).

Goodnough contended that ‘all members of the community had an equal say in the project’
(p.172). Oliver, an adolescent co-researcher, provided a rich reflection on equality and power
dynamics and Lind (2007) provided interpretation of his change in perspective

‘At the beginning everyone brought their own special thing to this group, and they used
that special thing throughout the group and nobody’s special thing is the same’. He
concluded, ‘equality of choice and the option to participate, that’s what we were aiming
at here’. Oliver was beginning to understand egalitarian practices (creating openings for
voice) are not the same as everyone having equal rights.’ (Lind 2007 p. 378).

Pertinent to this research question was discussion relating to adult/adolescent dynamics: ‘we
had considered the power relationships between children and adults and had embedded our
work in a conceptual understanding of how those relations were historically constituted’ (Ducket et al., 2010 p. 174). Yet no paper explicitly reflected on co-researcher views of the additional dynamics of researcher, adult and adolescent participants within the research.

Goodnough (2014) argues that where individuals were able to work together authentically a diversity of perspectives from individual co-researchers lead to enhanced group understanding and clarity of collective purpose.

   Mutual engagement and learning within the community are enhanced by diversity, with each member bringing unique ideas and perspectives. While tensions and challenges may arise as results of this diversity, these tensions and challenges become a context for community members to develop shared perspectives and understandings, and to move their work forward. Eventually, the community develops a joint enterprise, (p.369).

Galletta and Jones (2010) also reported on group diversity, commenting on the importance of paying attention to possible impacts from race, class and culture on group power relationships and the importance of equipping co-researchers with the time and skill to create shared understanding from individual perspectives. They also considered the power dynamics between the authors and the co-researchers, where adult co-researchers complained ‘I just feel that more preparation could have been made before the beginning of the project’ (p.344).
Resources are required for effective participation.

The theme of resources to support meaningful participation is prevalent throughout the papers. Ducket et al. (2010) explained ‘to work in a community psychological way and to embrace participatory practices can be time and resource intensive’ (p. 175). A particular obstacle seems to be the time for data analysis.

In the early stages of the study, the researcher asked the group members whether they would like to be part of analysing the case-study data. Because of a lack of time, they felt this would not be possible. Thus, the group agreed that the data the researcher collected and the corresponding interpretations of these data (themes and patterns) would be shared with the group for their feedback. (Goodnough, 2014, p. 364)

Two authors highlighted specific skills required for data analysis. Lind, (2013) outlined ‘Data analysis training (included) development of metaphors’ (p. 461-462) whilst Galletta and Jones (2010) summarised the support needed for co-researcher involvement in theme development ‘We entered the themes into project files and, providing some scaffolding here, we further developed the students’ initial clustering’ (p.349).

Lind (2013) identifies that co-researchers need ‘Training for their roles beforehand’ (p.461). Whereas Enright and O’Sullivan (2010), amongst other authors, recognise the specific need for training adolescent co-researchers. ‘The purpose of this introductory phase, … was ……. to provide some initial training for the students in research methods’ (p. 208).

Other papers also recognise adolescents’ need for additional support to participate as co-researchers. Goodnough (2014), outlines the role that adult co-researchers can play in supporting adolescents ‘Prior to working intensely with students, the author worked closely
with the teachers, reading literature and engaging in activities that would enhance their (the teachers’) understanding of YAR (youth action research).’ (p.369). Lind (2007) also argues that researchers (or those with more experience) need to facilitate access to this process for adolescents ‘Actualizing adolescent potential occurs through their experience whereby their competencies are facilitated’ (p.380-81). Galletta and Jones (2010) appreciate that adolescents may struggle to fulfil their role as researchers without support: ‘Although we were inviting the high school students into a situation in which they were expected to take considerable responsibility, we had not sufficiently supported them in the process’ (p.347).

Positive impact on co-researchers.

Two papers conducted evaluation of co-researcher experiences and others included author reflections. Papers mostly reflect on the impact for adolescents, with Galletta and Jones (2010) the only authors to describe the adult reflection, outlining how ‘they learned… about themselves in relation to these complicated settings’ (school community) (p.354).

An affective element is often reported, depicted as empowerment. One YP reported how ‘The project taught me about cooperative team building and gave me lots of challenges in terms of personal comfort’ (Lind, 2013, p.465). Lind also reported her view of the impact for YP explaining ‘The opportunity …to accomplish academic and personal goals led to feelings of shared power and decision-making. (Lind, 2013, p.459).

Other reflections are adult attributions and interpretations of the impact for YP. The teachers in Roberts et al. (2015) ‘observed improvements in club students’ behaviour such as increased confidence, higher self-esteem’ (p.317). Goodnough (2014) also reports ‘the student’s felt empowered’ (p.376) and contend ‘Students identified several positive outcomes to being involved in YPAR including gaining insight into others’ perspectives, developing
research skills and effecting change’ (p. 374). Enright and O’Sullivan (2010) reported how co-researchers ‘were empowered by a learning environment that recognized their capacities as competent social agents’ (p. 219).

Further adult perceptions detail co-researcher ownership of their projects ‘Students developed a sense of ownership and accomplishment and gained insight into how to effect change’ (Goodnough, 2010, p 373) going onto explain how ‘Group members had opportunities to assume leadership roles, contributing to an individual sense of ownership’ (Goodnough, 2010 p.171). The theme of insight appears in other reflections, notably in Enright and O’Sullivan (2010) where they describe one participant as having ‘evidently gained invaluable insights into the teaching and learning process’ (p.216). The final word on impact is left to Lind (2007) and one of the project’s co-researchers

I asked Oliver when it had become more a group-owned project rather than my project. He said the change occurred when the group members realized they had to come up with ideas and answers.

“We came into this [project] and you said that we were going to make decisions too, and then we looked to you to make decisions for us. And when you didn’t make those decisions I guess it forced at least me into thinking more in-depth about what we’re going to do, as opposed to just doing what I was told. You’d figure at [this school] it’s not something that most kids would want to do is do what they’re told, but there’s a comfort in that.” (p.380, Lind, 2007).
Discussion

Quality in Action Research

Reviewing the literature in this area revealed a diversity of approaches to participation within an AR paradigm. Whilst frameworks exist for quality participatory practice within YPAR and adult PAR studies, the findings reported support the hypothesis that additional dynamics are at play when both adult and adolescents are involved alongside research authors. It is argued that research authors/instigators must pay attention to individual difference within the group recognising researcher-adult, researcher-adolescent and adult-adolescent power disparities, alongside other dynamics.

Reflexivity and evaluation reveals three themes

McTaggart’s assertion that (1997) a project must demonstrate and reflect on how it meets criteria around participation is revisited. If one accepts the essentiality of this reflection/evaluation, the focus of the evaluation is also important. Piggott-Irvine et al. (2015) contend that evaluation of AR has mostly been limited to a focus on process or ‘participant satisfaction’ (p. 546) without co-researcher reflection/exploration on their participatory experience. Within this review first person, self-report of co-researcher’s participatory experience are provided only in Goodnough (2010) and Lind (2007).

All seven reviewed papers included author reflexivity, with authors reflecting on some of the issues which enable participation. Key themes emerged such as building trust, egalitarianism and shared understanding (Ducket et al, 2010; Goodnough, 2010) which Kim (2016) identified are vital requirements for fostering group participation. A number of papers also
identified co-researcher resources and skills as contributory factors for engagement. For example, Enright & O’Sullivan (2010) reported on the YP’s perceptions of their skill level before and after participation. Perhaps it is to be expected that authors in these studies focus on the resources and input needed to enable YP to participate. YP are likely to have less research experience, less confidence (Shier, 2001) and low expectations of being listened to (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). Moreover in prior research with YP it is acknowledged that adults need to make it possible (resources, skill/knowledge, space to talk) for YP to truly participate (Hart, 1992, Kim, 2016). Nevertheless, this focus on YP ignores the possibility of other power dynamics at play and the studies in this cohort were largely silent on the participation needs of adult co-researchers.

The final theme detailed the authors’ perceptions of impact for co-researchers (Lind, 2013), reporting insight, empowerment and engagement. However, without personal testimonies, the impact described is based on the authors’ attributions. As McTaggart (1997) argued, an evaluation of co-researcher participation should draw out the complexity of power relationships, leading to participant evaluation of their own practice, their reflection on their practice and the reciprocal influence on their practice from the context in which they operate. Notwithstanding the personal bias, an adult perspective may misrepresent or miss some essential elements of YPs’ experiences of being co-researchers.

Power relationships, within the selected research reports are not limited to adult/child, and Galletta and Jones (2010) provide additional insight reflecting on dynamics that can be at play between the researcher and other co-researchers, whilst also recognising how race, class, gender could also present power imbalances. Without evaluation of participatory experiences through first-person reflections the reader is left wondering about participants’ opportunity
for second order change (learning and developing themselves), an oft-cited AR goal (Reason & Bradbury, 2008b).

**Model of Participation**

A variety of participatory practices are on display, both across papers and at the different stages within projects which do not fit neatly into existing models of participation. These practices range from enabling adolescent voice (Enright & O’Sullivan, 2010), ensuring co-researcher involvement in dissemination (Lind, 2007) to empowering group participation in research design and objectives (Lind, 2013). Linear and hierarchical models offer limited scope for explanation of the interrelationship between mutually dependent factors supporting participation. For example, findings suggest the interdependence of group qualities, and how factors such as understanding the context, time/resources and skill development help build participation (see figure 4). The evidence from this paper indicates that it would be useful for action researchers to initially seek to understand and contract the needs and roles of individuals and group, as described within Piggott-Irvine et al.’s (2015) first stage of ‘Project focus’ (p.550). Furthermore, where co-researcher participation is enacted, information about emancipation, ownership of the project is best served by reflexivity from all co-researchers, thus providing greater information to guide authentic participation in future AR.
Reflections on thematic synthesis

The literature search exposed the limited range of published AR synthesis papers perhaps due to the challenge of removing findings from context (an essential component of AR), into a synthesis or review (Thomas & Harden, 2008). However, use of quality criteria for AR (Bradbury-Huang, 2010) allowed assessment against standards whilst remaining flexible to the diversity found in AR. The focus in this synthesis on evaluation of participatory practice, reinforced the argument that participatory evaluation is an intrinsic element of any AR paper, and a necessary element of meta reflections of AR (Piggot-Irvine et al, 2015). Further consideration of Piggot-Irvine et al.’s (2015) proposed evaluation framework when reviewing AR could allow for comparison across contexts.
Transparency about the way in which AR participation is negotiated, enacted and evaluated is essential to the trustworthiness of such research (Swantz, 2008). However, insufficient articulation and clarification of participatory processes and no clear evaluation of participatory experiences provided some barriers to judging quality, specifically the facilitators of co-researcher participation within AR stages (design to dissemination).

**Conclusions and Further Research**

This paper demonstrates the challenge of realising authentic participation with both adult and adolescent co-researching participants within educational contexts. A much larger number of papers purporting to be AR involve participants as data sources, or only at some key stages within the process. This may correlate with the time and resources required to facilitate authentic participation (Kim, 2016). As the number of EAR projects grow it is likely that more projects will contain diversity of co-researching participants and this paper provides for timely consideration of what we mean by participation and how we, as action researchers can share our learning around the facilitators and barriers of co-researcher participation.

By enabling participation, action researchers reflect on the participants’ increased sense of empowerment and ownership of the project when they are authentically involved throughout. This can impact on insight, both into the project and for co-researchers themselves, enabling changes in praxis and knowledge (Kemmis, 2010). The findings within this synthesis reveal the critical nature of both first person (the researcher’s own thoughts) and second order (evaluation of co-researcher experience) reflection, offering a full description of participation within the AR experience (Reason & Bradbury, 2008a).

AR seeks to involve key stakeholders within their environment (Dworski-Riggs & Langhout, 2010) empowering them to become change agents (Rodriguez & Brown, 2009) in this case
within education. Educational decision-making is often seen as an adult domain (Davison, 2013), however it is recognised that YP can have a unique view and make positive contributions to change (Messiou, Ainscow, Echeita, Goldrick, Hope, Paes, Sandoval, Simon & Vitorino, 2016). It is incumbent upon action researchers to seek to involve young people, amongst other players, within educational contexts to bring about democratic change rooted within the needs of the whole community (Ducket et al., 2010). However it is evident that contextual barriers, relating to hierarchies and the extent of prior engagement with research or decision-making, may need to be tackled to create authentic participation for YP and others within the process. Putting the conditions in place to create real ownership of collaborative change processes in this way can provide co-researching stakeholders with increased control over their own lives, creating lasting change (Kim, 2016).

Whilst celebrating the diversity of approach within AR, one can argue that the presence of certain conditions can enable researchers to meet their stated aims of co-researcher participation. This systematic review revealed that research involving adults and adolescents as co-researching parties are in their infancy. More research avoiding unilateral author action on research design, objectives, data analysis and/or dissemination and, importantly, evaluating co-researcher participatory experience is required to add to the body of research influencing authentic participation with co-researchers. Where articulation of participatory process and review of practice exists it allows action researchers to gain understanding which can positively influence participation within future AR projects. Considering participation within a non-sequential or hierarchical model may provide the flexibility needed to allow proper consideration of the needs of co-researchers thus enabling authentic participation. Paying attention to the conditions for authentic participation as described in the model should create opportunities for egalitarian relationships to flourish. Furthermore, a clearer understanding of co-researcher individual needs within context is actualised where authors
acknowledge different adult/adolescent needs and other power disparities such as age, gender, race, class, etc. Where authentic participation and egalitarianism takes place, the evidence suggests that this can positively affect co-researchers’ self-development, their ownership of the project and the ability of co-researchers to be effective change agents within their context. Future AR studies incorporating models of authentic participation, paying attention to quality AR frameworks could bring about greater understanding of the processes that enable full co-researcher engagement when researchers want to work with both adults and young people.
References


Lind, C. (2013). What builds student capacity in an alternative high school setting?


Retrieved from


T2: ‘Flattening the Hump’: Improving primary to high school transition through authentic participation in school-based cooperative inquiry.

Written in accordance with journal author guidelines from Action Research

Ethical approval by the School Research Integrity Committee, University of Manchester: PGR-9866994-Diss (see Appendix 8)
**T2 Abstract**

Transition from primary to high school, identified as one of the five key life transitions for children and young people (The World Bank, 2006) was examined in this action research (AR) involving seven school staff and a postgraduate researcher. The project was part of a doctoral thesis in Child and Educational Psychology. The school-based co-researchers agreed a guiding question: *How can we build on existing good practice to improve transition practice within academic, social and institutional systems?*

AR through cooperative inquiry (CI) was chosen, as this was a good fit with the vision of systems transformation raised from the group and it allowed for periods of action between workshops. This combination of praxis and reflecting on our actions allowed for deeper understanding through the cycles of AR. Data includes four AR workshops, an evaluation focus group, member checking, field notes and rich picture data. Themes relating to improving transition emerged around academic, organisation and social systems.

The project was evaluated using Piggot-Irvine, Rowe and Firkin’s (2015) AR evaluation model. Evaluation identified effective outcomes from organisational and social transition, with a future focus on factors to support academic transition. Assessing and reflecting on co-researcher experiences of participation, we considered factors that facilitated partnership, mutual engagement and positive collaboration towards agreed outcomes within the research. Learning generated from this AR encompassed change to school transition practice, authentic participation within AR and the use of a collaborative model for effecting change within school.

Keywords: Transition, cooperative inquiry, action research, authentic participation, collaboration for change. high school, secondary school
Introduction

It is widely reported that primary to high school transition is a key phase in a child’s life, with impact potentially felt over the long-term (West, Sweeting & Young, 2010; Bloyce & Frederickson, 2012). A plethora of transition guidance is available for schools focusing on key at risk groups (DCSF, 2008; DfE, 2013; NASEN, 2015). The psychological impact of transition can be experienced negatively as a rupture or it may allow the chance to forge a positive new identity (Zeedyk, 2013, O’Riordan, 2013, Crafter & Maunder, 2012). West et al. (2010) found that the majority of students had short-lived concerns about transition, but for a number of children there is a dip in academic performance or difficulties with social adjustment post. This AR project focused on facilitating transition for pupils to a point where they settle into high school and continue to make academic and social progress. Considering this topic from a participatory approach, this project uses cooperative inquiry to explore improvements in practice for primary/high school transition in a northern England urban high school.

Evangelou, Taggart, Sylva, Melhuish, Sommons & Siraj-Blatchford (2008) produced findings from a large-scale longitudinal study citing evidence of good transition practice which focuses on school, social and academic systems, for example new pupil introductory transition days, and gathering pupil information from primary schools. A focus on social needs appears to reap rewards with strategies such as additional transition support for vulnerable students (West et al, 2010), facilitating positive relationships with new staff and peers (Lyons, 2010) and close family/school relationships (Crosnoe, 2009) being effective. Alongside this, Galton, Gray and Ruddock (1999) suggest that schools should direct their attention to the academic dimensions of transition to sustain progress. A number of studies (Galton et al 1999; Riglin, Frederickson, Shelton & Rice, 2013) report academic discontinuity across transition, their findings indicating that teachers undervalue new
students’ capabilities and students’ attainments fall (Evangelou et al., 2008). This transition dip can be mitigated where primary and secondary schools work together around the curriculum and evidence suggests specific interventions such as curriculum-bridging units can improve attainment within the first year at secondary school (Powell, Smith, Jones & Reakes, 2003). What all these suggested interventions have in common is a theme of preparedness and information sharing, to enable the new school to be able to tailor strategies to meet the social and academic needs of the pupils entering their community (West et al., 2008).

Action research to explore school transition practice.

Educational settings have provided a fertile ground for AR (Stringer, 2008) affecting practical social and systemic change (Newton & Burgess, 2016). Despite this there is relatively little education action research (EAR) focused on school transitions, with projects focused at transition into primary school (Lee & Goh, 2012) and on from high school (Dee & Byers, 2003). One U.K. based AR project uses the Research and Development in Organisations (RADIO) model (Timmins, Shepherd & Kelly, 2003) to investigate transition through AR across a number of schools (Ashton, 2009). RADIO provides a 12-stage process for structuring AR. The project elicited young people’s views on changes required to support positive transition, concluding that preparation, which is context-specific, is key to success and that AR can be effective way of understanding required systems changes.

AR is unique in that it seeks to create practical change within the contexts in which the researchers exist and has an emancipatory focus at its heart (Jennings & Graham 1996). Criticism of EAR focuses on possible structural/organisational barriers, which may result in emancipatory focus side-lined, with changes rooted within the confines of existing school
hierarchies (Newton & Burgess 2016). These researchers suggest that overcoming such barriers requires researchers to stay close to ethical standards and to consider interactions with wider school systems to ensure that EAR can facilitate collaboration and agency of school-based participants.

CI provides a framework for communities to work together to understand the complexity of the issue in hand and improve practice, allowing individuals to step back from and reflect on their daily practice (Heron & Reason, 2008). I suggested a CI framework as it appeared a good fit for the social transformation agenda of the agreed research question (Mardis & Everhart, 2014). Furthermore, the focus in CI on understanding through interactions and on the value of ‘knowing through doing’ (Heron & Reason, 2008) appeared appropriate for our project.

This project report follows the AR stages of precursors, process/activities, AR outcomes and AR impact as outlined by Piggot-Irvine et al. (2015) (Figure 5). The report considers both what was produced by the project and the way in which the group worked together to make change. School-based AR is often focused on school-system level change. However this project, focuses on both system’s level change and the changes to individual’s understanding and professional practice. The project used CI as a focus for facilitating authentic collaboration with co-researchers within school, exploring the way in which Piggot-Irvine et al.’s framework supported our outcomes and the impact from the project.
Figure 5. The stages and activities of this cooperative inquiry

**Methodology**

*Understanding the Research Context – Secondary School*

The research school is a smaller than average-sized secondary school, in a mixed urban area, with 900 11-16 year old pupils. A 2014 Ofsted report summarises the relatively high proportion of students who are classed as disadvantaged, supported through additional pupil premium funding (DfE, 2014). The community of students from minority backgrounds is also high compared to other schools within this area, with greater percentage of students who speak English as an additional language and of Pakistani heritage. During 2016-17 there were 33 feeder primaries, which is considerably more than found in most high schools and adds a complexity to school’s transition processes. Two members of staff had been appointed in the previous year to led on transition (the head of lower school inclusion support officer).
Building the co-researcher group

The author’s University supervisor, who had existing links with the local authority, brokered the partnership between author and school. During a local authority meeting the assistant headteacher had discussed the school’s focus on improving transition, which prompted discussions about the use of AR to support transformation. Following this, I met school’s transition led staff, to gain background understanding of both the project proposal and the school. During this meeting we discussed the format for inquiry, considering both appreciative and cooperative inquiry. The transition lead staff thought that co-operative inquiry fit with the way in which the project would work within school. The participant/co-researcher sampling used a selective, convenience approach inviting colleagues who could speak to the diverse elements within the project (Cohen, Manion, Morrison, 2011). Confidentiality and anonymity parameters were agreed. Co-researchers were notified of their right to withdraw, that involvement was voluntary and there would be no repercussions within school if staff were unable to attend workshops, or not complete their involvement in the project. The project involved staff from different levels and departments across school.

Table 2: Summary of co-researcher involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cooperative Inquiry Group Co-researchers</th>
<th>Involvement in Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CI workshops</td>
<td>Evaluation focus group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Member checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Assistant head teacher for key stage 3 (KS3)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>KS3 inclusion support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie</td>
<td>Retired former feeder primary school headteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katya</td>
<td>Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annie</td>
<td>Senco 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail</td>
<td>Literacy Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>University action researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeline</td>
<td>Numeracy Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug</td>
<td>(replacement for Madeline)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Doug attended evaluation workshop as a replacement for Madeline, to discuss outcomes from the project.

I provided briefing sheets and participants were able to discuss the project with me, by telephone and in person before providing their consent ahead of the first workshop (Appendix 8). Co-researchers committed to six workshops, four CI workshops, an evaluation focus group and member checking across 2016-2018. Attempts were made to agree time and
resources for implementation of action between workshops with school leaders. Towards the end of the project, the numeracy co-ordinator went on maternity leave and there was a change of SENCo.

**Author's position**

This AR was conducted as part of doctorate research, within a participatory paradigm as my ethical stance (Heron & Reason, 1997). I value a subjective-objective knowing where we understand by working with others and reflecting, collectively and individually on those experiences. Acknowledging my position as outsider co-researcher, I sought to be transparent in both ontological and axiological position with the group. Careful thought was given to the process of AR itself, aiming for democracy, paying attention to any power imbalances. Knowledge generated within the project is seen as context dependent and co-constructed with others: a social constructionist epistemology. As the project was situated within the school context, it seemed vital to comprehend and take account of group/individual views around social/cultural factors impacting on system change within context.

**Negotiating the Project with the Group: Ethical Considerations**

I acquired ethical approval from the University of Manchester (see appendix 8). The suggested research proposal involved AR regarding the social needs of students at transition, focusing on the need for belonging. This plan was based on findings from an earlier study examining issues around transition in a high school with a mobile population (Euston, 2016). Initial discussions with school’s transition staff determined that this focus on social need was only one desired area for exploration, identifying mitigation of academic attainment dip post-transition was also salient. School had recently held a meeting with primary staff exploring how to bridge the gap in maths/English across transition. In addition they were also
considering how to make best use of the systemic or institutional systems which supported transition.

Outlining AR methodology/inquiry in detail ahead of full collaboration with participants has been likened to “Designing the plane whilst flying it!” (Herr & Anderson, 2005 p. 69). The focus for the research was negotiated and agreed with the group, based on the school’s needs. The guiding question was: *How can we build on existing good practice to improve primary to high school transition practice within academic, social and organisational systems?* Using the research question as a guide allowed for iteration of the project based on reflection following action (Stringer, 2008). The group agreed ground rules for the inquiry, based on shared aims and values seeking to maximise participation from the co-researching group. We also worked to successfully embed the project within existing school systems.

I proposed to engage year seven students as part of a co-researching sub-group, enabling YP to participate within AR, enabling them to contribute regarding their views on transition. However, there were a number of challenges faced by school in implementing this and an extremely low return rate for parental consent, which resulted in this element of the project being postponed.

The project sought to answer criticism of validity within AR by staying close to ethical considerations (Newton & Burgess 2016). Whilst this project sets out to be a democratic co-researching process embedded within one context, it is within the evaluation and write-up of the project that scientific findings can be examined, derived and communicated, ensuring self-reflective practice and being ethically and epistemologically transparent throughout the process (Marshall, 2001). With a clear show and tell of author and group analytic processes.
and exposition of the outcome from evaluation, the objective of academic rigor remains to the fore.

Data Gathering and Analysis

The AR group met for four AR workshops, described within the diagram, figure x. During workshops the co-researchers generated the data, through activities such as card sorts, sorting and grouping activities etc. In keeping with cooperative inquiry, the data was both generated and analysed with the co-researching group, as far as possible. This included presentational data, including sorting and grouping and rich picture data capture (Avison, Golder, Shah, 1992, appendix 11). The rich picture captured the experiential knowing (actions generated through activities during workshops and between inquiry phases) and practical/propositional knowing (increased skills and knowledge within our activities and actions). Appendix 9, a record of workshop is an amalgam of data generated within the group, notes by co-researchers during the workshop and notes made by myself in listening to the recording of the workshop. Appendix 9 is annotated to show the data which was generated by co-researchers within the group and the record completed between workshops. Each workshop commenced with review, discussion and agreement of rich picture and written record of previous workshop. Working in this way allowed co-researchers to be jointly responsible and involved in analysis throughout the project.

The purpose of the evaluation focus group was to reflect on the nature of participation within the four phases of cooperative inquiry. Before this meeting co-researchers were provided with an additional twenty minutes time to review all presentational data, set up around workshop room. The main themes from project analysis, and participatory experiences of co-researchers were generated cooperatively within the focus group, some notes were collected 72
within the group. I built on the themes collectively generated, conducting a thematic analysis of the evaluation focus group transcription. Kvale (1996) advocates a method of analysis which appeared the best fit in this case, where I reread transcripts and mined co-researcher co-constructed data to gain an impression of key and recurring themes. I provided initial descriptive codes from the evaluation workshop (Strauss & Corbin 1998). A further workshop allowed co-researchers to collaboratively generate and agree themes (see appendix 11) eliciting variations/inconsistencies and clarifying meaning, ensuring themes reflected individual and group perspectives. This co-construction of themes is in keeping with the epistemological standpoint regarding shared power within the research process (Reed, 2007). In exploring the themes identified in the evaluation, I also returned to specific sections of the AR process for a deeper interpretation of our discourse and actions, keeping close to the raw data to optimise authenticity (Yin, 2003) and build trustworthiness in the report of this AR.

**The core process of the group: activities and actions**

I participated in school’s transformative journey working collaboratively with staff as co-inquirers through action/reflection cycles as depicted in figure 6. Prior to the AR project
school staff had been involved in developing transition practice. They reflected that this had also involved planning, action and reflection and school continued to engage in cycles of action and reflection to continue the improvement agenda after completion of the current AR project.

Figure 6: School’s involvement in cycles of action and reflection

Heron and Reason (2008) explain that “In co-operative inquiry a group of people come together to explore issues of concern and interest. All members of the group contribute both to the ideas that go into their work together, and also are part of the activity that is being researched. Everyone has a say in deciding what questions are to be addressed and what ideas may be of help; everyone contributes to thinking about how to explore the questions; everyone gets involved in the activity that is being researched; and finally everybody has a say in whatever conclusions the co-operative inquiry group may reach.” The authors argue that transformation is at its best when there is congruence between experiential knowing,
presentational knowing (finding meaning from the interaction), propositional knowing (hypotheses on a subject) and practical knowing, (putting our practice into action). We acknowledged experiential knowing by allowing space to explore individuals’ views on transition practice and their perspectives on pupils’ experiences of transition (Heron & Reason, 2008). Presentational knowing took the form of accounts of action from individuals, recorded within a visual rich picture reflection within each workshop. By reflecting on our actions within the group in this way we hoped to deepen our understanding of the needs of the pupils to make a difference to them in their transition.

Through the required four stages of cooperative inquiry, staff took responsibility for actions between workshops, reflecting that most actions were successfully implemented improving on practical knowing. All records of workshops were member checked within subsequent workshops and we reflected on actions through presentational using a rich picture format. One example of deepening propositional knowing included our focus on parental engagement. The four stages of the cooperative inquiry are described below
Figure 7. The Process of the Cooperative Inquiry.
Project Impact – Parental engagement

The group raised parental engagement as an issue early in the process. Jack explained that ‘If the parents don’t engage with the school the students aren’t going to engage with the school and (it) underpins that lack of engagement … We’re working to improve that’. Through action and reflection, we decided to devote some time in a subsequent meeting to exploring parental engagement in depth. I supported further propositional knowing using a force field analysis (Swanson & Creed, 2014) (figure 7). I also introduced research indicating parent’s enhanced motivation to engage where specific invitations are made from school (Green, Walker, Hoover-Demsey & Sandler, 2007).

Figure 8. Force Field Analysis.

These new understandings prompted further actions including parental invitations to an additional transition day. The group also generated an idea for a family summer project.
considering the success of this within the evaluation below. Additionally, we agreed to ask pupils and parents to complete questionnaires rating their transition experience. Pupil questionnaires were shared with parents and analyses of pupil and parent questionnaire data was considered for future transition actions.

**Evaluation**

*Outcomes: Co-researchers perspective on change*

The evaluation focus group explored the outcomes and impact from the project, particularly looking at changes in perspective and the process and conditions which supported participation (presentational, propositional and experiential knowing). Additionally, the group considered their role in relation to new funding awarded to the Local Authority to improve transition for pupils from deprived backgrounds. The focus of this wider project and the groups’ role within it is considered in more detail in T3.

![Figure 9: Themes related to outcomes, from evaluation workshop](image)

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The thematic map (figure 8) represents the themes related to project outcomes as generated from the evaluation workshop. Within this evaluation we reviewed the actions from the project, both the rich picture representation and written summaries of each workshop. Jack explained that our rich picture reflection at the start of each workshop led to idea generation which enabled actions. He explained that he felt empowered to act ‘I can take that idea away and do something with it’. Co-researchers agreed that the project had allowed time for a greater focus on transition and that deeper understanding and new ideas led to improvements in transition practice. Annie maintained ‘It's been different and I feel it's worked much better, from my perspective, and the ideas generated around the table helped to put that plan into place’.

A new conceptualisation evolved during the workshops. During workshop 1 the initial group exercise considered the needs of pupils ahead of transition, identifying worries they might have and considering their needs before and during their transition (appendix 9). As time went on, co-researchers use of language around the effect of transition coalesced into thinking of this in terms of ‘flattening the hump’ (Jack), or avoiding ‘starting again’ (Madeline) or a ‘drop’ (Laura) describing the possible rupture posed by moving schools at this time (Crafter & Maunder, 2012). Our agreed response to this was to consider the ways in which this move might be experienced differently and to personalise our approach to meet pupil needs. As Emma explained ‘it’s not one size fits all so, we’ve developed (practice) as highly personalised as it can be with 200 students coming from 22 primaries’.

Co-researchers reflected that, through our deeper understanding, we sought to take account of the emotional needs of the pupils. ‘The bit seems to be very effective in this project around the affective and emotional aspect [of supporting transition]’ (Doug). Emma articulated what appeared to be group thinking about remaining ‘child-focused in all decisions’ to inform our
The group hoped that the focus on transition could be shared more widely across departments and other school systems. Evaluating our actions around parental engagement, we believed the summer project was not as successful as hoped, partially attributed to a lack of buy-in from other staff. We further considered opportunities for engagement with parents of new students at a settling-in evening which was organised for October 2017. ‘We also put on presentations … drop-ins for parents….. being available for Q&A.’ (Jack). My research diary reflected how this evening brought together the three strands of the project, paying attention to social, academic and institutional elements of transition.

Co-researchers contemplated the engagement with other school staff around transition, reflecting that more work is required to mitigate any impact on academic performance from transition. We hoped to engage others with this work. Julie explained how ‘we need to bottom out what happens in terms of academic transition because I still feel there's a little bit of a gap there’. The group agreed that this required more work with colleagues from Maths and English departments as well as collaboration between primary and secondary school colleagues. As Emma explained it was hoped to ‘develop this parity between the secondary and the primary and (build on) this collegiality’. However, Jack and Julie also explained the importance of involving school leaders in any future work across systems. As Julie proposed ‘maybe getting at and talking to your school leaders first of all and explaining (the project) to them. You need to get at that level’. So, whilst collaboration was a model the group felt had worked well within our project, they recognised the buy-in from other leaders would be required to roll this model out more widely.

In a previous workshop, Jack had reflected on the difficulties faced in communicating actions from the project to the wider school. He felt that staff workloads meant they were not prioritising awareness of the
project, He thought staff were thinking ‘You're doing a great job. I've got things to do as well’. Within the same discussion Annie perceived the disinterest was related to staff working just on their area ‘because people’s jobs are so specific’ She went onto say we don’t want to be sharing information with people who don’t care’.

**Outcomes: evaluating of the process of participation**

![Participation Diagram](image)

Figure 10 The broader inquiry, evaluating participation within action research to make school changes

Through the evaluation workshop and written responses, co-researchers reflected on what had enabled us to take actions. The participation thematic map (figure 9) represents the key themes generated by the co-researching group. We considered whether the project enacted the participative values agreed at the outset of the project. The group agreed that we came together through a shared child-focused aim. ‘The children have always got to be at the heart of it’ (Abigail). We went onto discuss what enabled us to take action, with Abigail suggesting how co-researchers came to the group with a passion to improve transition, explaining that there was a ‘natural desire, isn't there, around the table to make sure
transition is as best and seamless as it can possibly be.’ The functioning of the group was also highlighted in another theme, where co-researchers acknowledged how trust between group members lead to the conviction that actions would take place between workshops. ‘There has to be a degree of trust and a degree of professionalism that people will follow through with what they have’ (Jack).

Co-researchers communicated that the group was enhanced by individual skills/ knowledge and qualities. Jack described how it ‘Has been a very good recipe […] for tapping in on individual people's expertise’. Laura outlined how those individual contributions lead to the ‘alchemy of idea generation’ and onward actions within the group. Whilst Julie recognised that the dynamics of the group worked best when all were present ‘Sometimes some of our number have been missing, and we haven't been able to move, I didn't feel, anyway, quite as swiftly on those occasion.’

Figure 1: Adapted from a model of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1969)

Egalitarianism and collaboration was a theme raised or confirmed by all and I asked the group to consider our participation against a model of citizen participation (figure 10 above, 82
Arnstein, 1969). Julie explained that she felt ‘it was quite collegiate in the beginning really, opinion mattered and there was a great deal of listening to each other wasn't there?’ Emma echoed this stating ‘I could say what I felt’. Co-researchers also credited this collaboration as the catalyst for change ‘I think it's been a really nice experience for everybody to chip in. Well, I think this. Well, I'll do that’ (Annie). When considering the future Jack reflected how the collaborative nature of our project could be effective for interacting with other elements of the system.

At the end of the process Julie believed that ‘we've grown as a group….. I feel differently today sitting around the table than I did in the initial meeting’. Emma summarised how ‘the composition of the group changed during the project due to staffing changes, (yet) the opinions and views of new members were held to be equally valuable to those who had been part of the project since the beginning’. Whilst all agreed that no one had overall power and control, we reflected that elements of our action/reflection required knowledge from a leader. ‘I think we've needed a leader and yourself (Laura) sometimes as well to keep us focused and also to put additional information on the table that the rest of us didn't know.’ (Abigail). We agreed that, by creating this egalitarian working relationship, the project felt owned by the group. Julie expressed how she felt we had ‘an ownership of the group as well, and a commitment to it’ whilst Jack explained how collaboration allowed ideas and actions to flourish.

‘What a number of us have gone away and done or taken is as a result of what something somebody else has said. I can't tell you how many times someone else has said something I would never have thought myself and I thought ….. I can take that idea away and do something with it’ (Jack).
The co-researchers also reflected upon how the group model could be replicated for working across other systems. As Julie suggested ‘We've done a lot of background work on this to save people time and to structure it up and say, ‘Well, this is a model. We've done a year's work on this, not two minutes’, with Abigail agreeing that the collaborative group work was a ‘model of good practice’ to share with others.

**Discussion**

*Evaluating outcomes: the impact of participation*

This cooperative inquiry involved a group of school professionals, seeking to collaborate through cycles of action and reflection to make positive changes to school transition practice. The outcomes for the project (perspectives of practice change and participatory experiences) were collectively evaluated alongside reviewing the effectiveness of the project within the focus group, written reflections from co-researchers and author self-reflexive journal (Piggot-Irvine et al., 2015).

As an outsider researcher I set out to empower co-researchers to take ownership of the project within their context, building on their desire to improve their practice and to enable them to continue to develop after the end of the short project (Bridges & Meyer, 2006). My reflections highlighted how we attended to and negotiated changes within the project between ourselves, whilst staying true to the inquiry focus (Herr & Anderson, 2005). It is suggested that this flexibility regarding process enabled co-researcher participation and project ownership by the group. This ownership resulted in the project being able to continue and extend involvement to the wider local authority work, a sustainable model which Piggot-Irvine et al. (2015) suggest is a key indicator for effective AR.

Stevenson, Dixon, Hopkins, Luyt (2015) described how ‘participation leads to an increased
sense of self-efficacy, personal and organisational empowerment as well as an enhanced critical understanding of the local socio-political environment’ (p.7). In our project our participation enabled greater understanding of the transition needs of the child within their context (family, school, community, cultural, etc.) and resulted in thinking about other elements of the school where improvements could also support a better transition for pupils - in particular, this was enacted within the actions around parental engagement. Our child-focused values were a thread running through the project and the benchmark by which we judged our ideas, actions and subsequent reflections. This core focus coalesced into actions aiming at personalised transition and allowed the group to consider the facilitators and barriers to this within the school and wider environment. Throughout the project there was a focus on conceptualising the aims and values of the group and the project and co-researchers agreed that the desire to make change and the motivations for action were driven from this shared understanding.

Notwithstanding the shared aims, values and group ownership co-researchers recognised that sometimes our resources had an impact on the project. The absence of some key staff at certain stages in the project resulted in fewer or less effective outcomes across the academic strand of work or with some new initiatives. The group agreed that resources played a part in difficulties with the summer holiday (parental engagement) project and with working collaboratively with primary colleagues. However, staff were hopeful that the stakeholder networks created within the newly funded local authority project would provide resources to support further collaboration and remove some of the resource barriers to collaboration found within our project.
The challenge of participation.

With participation oft cited as the central tenet of AR (Reason & Bradbury, 2008) I sought to embed participatory practice and keep it to the fore in decision-making throughout the project. Group evaluation of both the process and experience of participation within our CI outlined the elements that enabled the group to function together. Reflections seem to suggest that as individuals and a group, co-researchers were suitably empowered, by role and experience, to participate in the project. Thus, whilst participation was achieved, to some extent, the disparities within the group of power and responsibility were minimised by the choice of individuals to participate within the group. Arieli and Friedman (2009) described this as a ‘paradox of participation’ where action researchers wish to empower marginalised/disempowered groups, yet those groups may not yet have the skill or time to participate fully (p.263). For this project these stumbling blocks were apparent within the difficulties seeking pupil involvement in the project. Whilst this was initially seen as a failure within our project aims, we later reflected that it is likely to be more effective if we include students at a point where resources were available to enable their authentic participation in the transition project (Messiou, 2010).

This project sought to enact participative values and the group reflected that they experienced the project as collaborative and egalitarian. However, time and resources limited the opportunity to explicitly discuss and reflect on our participation and group relationships so much during the four workshops. My research diary often contained reflections on the participatory process: whereas co-researcher evaluation focused on improved transition practice, perhaps reflecting the action focus within the project. This focus on participation could be argued to be particularly important where there were changes to personnel within the project (Lind, 2013). Personnel changed at the fourth workshop and their introduction
involved a quick review of the project and ground rules. Within our evaluation, co-
researchers voiced their belief that the project fortuitously continued with little deviation
following co-researcher change.

The systematic review of the literature highlighted the importance of allowing time to agree
the extent and process of participation, building co-researcher skills/knowledge to participate
within the research project within their context. Preparatory work, establishing individual and
group needs for partnership, can lead to unambiguous contracting of the role of co-
researchers at all stages of the project, which Greenwood and Kelly (2017) argue can support
group formation. I would have preferred to spend time with co-researchers in collectively
analysing data, whereas it was clear from the outset that co-researchers had limited time they
could commit, which resulted in a member-checking workshop to agree the themes and
analysis I generated from the evaluation focus group. This account makes explicit co-
researcher participation, clarifying the aims for our project, but also the reality of group
participation within the resources and time available in school, for example attendance at
workshops and time for action impacted participation and outcomes for the project. This is in
keeping with Bradbury-Huang’s (2010) suggestion that clear exposition of the extent and
process of participation contributes to wider practice knowledge within the AR field.

**Participation leading to change – Changes in perspective impacting partnerships and wider systems.**

Piggot-Irvine et al. (2015) recommend considering impact by way of changes to the context,
new programmes and partnerships and knowledge mobilization (the latter is discussed in T3).
Participation within an action and reflection model supports a standpoint where ‘reality’, is
temporary, at one moment in time, located in a particular context and systems change within
the context is possible (Reason & Bradbury, 2008b). As McAteer (2013) describes ‘Action research makes the demand for critical reflection on practice, and theory-practice conversations but it also designates ongoing and evolving action as part of the process’ (p.12). Through agreeing expectations at the outset and the commitment to the continual, interactive process of action and reflection, co-researchers had permission to be immersed in taking action between workshops. The practical knowing of our action appears to have been enhanced by ideas generated with presentational approaches by way of rich picture reflections. It was further into the project that our propositional knowing took shape, for example, when using a force field analysis framework to deepen our knowledge of effective parental engagement, which led to one of the main change strands within the project (Swanson & Creed, 2014). Subsequently we were able to consider issues and their interaction with systems/contexts in a new way (Heron & Reason, 2008). The interactions between transition practice and school and other systems were dynamic and multifaceted throughout the life of project. The group experienced a change in thinking about our interactions across systems, considering how to communicate the messages we wanted to share more widely.

**Ecological System for Our Cooperative Inquiry**

Figure 12. Ecological system for our cooperative inquiry.
Borrowing from Bronfenbrenner’s (1977) ecological theory, and building on a model described by Stringer (2007) (figure 11), our CI can be seen as a nested arrangement. The co-researcher group is at the core interacting (as a group and in their individual job roles) with the immediate school environment and the wider contexts of the feeder primary schools and the local authority. The group raised some challenges of working with these wider systems. Co-researchers appeared to favour a didactic model for communicating outcomes, where we had the knowledge and had a duty to inform others. Terhart (2013) argues that whilst change within schools often follows such an information-giving approach it is often met with resistance from school staff. It is therefore helpful to consider other models for change.

It was only within the evaluation workshop, when exploring the success of this project through collaboration that co-researchers reflected on the benefits of a participatory, approach to effect change within other elements of school and wider systems. We moved from considering how change is done to others (and other systems) to thinking how best we can collaborate across systems to make positive transformations. This included considering our interactions with students, parents, primary schools and the local authority. The theme of participation was to the fore in dissemination at the local authority transition project launch event. My journal reflections from this event detail that Jack fed back on our project outlining how participation and collaboration were key themes which could be utilised to good effect when working across systems (for example collaboration between primary and high school teachers). Martin (2001) proposes that participants need support from within their system to continue transformation through collaboration. This was recognised by the group in the
evaluation workshop where we discussed getting ‘buy-in’ from senior leaders in primary schools to further our collaboration across systems.

First, Second and Third Person Enquiry.

Reflecting on this project utilises a model frequently cited as central to completion of AR projects, that of first, second and third person practice (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). At the heart of these reflections is the idea of critical reflexivity, which Heron and Reason (1997) posit is integral to working with the four ways of knowing within cooperative inquiry. My reflexivity throughout this process was influenced by findings from the systematic literature review. At the outset and within my reflections I was concerned with how my actions and interactions could engender authentic participation for the group and how this presented itself within the inquiry cycle. This first-person inquiry was evident in my research diary where I described moments of perceived genuine collaboration, for example, in workshop two I stepped back from the facilitation role as the group took over, generating and considering ideas collectively, around improving parental engagement.

In addition to this I frequently discussed my own role as facilitator within supervision, allowing that objective perspective gained from discussion with others, central to first-person inquiry (Torbert, 2001). These discussions considered how to overcome barriers caused by school hierarchies, and I reflected on small frustrations related to relinquishing pre-conceived ideas that I had for quality AR practice. For example, I was conscious during the project of the mono-cultural participant sample. I was, therefore, keen to ensure that the YP who were involved were both representative of the school community and were enabled to authentically participate. From discussion in supervision, I accepted that the group and school were at the early stages of collaborating with YP and the goal of pupil involvement in the project was something for the group to take forward in future action/reflection cycles. Action research
involves developing a shared agenda involving starting from where people are and
recognising the context within which the project is sited (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). This
examination of participation within action research is within a context where student voice is
sited within the prevailing UK school culture where students are consumers of education and
real efforts to encourage participation of students as valued stakeholders is less in evidence
(Fielding, 2016). The context for this school included very little participation of young
people within school systems beyond an active school council. However, working with
young people on projects such as restorative justice and peer were at early stages of
development.

This project worked with a small group within school and the project members were able to
influence decision-making within the wider school in relation to transition, as they had a
clear leadership remit in this area. However the group reflected on their limited role in
influencing any other school decision-making factors. For example within discussions on
parental engagement we considered the importance of building relationships with parents
where students displayed behaviour at school deemed to be problematic. Co-researchers
considered the need for staff training for pastoral staff who have frequent interactions with
parents, however felt that this would have to be a more long-term objective, as they had little
influence over school’s priorities for staff training.

In the write-up of this project I have reflected that the propositional knowledge articulated by
the group may be limited by the lack of participant diversity and the lack of involvement of
other groups within the school system (e.g. parents, pupils). The project would have
benefited from further time in which to build the inquiry with the YP and extend the project
to involve others, such as within the wider school community, e.g. primary/high school staff
and parents. I have considered the changes made to perceptions of participation within a
model of change as developed by Prochaska, Diclimente & Norcross (1992). This model, initially developed to represent the stages of change for individuals experiencing addiction, has successfully been applied, more widely to consider the stages of behaviour change in a range of fields (Xiao, Newman, Prochaska, Leon, Bassett, & Johnson, 2004). The authors suggest that change can only take place where individuals are able to see the value of this change (they are contemplative of change) and that people do not progress in a linear way through stages of change (precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance) (Prochaska et al., 1992). As depicted in figure 13 below Prochaska et al (1992) consider change as cyclical, with behaviour change often going through a contemplation, action, relapse cycle. In considering utterances and observations of co-researchers at the outset of the project, the group appeared pre-contemplative of full participation, being wary of involving others (parents or young people) within decision-making about transition in school. As the project progressed, we considered how to gather others’ views. As a starting point we agreed to involve young people in an experiential school walk to gather their views of transition. School staff took on the role of gathering consent and assent for this, however gathering consent from parent/carers proved difficult and additional staff resources were not made available to prioritise removing this barrier. Our reflections in workshop two and three identified that this barrier indicated a lack of parental engagement with school, a factor we prioritised for discussion/action. Within the final stages of the project the group considered how others within the wider community could be meaningfully involved in the project and co-researchers stressed the value of collaboration within this, demonstrating the change in thinking and their agency to take action in this area.
Second-person practice was to the fore within the CI ground rules for the project and through our collective evaluation. Analysis of our sessions alongside other data revealed congruence between utterances and the actions of the group. This harmony between discourse and effect is argued to be a critical element of second person inquiry (Torbert, 2001) engendering trust between parties and facilitating agency of co-researchers. The trust created, actions taken and ownership of the project by the group are all signs of a high performing CI/AR group (Piggot-Irvine et al., 2015). These elements enabled the group to consider the benefits of working collaboratively through cycles of action and reflection, leading to individual and group belief in the utility of such a model of work to effect change (Heron & Reason, 2008). My reflections, alongside those of co-researchers indicate that the goal of co-researcher participation was achieved between myself and the co-researching group. This project is seen within the context of an initial inquiry cycle and school were in a position to continue these inquiry cycles beyond the timeline of the project, involving other stakeholders within
the ongoing wider project of improving school transition.

It was within our ability to reflect openly on the positive/negative impact on actions between workshops that changes in perspective around transition and greater shared understanding seemed to arise. Nevertheless more time was needed within and at the end of the project to establish this impact. One co-researcher expressed their preference for numerical impact measurement, in keeping with U.K. educational accountability systems (Hodkinson, 2016). This shows that whilst individuals had shifted their thinking about how cooperative inquiry type projects can effect change, some still recognised that they were located within systems which privilege and prioritise numerical data as evidence of impact. Further discussion could have aided our understanding of the pros and cons of different ways of measuring impact, opening the debate from the narrow prevailing discourse for hierarchical authoritative leadership frameworks, where accountability by statistical measurement is pervasive (Courtney, McGinty & Gunter, 2017). Reason and Bradbury (2008b) contend that it is in our third person practice that action researchers create our ‘wider community of inquiry’ (p.6). By staying close to ethical standards and seeking to show and tell both process and outcome, using the evaluation model outlined by Piggot-Irvine et al (2015), it is hoped that future projects will benefit from understanding the exposition on the process, outcomes and impacts for both improving transition practice and encouraging participation within school-based AR.

The concept of collaborative leadership is useful for considering the impact of our third person inquiry across wider systems within the research context. Group member’s self-efficacy around making change and building collaborative networks increased throughout the project. Nonetheless, wider systems change requires further work to espouse the benefits of collaboration for change, across school, feeder primary school and local authority systems.
Group understanding and ownership of the project appeared to induce a clearer ontological understanding around collaborative practice and agency for change, where researchers changed their thinking and felt able to share the importance of collaboration (with all stakeholders) to effect positive change. This enabled a more coherent message around how change could take place in communication with others, which Stevenson et al., (2015) argue is essential in convincing others of our message and in effective professional collaboration (Edwards, 2006). However, co-researchers were also rooted within existing systems and there were a number of contradictions between bottom up collaborative change and hierarchical educational leadership systems, and between a social constructivist approach to effecting change and positivist evaluation of the impact from that change, expected from the wider context (Hodkinson, 2016). A future focus on evaluating the impact from this research may be needed to convince leaders and policy makers of the value of working in this way to effect change within multi-faceted, complex systems such as schools.

**Conclusion**

The active participation of school staff as co-researchers enabled a deepening understanding of the issue under investigation and changed school practice. Through evaluation, co-researchers identified three key outcomes from the project. Firstly cooperative inquiry cycles of action and reflection allowed for clearer group knowledge of transition needs and this generated actions to improve practice, attempting to flatten the transition hump we identified. Secondly, in reflecting on their involvement in the project co-researchers recognised that we had shared values and aims (a group recipe) and a focus on working collaboratively which allowed all co-researchers to participate. We perceived that this shared purpose also supported the improvements and actions taken. Finally we identified the utility of AR to effect change in schools. Whilst the project effected change within transition processes, the original goal of our research, the deepening understanding of the benefits of collaborative change (in the project and for future change) was a powerful secondary outcome from the project. As Kennedy (2014) outlines, a community of practice model, involving projects such as AR have something to offer to change practices within school. AR has the power to
enhance knowledge and skills through social theories of learning, enabling understanding and change through interactions across systems and can be a powerful force for change.
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T3.: The dissemination of evidence to professional practice
Introduction

This paper explores the dissemination of findings from the literature review and empirical study within this thesis, alongside considering how evidence from research can be disseminated to inform practice. The first paper was a thematic synthesis of evidence from projects where action researchers facilitated participation with adult and adolescent co-researchers in education. The empirical paper took learning from these findings, applying it to AR in a school investigating how to improve school practice for year six to seven transition. This dissemination paper starts with an overview of the field of evidence-based practice and moves onto consider how best to disseminate research findings to maximise impact and utility. Finally the dissemination strategy for this thesis research will be outlined and considered in relation to research impact and integration within educational psychology practice. Whilst this paper is written sequentially after both the systematic literature review and the empirical research the dissemination activities have been considered from the outset of the project. As described by ACTL (Association, Teaching and Learning) (Hinton, Gannaway, Berry, & Moore, 2011), plans for research projects ought to consider dissemination, outlining any intended impacts and benefits and clarifying key stakeholders within the project.

Overview of evidence-based practice

Theoretical understanding of evidence-based practice came from the field of evidence-based medicine and has been defined as ‘The conscientious explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients’ (Sackett, Rosenberg, Gray, Haynes & Richardson, 1996 p.71). This theoretical framework has been widened to other professions, such as social work (Drisko & Grady, 2015), therapeutic work (Barkham & Mellor-Clark, 2003) and clinical psychology (Lilienfeld, Ammirati, & David, 2012). One key
paper defines EBP in applied psychology ‘defined as the integration of the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics, culture, and preferences.’ (Goodheart 2006).

Lilienfield et al (2010) suggest a ‘3 legged stool’ model of EBP (p. 885). Where research evidence, (1 leg of the stool) is applied in conjunction with practitioner expertise taking into account the client’s values and needs. A number of authors considering EBP attest to the critical nature of practitioner skills in interpreting the best research evidence within their practice (Goodheart, 2006). The reader needs to be able to consider a range of factors including:

- The weight that is afforded to different research methodologies within research publications
- The representativeness of the sample that the research is based on and
- The applicability to the person/group/organisation that they are working with

Within educational psychology, Frederickson (2002) tackled the issue of educational psychologists (EPs) and EBP, arguing for an increased focus on the application of best research evidence within EP practice. Frederickson made the case for the importance of all types of research evidence; for example randomised controlled trials, which hope to limit the impact of other variables in order to determine correlations or causation between a number of variables. She argued this type of evidence serves the purpose of establishing the efficacy of an intervention. On the other hand case studies and qualitative methods may present an opportunity to understand effects within real world settings. Additionally, Florczak (2016)
suggests that some judgement about research quality is important, specifically considering sample size and replicated studies as high quality.

Criticisms raised of the level of practitioner understanding of best research evidence are focused on the lack of research education provided to professionals within the psychological, and health related fields (Kratchowill & Shernoff, 2004). In nursing, for example, Cullen, Titler and Rempel (2011) argued that there is a requirement for additional practitioner training to implement research in practice, setting up a training programme to support nurses in this regard. Whilst Burnham (2013) makes the case for educational psychologists as bricoleurs, maintaining a knowledge of theories and findings from across the research spectrum and using supervision to bring rigor to decisions around implementing research in practice.

It is widely acknowledged that the best available evidence for efficacy of particular interventions comes from meta-analyses or systematic reviews of large – scale randomised controlled trials (RCT), where the evidence supports treatment for particular conditions (Burnham, 2013). Models of EBP tend to endorse a positivist view of evidence. The model (figure 12) represents Glover, Izzo, Odato and Wang’s (2016) hierarchy of research evidence, suggesting that practitioners should prioritise papers from the top of the pyramid.
Lilienfeld et al. (2012) go onto suggest reasons why EBP (based on accepted research quality orthodoxy) is, whilst fallible, the best available system for proving the efficacy of interventions. Critiques of such a hierarchical model evaluate assumptions around quality and expose some of the difficulties of relying on RCT and systematic reviews. RCT involves removal of a situation from the real world to limit any interfering variables, however by doing so it poses potential difficulties for applying the findings of (often laboratory research) to real world settings (Frederickson, 2002).

Thompson, McCaughan, Cullum, Sheldon and Raynor (2005) suggest a 5-stage model for clinical decision-making using best research evidence within health related fields. They recommend that practitioners:

- Identify a clinical question in response to a need
Search for the most appropriate evidence

Critically appraise this evidence

Incorporate the evidence into strategy for action

Evaluate the effects of the decision making

Hillage, Pearson, Anderson and Tamkin (1998) acknowledge the difficulties faced by practitioners within the field in scanning, identifying and implementing research from a diverse and sometimes difficult to navigate research base. Furthermore, Frederickson (2002) argues that using EBP within psychology involves considering real world application, understanding that the myriad variables of someone’s situation and context can limit the utility of laboratory-based findings. EP’s judgement and application in applying psychology findings to our real world contexts requires a more complex process involving other layers of both objective and subjective judgement. It is contended that EPs need to participate in double loop learning (Agyris, 2002) not simply finding a theory testing and evaluating it, but thinking about the theoretical underpinnings and questioning the decision-making rules to better understand whether an outcome is truly positive or potentially harmful. Kennedy & Monsen, (2016) advocate a problem-based methodology considering the accuracy, effectiveness, coherence and improvability of interventions for problems to further understanding in application of theory in action.

Much of the writing around evidence-based practice is focused on treatment for an individual with defined ‘conditions’ (Dunsmuir, Brown, Lyadurai & Monsen 2009). However, as EPs we are dealing with multi-faceted individuals within complex systems. Key themes relating to practitioner research skills are repeated within papers across fields (clinical psychology,
medicine, nursing and school psychology (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2003, Thompson et al., 2005). Practitioners need expertise to understand and interpret the research evidence available and apply this to real world situations. Furthermore, where researchers and practitioners work closely together, there is greater opportunity for dissemination of findings to improve impact in the real world.

Within School Psychology in the USA, Kratochwill and Shernoff (2003) detail the following strategy to apply to research evidence in practice. They recommend School psychologists:

- Work together in networks to share practice-research findings
- Create opportunities for developing the skills required to evaluate best research to implement in practice.
- Establish guidelines for implementing and evaluating evidence-based practice

Fox (2011) details the lack of clarity from the British Psychological Society (BPS) regarding the use of evidence in practice. He argues that BPS professional competences for practitioner psychologists focuses on their role as researchers, rather than their skills as scientist practitioners in choosing the best evidence to apply to real world situations. Fox argues that practitioner psychologists have a duty to find a middle ground between application of evidence from rigorous scientific methods and pragmatic decisions regarding what feels the best fit for the practical problem at hand. It is possible that action research (AR) with its focus on action within context is a methodology which can fill this gap (Reason & Bradbury, 2008).
Taking on board the arguments as described above, it is incumbent on practitioners to learn from implementing evidence in practice to inform their work. Hughes (2008) argues that when 'decisions go beyond patho-physiological concerns and when multi-professional teams work with complex problems, new situations or whole systems, evidence-based practice is too narrowly defined to support credible and effective practice.' (p.387) and practice-based evidence is outlined as an essential part of the toolkit of practitioner psychologists (Barkham & Mellor, 2003).

Fox (2011) takes this argument further, detailing how EPs need to be involved in a range of research types to complement professional practice. He went onto explain the EP role in influencing change within multi-layered systems where we can work with the actors within their system. As Reason and Bradbury (2008) contend, it is within this multi-layered context specific position that AR can best be used. Wilson & Holt outline how complexity theory offers an explanation of the utility of AR in systemic situations. Complexity theory argues that where complex adaptive systems exist the number of agents of change and relationships lead to patterns of interactions. Wilson and Holt argue that when considering research in such contexts, actors within systems may best understand their role within the complex system, by working with research based within their systems and seeking to understand perspectives of others in relation to the system and its patterns (2001). This understanding of interactions between actors and their systems can be used to characterise a participatory AR paradigm.

Action researchers are in a unique position of being able to work with stakeholders within their environment, providing the scientific framework on which the problem or research area can be studied. It is also incumbent on the researcher to provide a report of the research
which contributes to the body of knowledge within the field and stands up to scrutiny as a trustworthy account of the research process (Bradbury-Huang, 2010). The link between such quality research and positive outcomes is found in a review by Viswanathan et al. (2004). They reviewed 1408 AR studies, concluding that when best quality research and optimum participatory practices were in evidence, the papers appeared to detail the best research outcomes.

The issue under consideration within this paper was a multi-faceted one involving a number of interacting systems. Action research appeared the best fit, working both at a practice-based evidence level and providing a record and interpretation of the empirical study to inform evidence for future practice. This paper moves onto to consider how to disseminate research to ensure that it can inform developments to practice, adding to the evidence available for others within the educational psychology, research or education communities.

**Overview: Disseminating research and assessing impact**

Rabin, Brownson, Haire-Joshu, Kreuter & Weaver (2008) describe dissemination as ‘an active approach of spreading evidence-based interventions to the target audience via determined channels using planned strategies’ (p. 118). Professional Standards of Proficiency for EPs (Health and Care Professions Standards (HCPC), 2015) declare that evaluation and dissemination of research, working with stakeholders, is an intrinsic part of the research process.

Best practice in disseminating research findings has come under close attention in the last decade (Wilson, Pettigrew, Calnan & Nazareth, 2010). Protocols, strategies and approaches have been suggested within fields termed dissemination science, implementation science (Brownson, Coditz & Proctor, 2012) or knowledge transfer (World Health Organisation, 2015).
2014) amongst others. Authors agree on the need for researchers to consider how to share the research knowledge, including the way in which the knowledge produced through the research can influence practice (National Children’s Bureau, 2017). The goal of dissemination and implementation findings to appropriate contexts allows for a return on the investment in the research and can effect positive change on the basis of the research (Brownson, Colditz, & Proctor, 2017) proving utility and applicability of research findings.

Knowledge transfer within education.

The National Children’s Bureau (2017) produced a report which outlines their framework for disseminating research within education, relevant to this thesis. This is based on a model of knowledge transfer considering dissemination as a process of awareness raising, then raising understanding, finally leading to action for change.

The authors explain that there are relatively few models for dissemination within education and reference the D-cubed model provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (Hinton et al., 2011) (appendix 12). D-cubed provides helpful questions to consider in disseminating AR and the three elements of this model are used to consider dissemination of this thesis research. This model suggests consideration of the readiness for change within context, engaging with stakeholders throughout the project and working to transfer knowledge of outcomes from the research (Hinton et al., 2011).

Research Impact

When judging the change made as a result of research it is useful to consider the concept of research impact. The UK Research and Innovation fund (2018), which funds a significant amount of higher education research, defines research impact as ‘the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy’ (p.1). They provide a
helpful distinction between

- **Academic impact** – What is the contribution to science, assessing whether the research furthers our understanding around theory, methodology or practice? and
- **Wider economic and societal impacts** – is there a measurable benefit to individuals, organisations or wider systems from the outcome and dissemination of the research?

The purpose of publication is to further understanding of the topics investigated (authentic participation with students and adults in school and using cooperative inquiry to investigation school transition practice with staff) and the utility of AR in such situations. The peer-reviewed journal selected for dissemination of paper one is Action Research. This was felt to be the best fit for the systematic literature review as the paper utilises the journal’s own quality criteria (Bradbury-Huang, 2010) to review the papers within the selection for thematic synthesis. There was a gap in the literature for thematic synthesis of AR and only a small number of papers within the journal provide meta-information on AR (Chen, Huang & Seng, 2017).

The theme of participation arising from the second paper initially prompted consideration of Action Research for publication. However, on reflection one aim of the project was to reach a wider audience within the educational community. This precipitated the choice of Educational Action Research. Moreover an international conference which has been selected for presentation is the companion conference to accompany Educational Action Research. This journal and conference offers a forum for disseminating papers exploring both the outcomes and methodological approaches of AR within schools. Co-researcher partnership as a theme is to the fore within both journals, as there is a shared epistemology relating to a participatory paradigm, doing research with rather than on people/communities. Author
guidelines for both journals are included at appendix 1 and 2.

Both journals are highly relevant for the subject area and the AR community. Academic research impact can sometimes be narrowly defined as publication in peer reviewed journals of good standing, i.e. those which have a high impact rating or citation score for published papers (Watkins & Chan-Park, 2014). Whilst both journals selected have good impact ratings for AR publications, wider societal impact is the aim of the research, both within the action taken within the AR empirical paper and the use of findings from paper one and two by EPs, action researchers or education professionals. Thinking about wider economic and societal impact dovetails with dissemination of the third person understanding from the action research paper (Torbert, 2001) which is explored in detail below.

**Implications from research influencing the Dissemination Strategy**

The findings from paper one and two have led to complementary yet varied dissemination strategies. Key findings for diffusion activities across both papers relate to the participatory practices reported which sought to facilitate authentic co-researcher participation. Whilst paper one has this participatory focus within findings, the key difference involves the focus on facilitating participation when working in co-researcher groups with young people and adults. Paper two acts on this and evaluates the experience of participation for adult co-researchers. Findings from paper two also relate to the outcomes specific to the focus of our research, primary/high school transition.

The conclusions from the systematic literature review have relevance to school-based AR with adults and young people and, more widely, for collaborative projects within education.
Findings relate to the conditions which facilitate participation, considering contextual, interpersonal, inter and intra group factors. The synthesis from themes suggests that action researchers will benefit from better understanding of individual and group needs of co-researchers at the outset of a project. Furthermore hierarchical models of participation (e.g. Hart, 1992) do not offer a framework for understanding, contracting and evaluating the multi-faceted nature of co-researcher participation. Greater egalitarian participation is realised where action researchers negotiate the group’s needs (at the outset and throughout) and provide the resources to meet the needs for authentic partnerships (Lind, 2007).

Paper two sought to enact key recommendations from the systematic literature review, in particular contracting the extent and process for participation with the adult co-researching group and evaluating their experiences of participation. As with paper one, the findings from this research are relevant for action researchers working with education related co-researcher groups. There is also a wider audience of educational professionals and policy makers. Dissemination for this empirical paper is integrated within the communication around this project. We considered our dissemination during the AR process and taking account of the group’s interactions with the wider systems in which it was sited.

**Dissemination Strategy**

The original thesis proposal was to involve young people as co-researchers within the empirical AR project. As a result the initial paper reviewed the literature for AR projects which involve both adults and young people. However, there were a number of challenges to involving young people in the school-based AR project to be resolved before involving young people in school’s transition project. Consequently some of the themes are not shared within both papers, which has led to some divergence in findings which affect dissemination.
Nonetheless both the first and second paper explore issues around participation in AR, meaning audience for dissemination of both papers overlaps significantly.

This participatory theme also allows the opportunity for sharing findings from both papers at conference. The conference selected, ‘Collaborative Action Research Network’ has as this year’s theme ‘Voicing and Valuing: Daring and Doing’ which is a good fit for the dissemination of research exploring participatory practice in schools. The conference presentation involves colleagues from the University of Manchester who have also explored participation with young people within their research. Further conference options are being pursued.

Alongside dissemination through peer-reviewed journal and conference I am able to disseminate both my literature review and empirical paper within the educational psychology service where I work, which is the largest EPS in England. A workshop is booked at a future team CPD day. This will allow the opportunity to present findings and to consider how EPs could use these findings to conduct AR with authentic participation involving both young people and adults in school. The understanding of conditions and elements that can support authentic participation is the key legacy from the project.

**Dissemination: Paper One**

Dissemination of paper one sits more closely within the academic sphere and dissemination. The author has considered the main findings which are salient to disseminate, in particular considering findings relevant for different audiences (Harmsworth & Turpin, 2001). Dissemination activities are described in table 3 below, following the awareness, understanding, action staged model for dissemination (King, 2003). Awareness and understanding activities are focused on publication, presentation as previously described and
awareness raising both with schools and with EPs, for use in school. The author is seeking to present to other doctoral researchers within the University of Manchester, as part of a president’s doctoral scholarship scheme.

Findings from this thematic synthesis relate to participation of adult and YP as co-researchers were disseminated and implemented as part of the AR (paper two). Co-researcher understanding from this research impacted decisions about how and when to involve young people, ensuring their participation was not tokenistic. The same findings around working with adults and young people within school are useful to a new AR project which being established at a school for which I am the link trainee EP (TEP). Within the planning of this new project findings from paper one were shared to inform the contracting of working with YP within this project.

Table 3: Thematic Synthesis dissemination strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of dissemination</th>
<th>Dissemination approach</th>
<th>Brief description</th>
<th>Dissemination activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To raise awareness</td>
<td>Transmission</td>
<td>Sharing the T1 research with: Educational psychologists School professionals Action researchers</td>
<td>Information sharing for AR involving YP at two schools Presentation to EPS Publication in Action research journal Presentation at CARN conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For understanding</td>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>Individuals who have read and understood the systematic literature review use the evidence to support authentic participation in school-based AR project with adults and adolescents.</td>
<td>Educational psychologists able to cascade information to schools Educational psychologists, school professionals and action researchers apply findings from the research into new AR projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action for change</td>
<td>Transformation</td>
<td>Applying the findings around the conditions for authentic participation within future AR or where participation is required as part of a school-based project.</td>
<td>Using the findings from this review within my own school-based action research project (T2 and ongoing AR project in schools Feeding information around authentic participation within the wider local authority project which has emerged from T2 project to change practice, ensuring authentic participation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Dissemination: Empirical Research Paper**

**Dissemination in AR**

The strategy for the empirical action research project borrows from the D-cubed (Hinton et al., 2011) model to explore dissemination. This includes a three stage process for

- Assessing the climate with the research context for readiness for change
- Engaging throughout the AR project to consider communication/dissemination
- Enabling and evaluating the implementation of outcomes within context.

As Brydon-Miller (2008) argues, dissemination is best seen as a co-constructed activity with co-researchers; simple publication is an insufficient AR dissemination strategy (Sommer 2006). This co-constructed activity often involves consideration of the academic researchers’ dissemination activities within journals and at conferences, whilst also considering relevant (possibly innovative) ways to share the messages from the research within the community in which the research is sited.
Reason and Bradbury (2008b) also outline the importance of third-person inquiry, extending the inquiry through engagement with a wider audience. Gustavsen, Hansson, & Qvale, (2008) explain how this dissemination of AR cannot be a linear process where findings from one context are applied to another, as by its very nature AR findings are context dependent. They conclude that dissemination and diffusion works best when networks build up within regions and where those information is communicated across networks with shared values. AR can have a greater impact when conducted by and/or shared with learning communities where the sum total of individual knowledge and experience is enhanced through collaborative networks and therefore contribute to increased levels of transformation (National Children’s Bureau 2017)

Within paper two’s AR project I sought to adhere to a rights research approach (Maschi, 2015) which suggests that research is not complete until the researcher facilitates ‘the community’ to take action at an individual, local and policy level. The rights research approach fits well with the participatory approach of AR. Forchuk and Meier (2014) explain ‘It is through the appropriate dissemination of results that positive societal change is enacted (p.157). Change from AR may involve cyclical phases of action within and across contexts before, during and after the AR itself (Gustavsen, et al., 2008).

**Dissemination as part of our AR project**

Towards the end of the AR project the group identified the potential stakeholders and networks for the key messages that we wanted to share, which are represented in the dissemination strategy table 4 below. This dissemination can be represented within the ecological system model as depicted in paper two (figure 11), recognising the interactions between systems within the wider networks for our co-researching group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Action research</th>
<th>What have we agreed to disseminate to? Stakeholder mind map to share</th>
<th>Who do we need to disseminate to? Stakeholder mind map to share</th>
<th>What could the stakeholder (target audience) gain from this</th>
<th>Data source</th>
<th>Action/progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The academic gap at transition</td>
<td>Maths and English Department in School</td>
<td></td>
<td>An understanding of the research evidence which highlights the dip in attainment between KS2 and 3 and how this can impact specific groups in particular</td>
<td>From previous research evidence (cite evidence)</td>
<td>Date set July 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success within social and institutional systems at transition to support more vulnerable students</td>
<td>Anytown SENCo Network</td>
<td></td>
<td>An understanding of how a school can work collaboratively to understand and implement actions for vulnerable students within complex school systems</td>
<td>Information gathered from research within Anytown high school</td>
<td>Date to be agreed Autumn 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consideration of the model of TDHS action research for use within the wider group</td>
<td>Anytown transition partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>To share a model of effective change practice and consider how this could be scaled – up to a Anytown wide project</td>
<td>The factors that supported effective participation towards positive actions within TDHS action research</td>
<td>20\textsuperscript{th} March 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings from the action research at Anytown school regarding social and institutional transition</td>
<td>Publication of 2 papers in action research journal. 1 paper focused on CARN international action research conference in Manchester run by Edge Hill University.</td>
<td></td>
<td>To share a model of researcher working within a school on a cooperative inquiry action research project.</td>
<td>Action research project – positive actions taken Improvements to information gathering Improvements to parental engagement Improvements to transition artefacts (transition days, first day of school) Gathering student views</td>
<td>Action Research Journal Conference submission 14/5/18 for conference 25/10/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider how to share findings from research within school</td>
<td>Will circulate written research report. Considering how to measure impact from project within school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Greater clarity on need to support actions on transition within school</td>
<td>Evidence from action research project</td>
<td>Circulate reports when published in journal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing learning from research with educational psychology community</td>
<td>To share with EP’s within my own team and Anytown EPS.</td>
<td>An understanding of the benefits and pitfalls around process and participation of conducting action research in schools</td>
<td>Evidence from synthesis and AR project</td>
<td>Workshop at CPD events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dissemination within school.

The co-researchers discussed presenting the outcomes from the project to staff in school. However co-researchers appeared disillusioned from taking action to share findings in school, as previous efforts were met with apparent disinterest.

Furthermore, the AR group had the sense that colleagues’ workloads were so high that they had little time to consider and explore areas outside of their immediate remit and were resistant to any change which may impact on this workload. As Terhart (2013) identifies there is a history of resistance to ‘managerialism’ within education, whereby imposed change is met with distrust. Thinking about this in terms of the D-cubed model described above (Hinton et al., 2011), the group had identified the limited number of change enablers within school and a lack of leadership to allocate resources for change. These challenges required further contemplation of how to effect change.

Towards the end of the project we were better able to consider the ways in which learning is normally shared within school. We considered

- who our audience might be (stakeholders for information and potential adopters to build change enablers)
- what elements of the learning within the project would be best to share for either awareness raising/ understanding or to bring about changes within school systems.

The National Children’s Bureau report (2017) details the most effective transmission methods for dissemination of research in schools with interactions between staff and
staff meetings being the most popular. We acknowledged these and other informal and formal processes in communicating change.

Our initial stratagem involved disseminating the actions from our project to the head teacher in the hope of obtaining ‘buy-in’ regarding a wider school dissemination strategy. Ahead of this meeting we reflected on what helped us during the process agreeing the visual representation of our cooperative inquiry process and outlining the key improvements made within the progress (appendix 13). Our reflections on the readiness for involvement and change within school identified that staff outside the group are at the early stages of understanding the importance of a focus on transition. Therefore our decisions about school-based dissemination were based on Terhart’s (2013) theory that teachers need to believe that the change is relevant to them in their role, that it will not be onerous for them to implement changes and that it is of benefit to the pupils. Consequently, we prioritised awareness raising and understanding within school. We sought to share the research evidence within key departments on attainment dips and best practice evidence for interventions to support this dip, including evidence from our AR. A plan for delivery of this communication is in place for summer 2018.

Disseminating to feeder primary schools

During the focus group evaluating our AR, the group considered the ways in which we could take further action working with other systems outside of school. In particular, we focused on how to build opportunities for collaboration with primary school colleagues to help support transition preparation during the final primary school years. Co-researchers reflected that collaboration with colleagues across key
stage 2 and 3, preparing for transition earlier would benefit pupils at the point of transition. Likewise secondary colleagues may need to understand the way in which learning has taken place in primary to be able to support pupils when they transition. Our action on primary/secondary collaboration became subsumed within a wider local authority project.

*New funding for a wider local authority (LA) transition project*

One key theme, which arose within our discussion, related to the process by which we brought about changes in transition practice in our AR and how this could be scaled-up to work with a number of different schools or systems as per Gustavsen et al.’s (2008) networks approach. The group considered the collaborative approach one of the key factors which enabled the positive change. We discussed how this model of collaboration could support change at a wider level. This tied into our deliberations on how to interact with the new local authority transition project focused on reducing negative transition effects for children where families have low incomes. The funding for the new project had identified the attainment dip of pupils in receipt of pupil premium following their transition to high school.

This wider project offered both a challenge and an opportunity to the dissemination strategy from the AR project. The challenge involved putting previously agreed plans for primary/secondary collaboration on hold to consider interaction with wider systems within the LA project. Opportunities emerged for becoming involved within this project and funding was available to establish positive networks and partnerships.

We sought to share outcomes around improved transition practice within this wider
network, whilst also wanting to share our perception of the impact from a successful, collaborative model of work. Ramon and Hall (2017), amongst others, advocate evidence for the utility of such models. They maintain that collaboration and participation in decision-making are central to creating what they describe as ‘learning ecosystems’ which can affect systems change for the good in schools (p1).

Alongside the wider local authority project we also considered other ways of sharing our work within the local authority. We have requested time to share our findings around participation and the outcomes of the project at:

- A network meeting of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators
- A Deputy Heads’ forum
- Within the educational psychology service within the authority where the research is sited.

**Conclusions**

The delays within progress through the empirical project and the lack of resource provided to dissemination, have, to date, limited both the scale and scope or our dissemination and the possibility for evaluating change from the project at a school and wider level. Any future project would seek agreement around possible dissemination activities and resources with key stakeholders at the outset of the project, (assessing readiness to change), (Hinton et al., 2011) and ensuring resources are available and planned for dissemination activities. An ongoing review of possible communication strategies involving all stakeholders (school, pupils, parents, feeder primary schools and the local authority, for example) would also have benefited our final dissemination strategy. Work is continuing to enable and
evaluate the implementation of outcomes within context.

It seems highly possible that the co-researchers can ensure that the awareness raising and understanding elements of our dissemination strategy are met, yet the readiness for change is limited to the areas of influence of members of the co-researching group. Involving other staff across school in changing practice is at an early stage. To a certain extent changes introducing collaboration for transition may be imposed by involvement within the wider local authority project. Nonetheless there are dangers inherent in such imposed change and it is incumbent on the co-researchers to continue to reflect on the impact from our dissemination and consider how to impart our key message about the effectiveness of our collaborative change model.

Figure 13. Key findings relevant to different communities.

This research begins to address a research gap around using participatory action
research projects within school to consider transition practice. Evaluation of the impact of the project details the school level changes to transition practice, the way in which we can build authentic participation within AR and the deepening understanding on the utility of participatory (collaborative) practice as a vehicle for change. This is represented in the venn diagram (figure 13), demonstrating the utility of these findings for different audiences. The research makes clear that a number of factors need to be in place to allow co-researchers (stakeholders within school, including YP) to authentically participate in contributing to decisions and changing practices within their contexts.

Alongside the framework for action researchers and school professionals, findings from this research are useful to educational psychologists providing understanding of a model for improving pupil transition or, more broadly, offering a model to use in school change practice. Currie et al. (2002) described five core functions within the educational psychology job; consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research. Action research provides a model which particularly incorporates three of these elements, namely, training, research and intervention. Intervention takes the form of the action stages of the research, whilst change through collaboration in this way has an evidence base for continuing professional development (training) (Kennedy, 2014). Furthermore, as Currie et al. argue, research offers the opportunity to develop new ways of working and contribute either to evidence-based practice or through practice-based evidence.

At a theoretical level this research offers factors to consider when contracting participation at the outset of action research involving adults and children. By being
mindful of the elements that support participation, action researchers may be able to more clearly negotiate the resources, knowledge of context and skill level of the group, and facilitate the research conditions to realise a more authentic participation within their project. It is in this connection of theory and learning to practice that educational psychologists as action researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the process, benefits and pitfalls of facilitating participation with stakeholders in schools
References


Appendices

Appendix 1: Action Research Submission Criteria

1.1 Aims & Scope

*Action Research* is a new international, interdisciplinary, refereed journal which is a forum for the development of the theory and practice of action research.

Our purpose with this international, peer reviewed journal is to offer a forum for participative, action oriented inquiry into questions that matter – questions relevant to people in the conduct of their lives, that enable them to flourish in their organizations and communities, and that evince a deep concern for the wider ecology.

The aim of the journal is to offer a viable alternative to dominant 'disinterested' models of social science, one that is relevant to people in the conduct of their lives, their organizations and their communities.

The journal publishes quality articles on accounts of action research projects, explorations in the philosophy and methodology of action research, and considerations of the nature of quality in action research practice.

1.2 Article Types

The journal publishes quality articles on accounts of action research projects, explorations in the philosophy and methodology of action research, and considerations of the nature of quality in action research practice.

All papers submitted ought to link theory and practice, in whatever way the author deems appropriate. It is assumed that the author, in seeking to share their work more broadly will
consider the issue of how their contribution builds upon and advances the theory and practice
of action research. In most cases we prefer to see theoretical and practical insights
intertwined.

The journal will include:

- A strong editorial comment column
- An Open Forum for readers to initiate and sustain debate (see also the Action
  Research Community blog: http://ari-journal.blogspot.com/)
- Peer reviewed articles that contribute to the practice, theory and method of action
  research
- Articles should be between 5,000 and 7,000 words inclusive.

1.3 Writing your paper

The SAGE Author Gateway has some general advice and on how to get published, plus links
to further resources.

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keywords and abstract are key to ensuring readers find your article through search engines
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abstract and select your keywords, have a look at this page on the Gateway: How to Help
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2.4 Funding

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7. Further information

Any correspondence, queries or additional requests for information on the manuscript submission process should be sent to the Action Research editorial office as follows:

Editor-in-Chief, Hilary Bradbury: bradbury@ohsu.edu
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Aims and Scope

*Educational Action Research* is concerned with exploring the dialogue between research and practice in educational settings. The considerable increase in interest in action research in recent years has been accompanied by the development of a number of different approaches: for example, to promote reflective practice; professional development; empowerment; understanding of tacit professional knowledge; curriculum development; individual, institutional and community change; and development of democratic management and administration. Proponents of all these share the common aim of ending the dislocation of research from practice, an aim which links them with those involved in participatory research and action inquiry.

This journal publishes accounts of a range of action research and related studies, in education and across the professions, with the aim of making their outcomes widely available and exemplifying the variety of possible styles of reporting. It aims to establish and maintain a review of the literature of action research. It also provides a forum for dialogue on the
methodological and epistemological issues, enabling different approaches to be subjected to
critical reflection and analysis.

The impetus for *Educational Action Research* came from CARN, the Collaborative Action
Research Network, and since its foundation in 1992, *EAR* has been important in extending
and strengthening this international network.

*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
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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
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Structure

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Word Limits

Please include a word count for your paper.

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

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*Updated 15-01-2018*
Appendix 3 The Prisma Framework illustrating the sequential steps in the review process.

T1: Authentic participation in school-based action research with adults and adolescent co-researchers

Research Questions

1) What factors (inquiry methods, interpersonal) support authentic participation of both adults and adolescents as co-researchers in action research within educational contexts?

2) To what extent were these factors evaluated within the research?

Databases

The following databases were used

- Ebscohost: Eric: Psychinfo: Assia. Plus searches using University of Manchester library database, Google Scholar and reference harvesting from other sources

Data Base Search Criteria
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Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

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<th>Study type (methodology)</th>
<th>Involves report of participation focused action research AR (e.g.)</th>
<th>Is only a report of the methodology or some other element of AR, but does not</th>
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<td>Scope</td>
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<td>Adolsecents or the adults are only involved as data source or only adult involved in the research is the</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
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<td>Adolescents as coresearchers who are primarily aged children or University students or young adults not within an educational setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time and place</td>
<td>Published in a peer reviewed journal</td>
<td>Report, Thesis or published in another format</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and place</td>
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<td>Published before 2006</td>
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The results were filtered by date, since 2006 and by peer reviewed journal.

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<td>Leaving 817 records to consider for review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Screened by title and info following removal of duplicates 437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaving 331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Removed following initial reading of abstract based on inclusion/exclusion criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaving 47 papers to apply inclusion and exclusion criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filtering where eligible</td>
<td>Applied inclusion and exclusion criteria to full transcript of 47 papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LEFT with 13 papers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applied above inclusion and exclusion criteria applied to all 47 papers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality and relevance criteria applied</th>
<th>7 papers pass quality and relevance criteria.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 papers excluded at this stage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 (Chatterjee; Lacasa, Kirschner, Pozzoboni and smit) papers did not meet relevance and quality criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 paper (Fongkaew) did not meet quality criteria, but did meet relevance criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Appendix 4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATA SOURCE</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>METHOD</th>
<th>EXCLUSION REASON</th>
<th>VERIFIED</th>
<th>KEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ERIC</td>
<td>‘Can I Do It in My Pajamas?’ Negotiating a Physical Education Curriculum with Teenage Girls</td>
<td>Enright and O’ Sullivan</td>
<td>PAR, coresearchers - appropriate age adolescents</td>
<td></td>
<td>green = Fits criteria by title and interviews children to gather their views</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 PsycINFO</td>
<td>‘Can I make any difference?’ Gang affiliation, the school-to-prison pipeline, and implications for teachers. [References].</td>
<td>Gass</td>
<td>PAR YP 13 4 5 2 no other adults just the researcher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grey - fits inclusion criteria but YP only used as data source</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A qualitative study of interdisciplinary cooperation on computer and English: A case study of Aletheia University participated in international volunteer service learning to inner Mongolia. [References].

PsycINFO

Casey, Gail
Casey
Gail
1,3,4,5
2 Yp data sources

Applied
Social
Sciences
Index &
Abstracts
(ASSIA)

‘Can't We Just Have Some Sazón?’ Student, Family, and Staff Perspectives on a New School Food Program at a Boston High School

AVIK
CHATTERJEE, MD,
MPHa
GENEVIEVE
DAFTARY, MD,
MPHb MEG
CAMPBELL, MAc
LENWARD
GATISON, BAad
LIAM DAY, Ae
KIBRET
RAMSEY, f
ROBERTA
GOLDMAN, PhD, MAge
PAR YP and adults 1,2,3,4,5

‘I Want People to Believe in Me, Listen When I Say Something and Remember Me’--How Students Wish to Be Treated

PAR with YP and adults
Yp only used as data source

ERIC

Bergmark, Ulrika
1,2,3,4,5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Participants Notes</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>‘Now, I'm magazine detective the whole time’: Listening and responding to young people’s complex experiences of popular physical culture. [References].</td>
<td>Enright PAR with YP</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>‘Why Are You Doing This?’ Questions on Purpose, Structure, and Outcomes in Participatory Action Research Engaging Youth and Teacher Candidates</td>
<td>Galletta, Anne and Jones, Vanessa</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Beautiful You Creating Contexts for Students to Become Agents of Social Change</td>
<td>Fisette &amp; Walton</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>If You Were the Researcher What Would You Research?: Understanding Children's Perspectives on Educational Research in Mongolia and Zambia</td>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>A new view of body image': A school-based participatory action research project with young Aboriginal women. [References].</td>
<td>Tara-Leigh F McHugh. Kent C Kowalski</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>Accounting for Whiteness through Collaborative Fiction</td>
<td>Tanner</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 no adults involved
2 adults not participants, just researchers
2 adults not participants, just researchers
2 no adults as participants only researcher
7 student researchers within group - no adults
2 no adults involved
only researcher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>PsycINFO</th>
<th>ERIC</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adolescents Media Experiences in the Classroom: SimCity as a Cultural Model</td>
<td>Pilar Lacasa, María-Ruth García-Pernía &amp; Patricia Núñez 1,2, 3,4,5</td>
<td>2 Yp data sourcec, 3 uni students only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td></td>
<td>An analysis of students' academic performance when integrating DVD technology in geography teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Westhuizen 1,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td></td>
<td>ARISE to the Challenge: Partnering with Urban Youth to Improve Educational Research and Learning</td>
<td>Brown 1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Boundary- and Border-Spanning Collaborations of Educators and Youths: Challenging Our Literacy Pedagogies and Content</td>
<td>Zenkov 1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td></td>
<td>Early adolescent peer leader development in HIV prevention using youth-adult partnership with schools approach. [References].</td>
<td>Warunee Fongkaew, Kangwan Fongkaew, Prakin Suchaxaya, 1,3,4,5, 2 verified</td>
<td>Checked with supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Educating for a Critical Democracy: Civic Participation Reimagined in the Council of Youth Research</td>
<td>Mirra, 1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Enacting a Critical Pedagogy, Influencing Teachers' Sociopolitical Development</td>
<td>Mirra, 1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>Encouraging secondary students' deep reflection-on-learning: A case for a reflective approach to evaluating students' learning. [References]</td>
<td>Minott, 1,3,4,5,</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Examining School-Based Social Skills Program Needs and Barriers for Students with High-Functioning Autism Spectrum Disorders Using Participatory Action Research</td>
<td>Ostmeyer &amp; Scarp, 1,4,5</td>
<td>2 not adults and YP working together 3 elementary age yp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>Examining the potential of youth-led community of practice: Experience and insights. [References]</td>
<td>Goodnough, Karen, 1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
iPads as instructional tools to enhance learning opportunities for students with developmental disabilities: An action research project. [References].


More than Bodies: Protecting the Health and Safety of LGBTQ Youth

Multiple disabilities and visual impairment: An action research project. [References].
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research in Two Primary Schools in a Rural Tanzanian Village: An Exploration of Factors to Cultivate Changes in Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>Daniel M. Roberts, Alisha M.B. Brown &amp; Laura Edwards</td>
<td>1,2, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>Photovoice: An opportunity and challenge for students' genuine participation.</td>
<td>MARIAWARNE*, KRISTEN SNYDER and KATJA GILLANDER GA DIN</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Applied Social Sciences Index &amp; Abstracts (ASSIA)</td>
<td>Rock Up: An initiative supporting students' wellbeing in their transition to secondary school</td>
<td>Carmen, Waycott, Smith</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Student Interpretations of a School Closure: Implications for Student Voice in Equity-Based School Reform</td>
<td>Kirshner, Ben; Pozzoboni, Kristen M.</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 consultation with other adults but not involved in the same way as YP as researchers

2 Yp as data source

3 The groups are year 5 and 6, although some y7 children some are elementary aged.

But research paper is not clear how community members were involved
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>ASSIA</td>
<td>Students as researchers: engaging students' voices in PAR</td>
<td>Bland &amp; Atweh</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>ASSIA</td>
<td>The power of adolescent voices: co-researchers in mental health promotion</td>
<td>Lind, Candace 2007</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td>Supervisor verified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>PsycINFO</td>
<td>Understanding school-age obesity through participatory action research. [References].</td>
<td>Dinapoli and Lewis</td>
<td>1,2, 3,4,5</td>
<td>YP used as data source but both still participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>What Builds Student Capacity in an Alternative High School Setting?</td>
<td>Lind, Candace 2013</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td>Supervisor verified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>Youth Participatory Action Research and School Improvement: The Missing Voices of Black Youth in Montreal</td>
<td>Livingstone, Celemendal &amp; Calixte</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 no adults involved only researcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaborative action research for middle grades improvement.

Into our hoods: where critical performance pedagogy births resistance.

On the development and assessment of a computer-based learning and assessment environment for the transition from lower to upper secondary chemistry education

The benefits of cooperative learning to socio-scientific discussion in secondary school science
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Whose Gym Is It? Gendered Perspectives on Middle and Secondary School Physical Education</td>
<td>Couturier, Lynn E.; Chepko, Stevie; Coughlin, Mary Ann 1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 YP used as data source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Young people as co-researchers: enabling student participation in educational practice</td>
<td>Ben H.J. Smit 1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td>YP and adults just used as data source. Called action research, not sure it is action research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Differentiated curriculum design: Responding to the individual and group needs of students with learning difficulties with self-regulated learning strategies. [References].</td>
<td>WINNIE SIN WAI PUI 1,2,3,4,5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Using Appreciative Inquiry in Educational Research: Possibilities and Limitations</td>
<td>Maha Shuayb, Caroline Sharp, Michelle Judkins, Monica Hetherington 1,3,4,5</td>
<td>2 ARE THE ADULTS AND CHILDREN WORKING TOGETHER? It may be that the adults are just part of the workshops and not involved in action in between&gt;? Supervisor verified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>City of One: A Qualitative Study Examining the Participation of Young People in Care in a Theatre and Music Initiative</td>
<td>Debra Salmon*, Caroline Rickaby 12,,3,4,5</td>
<td>YP and adults within the action but not within the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Year(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Consultation and Participation with Children in Healthy Schools: Choice, Conflict and Context</td>
<td>Paul Duckett • Carolyn Kagan • Judith Sixsmith</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Teacher action research and student voice: Making sense of learning in secondary school</td>
<td>Kane &amp; Chimwayonge</td>
<td>1,3,4,5,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>So round the spiral again: a reflective participatory research project with children and young people</td>
<td>O’Brien &amp; Moules</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>The voices of youth in foster care: A participant action research study</td>
<td>Ponciana</td>
<td>1,3,4,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 5: Quality and Relevance Criteria

Bradbury-Huang’s Quality Criteria (2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulation of objectives</td>
<td><em>The extent to which the authors explicitly address the objectives they believe relevant to their work and the choices they have made in meeting those.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership and participation</td>
<td><em>The extent to and means by which the paper reflects or enacts participative values and concern for the relational component of research. By the extent of participation we are referring to a continuum from consultation with stakeholders to stakeholders as full co-researchers.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to action research</td>
<td><em>The extent to which the paper builds on (creates explicit links with) or contributes to a wider body of practice knowledge and or theory, that contributes to the AR literature</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method and process</td>
<td><em>The extent to which the AR process and related methods are clearly articulated and illustrated. By illustrated we mean that empirical papers ‘show’ and not just ‘tell’ about process and</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
outcomes by including analysis of data that includes the voices of participants in the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actionability</th>
<th>The extent to which the paper provides new ideas that guide action in response to need.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflexivity</td>
<td>The extent to which self-location as a change agent is acknowledged by the authors. By self-location we mean that authors take a personal, involved and self-critical stance as reflected in clarity about their role in the AR process, clarity about the context in which the research takes place, and clarity about what led to their involvement in this research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>The extent to which the insights in the manuscript are significant in content and process. By significant we mean having meaning and relevance beyond their immediate context in support of the flourishing of persons, communities, and the wider ecology.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relevance Criteria (Based on Bradbury-Huang, 2010 and Piggot-Irvine et al, 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Participation</th>
<th>Review of participation throughout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) objectives/questions,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) methodology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) how much actual participation of others is part of the research. Does it show and tell how participation occurred at various stages within the research, describing a concern for the relationships within the research (*how are power imbalances dealt with*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(iii) data collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(iv) data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) dissemination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Evaluation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can you see what was done to whom so that the reader can see the choices made to enhance quality?

*Looking for those papers higher up the continuum where YP are used as co-researchers*

2) Evaluation of participation

| (i) Does the paper work with co-researchers to evaluate the project |
| (ii) Does the author evaluate the project by way of researcher reflection |
Appendix 6: Quality Criteria applied to 13 studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Title/year/country</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Quality and relevance criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Chatterjee, Daftary, Campbell, Gaitson, Day, Ramsey Goldman, Mathew, Gillman 2016 Can we have some Sazon: Student, Family and staff perspectives on a new school program at a Boston High School U.S.A</td>
<td>7 student members of nutrition action club, wellness director and researcher Data collected from 4 student focus groups (N=32), 1 parent focus group (N=10), staff focus group (N=14) and interviews (N=3)</td>
<td>Using qualitative methods to explore feedback on the new school food program</td>
<td>PAR Trained community investigators to complete focus groups Immersed in audio data collection to come up with themes. Shared themes with group to agree</td>
<td>Trained a teacher and some students to be community investigators. Participated on project questions for focus groups and on focus groups themselves. Then they were involved in agreeing themes and dissemination, but not clear how</td>
<td>Quality criteria partially met 6 Relevance criteria i) partially met ii) not met THEREFORE NOT MET CRITERIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Downes, Bishop, Swallow, Olofson, &amp; Hennessy 2016</td>
<td>90 teachers across 10 schools. Analysis of 44 action research projects. However it is a case study design</td>
<td>Project looking at the use of technology in middle grade (aged 10-13) classrooms. Research questions (1) In what capacities are young adolescents</td>
<td>Case study design. Focus groups with teachers and students involved in the action research projects</td>
<td>Students and teachers are involved in focus groups. Only involved as data subjects</td>
<td>Quality criteria partially met 4 Relevance criteria not met both THEREFORE NOT MET CRITERIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Action Research For Middle Grade Improvement.</td>
<td>Involved in the action research process? (2) At which steps in the action research process do teachers seek or value student involvement?</td>
<td>To explore social and emotional health and wellbeing of pupils in school. Central to the paper was notions of pupil participation, equality and power processes as negotiated between staff and pupils.</td>
<td>Action research groups in each school with pupils and adults to plan research. Data gathering through semi-structured interviews with pupils and adults, experiential school walks with pupils, and written work and weekly diaries or journals with pupils. Adult-only research forum in each school. Partnership between researchers, staff and pupils for research design. Not clear how all pupils or adults are involved in data collection. Implies author only data analysis.</td>
<td>Quality criteria: Medium Met 2 Partially met 4 Not met 1 Relevance criteria i) Met ii) Partially met</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Duckett, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010 U.K</td>
<td>557 pupils (aged 12 – 15) 24 staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | Enright and O'Sullivan 2010 | Ireland | 41 pupils (aged 15-19) 
1 teacher | Working with a teacher and a group of high school female pupils to negotiate the PE curriculum. To explore whether this makes PE more meaningful to pupils | Action research group. Data gathering through journals from pupils and audio recording of curriculum design workshops. Plus individual/group interviews with 5 pupils. Thematic analysis of findings | Pupils and teacher are involved as co-researchers, designing the curriculum and conducting data analysis. However they are not involved in research design, agreeing objectives or project dissemination | Quality criteria: Medium 
Met 3 
Partially met 3 
Not met 1 
Relevance criteria: 
1) Met 
2) Partially met |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | Fongkaew, Fongaw, Suchaxaya 2007 | Thailand | Working committee of teachers from each of the 10 schools involved in the project 35 youth leaders (young adults or older teens) and 111 younger youth leaders | This article describes the development and evaluation of an HIV prevention program using PAR for early adolescents. It also reports on the evaluation of the effectiveness of PAR involving youth and adults – with youth trained as leaders to give the message about safe sex. Methods of data gathering and data analysis unclear. There is an evaluation | Yp are involved heavily in getting the message out there in training the other leaders and in working with their peers. Not clear how they are involved in data gathering or analysis in research set up. | Quality criteria partially met 4 (needs to be 5) 
LOW 
THEREFORE NOT MET 
CRITERIA 
Relevance criteria partially met both |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Galletta and Jones 2010</strong></th>
<th>24 Middle school pupils (age 11-14)</th>
<th>Trainee teachers working with middle and high school pupils in action research. Agreed research objective: To understand how middle school pupils view their new school and their community</th>
<th>Action research. The authors facilitate research groups of trainee teachers, high school and middle school students who in turn facilitate the middle school pupils to complete video interviews with pupils and teachers at their school. Initially data analysis co-constructed with group but completed by research authors. AR group involved in dissemination</th>
<th>Trainee teachers facilitating groups of middle and high school pupils in action research groups. However little partnership existed at the end, as the group did not finish data analysis, agree themes or participate fully in dissemination.</th>
<th><strong>Quality criteria:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Relevance criteria:</strong></th>
<th><strong>i) Met</strong></th>
<th><strong>ii) Partially met</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>‘why are you doing this?’ questions on purpose structure and outcomes in participatory action research engaging youth and teacher candidates.</em></td>
<td>9 High school pupils (age 14 -19)</td>
<td>16 trainee teachers</td>
<td>Unspecified number of pupils/staff interviewed</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Goodnough 2014</strong></th>
<th>10 high school pupils (age 16-19)</th>
<th>To investigate the processes which may emerge between pupils and adults in youth action</th>
<th>Youth action research embedded within a case study design. Data collection by way of large-scale survey, interviews,</th>
<th>Pupils involved in youth action research group. Completed research design and some data collection. Data analysis conducted by author</th>
<th><strong>Quality criteria:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Relevance criteria:</strong></th>
<th><strong>i) Met</strong></th>
<th><strong>ii) Partially met</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Examining the potential of youth-led community of practice: experience and insights</em></td>
<td>2 teachers</td>
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174
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Relevance Criteria</th>
<th>Quality Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
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<td>i) Met</td>
<td>i) Met, ii) Met</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kirschner and Pozzoboni, 2011</td>
<td>To explore views of students and adults about a school closure, using PAR, with students and adults working together to complete the research,</td>
<td>Good participation from 10 YP and 2 adults and then others as data sources</td>
<td>Quality criteria met 2, partially met 5</td>
<td>Relevance criteria i) Met, ii) Not met, THEREFORE NOT MET CRITERIA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student interpretations of a school closure: Implications for student voice in equity based school reform</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Lacasa Garcia-Pernia and Nunez 2013</td>
<td>A small group of boys and girls working with their teacher. Researcher used both sets of participants as data sources.</td>
<td>Participation of YP within Sim City sessions. Teachers only involved as facilitating the sessions</td>
<td>Quality criteria met 1 partially met 5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Study Title</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Research Methodology</td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lind 2007</td>
<td>The power of adolescent voices: co researchers in mental health promotion in Canada</td>
<td>4 pupils (aged 14 – 19), 2 teachers, school nurse</td>
<td>Participative action research using appreciative inquiry</td>
<td>Action research workshops with co-researchers, plus data collected from 3 audio recorded focus groups with pupils, 2 with staff and 3 with pupil alumni, 2 with parents and 2 individual interviews. Co-constructed data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lind 2013</td>
<td>To identify capacity building situations and experiences</td>
<td>4 Pupils (aged 14-19)</td>
<td>Participative action research using appreciative inquiry</td>
<td>Group co-constructed research design, data collection, data analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Key Findings</td>
<td>Quality Criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>What builds student capacity in an alternative high school setting Canada</td>
<td>3 school staff</td>
<td>Further understanding of promoting capacity building with adolescents in an alternative high school setting</td>
<td>Action research workshops with co-researchers, 10 focus groups and 2 interviews.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Met 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Roberts Brown and Edwards 2015 PAR in two primary schools in a rural Tanzanian village: an exploration of factors to cultivate changes in teaching and learning.</td>
<td>36 pupils (aged 10 – 15) 9 school staff</td>
<td>Investigating use of participatory action research in Tanzanian schools. Further aim of knowledge/skill development for teachers in using participative models of teaching through incorporating pupil voice in curricula design.</td>
<td>Participatory action research for curriculum design. Data collection through curriculum design workshops, interviews, observation of classroom practices</td>
<td>Quality criteria: Medium</td>
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<td>Pupils and teachers worked together with curriculum design workshops. Research objectives and design set by author. Researcher conducts focus groups at the end for evaluation and completes data analysis. Group involved in disseminating findings from curriculum workshops</td>
<td>Relevance criteria:</td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Reference</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Smit 2013</td>
<td>Young People as co-researchers: enabling student participation in educational practice</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>10 research teams of 4 – 6 students each, 1 teacher and 1 education. Some primary school age and some secondary age children. NOT CLEAR HOW MANY ADOLESCENTS</td>
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<td>To enable participatory practices through students as co-researchers and to understand the impact on teachers professional development.</td>
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<td>2 levels Action research project with Yp, facilitated by adults regarding feedback on student learning in external settings (museum/library)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Authors and teachers working together to support YP with action research</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Most of THE YP ARE AGE 6-11. 2 schools out of 12 are 11-16</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>12 research teams from schools 4-6 students, one teacher and one educator from external setting</td>
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<td>Quality criteria: MEDIUM</td>
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<td>2 fully met</td>
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<td>5 partially met</td>
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<td>THEREFORE NOT MET CRITERIA</td>
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Appendix 7 Codes and Themes

7a Extract of Coded Paper

We did look up to you [for] guidance, although at some points you just didn’t give it to us and we had to figure it out on our own which was difficult to do … you asked us where we wanted to go with this. We all just looked at you ‘well it’s your research project, what do you want to do with it?’ I think that happened for at least two meetings, and then it became more of our project after that. We looked to you for guidance and then it became more of our project

Oliver experienced this process as a culture shock when he had to figure something out himself. PAR opened a space for ownership in this project, but ownership was difficult and came with responsibilities. He called it, ‘the Socratic method of teaching… and it took a bit of getting used to … I’ve never experienced that before’. PAR a space for ownership

I asked Oliver when it had become more a group-owned project rather than my project. He said the change occurred when the group members realized they had to come up with ideas and answers.
We came into this [project] and you said that we were going to make decisions too, and then we looked to you to make decisions for us. And when you didn’t make those decisions I guess it forced at least me into thinking more in-depth about what we’re going to do, as opposed to just doing what I was told. You’d figure at [this school] it’s not something that most kids would want to do is do what they’re told, but there’s a comfort in that.

Coresearchers forced to think and make decisions

Evaluation of the research process

Co-researchers participated in an evaluation of the experience of being a coresearcher. Each person had experienced an impact from involvement in the research project, with both negative and positive experiences. For example, one adult shared that he felt he had needed more practice interviewing. The initial plan had been to conduct role-playing interviews amongst ourselves within the group process so that everyone had an opportunity to try one in this environment before doing an ‘official’ interview. However, the decision was made by the group to just have one role-play experience within a meeting. When decisions are made in the context of a group, sometimes members subsume their wishes to others’ wishes. Members may subsume their wishes to the group.

Positive evaluative feedback was also received. Chris articulated about the trust that had developed within our group, ‘I seem to be observing more recently that many adults don’t listen … but I think the listening was good here as well as the hearing in this group dynamic’. Chris’ statement meant that a trusting, respectful environment, where all voices were welcomed and included, had been built in our group process.
research design’s use of AI as a strengths-based philosophy, that provided guidance for the development of the interview guide, also became a mental health promoting experience for co-researchers and their interviewees. One adolescent said his interviewees told him it made them feel really good. He added, it’s been really cool, I’ve been really sort of enthusiastic about it and it’s really felt [like] a positive experience. I think it was a benefit for both the interviewer and the interviewee. And I think like for the teachers and just the whole group it’s been good. It brings mental health out in both [sic] people. Positive experience with benefits, bringing about (positive) mental health.

Actualizing adolescent potential occurs through their experience whereby their competencies are facilitated, thus helping them see their strengths (Cargo et al., 2003)
### Appendix 7b Codes, Descriptive Themes, Analytic Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Quotes</th>
<th>Sub themes</th>
<th>Descriptive Themes</th>
<th>Analytic Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘The researcher made frequent visits to the research site enabling her to develop rapport and trust with members of the Youth Action Research Group’ Goodnough 2014</td>
<td>At the start of the research focus on building rapport and trust with the co-researchers</td>
<td>Building trust and rapport at the outset</td>
<td>Trust egalitarianism and shared understanding facilitate participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The principal investigator tasks included the development of trust through honesty genuineness, consistency, reliability, demonstrated caring, inclusion of self as a person and inclusive involvement of the other collaborators to build the integrity of the study (Lind 2013 p453)</td>
<td>Building Trust within the group</td>
<td>Building trust and rapport at the outset</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(building) ‘Trusting relationships with students’ Line 541 Lind 2013</td>
<td>Building trust within the group</td>
<td>Building trust and rapport at the outset</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
‘Chris articulated about the trust that had developed within our group, ‘I seem to be observing more recently that many adults don’t listen … but I think the listening was good here as well as the hearing in this group dynamic’. Chris’ statement meant that a trusting, respectful environment, where all voices were welcomed and included, had been built in our group processes Lind (2007) p 380

Trust and rapport development for the group’ line 387-8 Lind 2007

‘Teachers in the school….even before we had met the pupils had warned us that pupils could not be trusted and they were likely to exaggerate or make stories up just to get attention’ Line 419-421 Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith, 2010

A lack of trust can be challenging for co-researching relationships

Building trust and rapport at the outset

‘Cultural pedagogy that students should remain silent in Tanzanian culture…. Students have grown accustomed to being passive observers….I addressed this by reinforcing classroom norms and expectations that all were expected to participate’ 460-463 Roberts, Brown and Edwards, 2015

Cultural and contextual norms can inhibit participation

Attending to any power imbalances.
‘Time speaking is the not the same as equality of participation ‘It is how voices are listened to, acted upon and influence others when they talk…. Equality of choice and option to participate’ Line 324-325 Lind 2007

‘Megan called for adults to have ‘an open mind’ to working differently with adolescents’ Line 353-4 Lind 2007

‘Difficult to accept nurse researcher without being unduly influenced by her interests and authority, so nurse must be mindful of possibility for unintentional coercion’ Line 301-303 Lind 2013

we did look up to you [for] guidance, although at some points you just didn’t give it to us and we had to figure it out on our own which was difficult to do … you asked us where we wanted to go with this. We all just looked at you ‘well it’s your research project, what do you want to do with it?’ I think that happened for at least two meetings, and then it became more of our project after that. (Lind, 2007 page 380)

| Challenge of researcher as expert vs researcher as participant | Attending to any power imbalances. |
‘Focus groups minimise the control the researcher has during the data gathering process by decreasing the power of the researcher over research participants’ Line337-8 Enright and O’sullivan 2010

Questions about the meaning of equality and voices of equal value in our teamwork resulted in an animated discussion when evaluating the project towards the end of data gathering. It appeared these concepts sounded good on a surface level, but when it came to carrying out project work using co-researcher concepts, there had been an impact from ‘working differently’ on group members. Oliver asked early on in this research process if empowerment was part of its philosophy. Oliver heard the participatory, co-researcher language, but he still expected the research process to evolve according to his understandings of the usual roles that adults and adolescents take on (for example, adults make the decisions and then tell the adolescents what to do). It was difficult to be involved intimately in a research process, in a responsible decision-making capacity. Line 309-319 Lind 2007
‘we had considered the power relationships between children and adults and had embedded our work in a conceptual understanding of how those relations were historically constituted’ Duckett, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010

Effort to carry on flat non hierarchical structure of relationships proved difficult, particularly across race, class and age differences’ Galleta and Jones 2010

‘All members of the community had an equal say in the project’ P 172 Goodnough 2010

‘There were three rules in the class: everyone must speak and participate; everyone must apply discipline at home and at school; and everyone must respect themselves and the others. I explained that each person was a leader in our classroom and in their school and that they had a responsibility to share with other students and their community what they learned here. Through reinforcing these rules and expectations consistently these students began to open up and speak more freely as time proceeded.’ Line 354-357 Roberts, Brown and Edwards 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power relationships need to be considered</th>
<th>Attending to any power imbalances.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Establishing participatory groundrules can support greater participation</td>
<td>Respecting difference and building understanding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘In the case of our project the child’s right to participate and choose were curtailed by the adults right to act in the best interests of the child’ Line 597-599 Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010</td>
<td>Conflict between rights of adults and adolescents</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘These tensions and challenges may arise as a result of… diversity, these tensions and challenges become a context for community members to develop shared perspectives and understandings and to move their work forwards Line 162-165 Goodnough 2014</td>
<td>Tensions from group diversity may lead to greater shared understanding</td>
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<td>‘When decisions are made in the context of a group sometimes members subsume their wishes to others’ wishes’ Lind 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Energy levels increased with the passionate involvement of all group members in discussions. We knew we were discussing matters of significance to group members when we became animated. Oliver (student) stated ‘I think there was something happening here that really encouraged or allowed [participation], whatever it was, even if it was just one individual, and it proliferated in everyone. We got that ranting attitude a lot of the time’. He felt an opening had been provided for all voices to participate in our meetings. Line 301-5 Lind 2007</td>
<td>The energy of the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Increasing understanding through questioning could create openings for new relationships between adults and adolescents that are based less on an authoritative focus on teaching adolescents, telling them what to do, or monitoring their behaviour, and more on working towards a respectful valuing of each others’ contributory capacity.’ Line 354-358 Lind 2007</td>
<td>Questioning can increase participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘PAR researchers are called upon to be open and potentially vulnerable’ Line 298-9 Lind 2013</td>
<td>Qualities individuals bring to the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At the beginning everyone brought their own special thing to this group, and they used that special thing throughout the group and nobody’s special thing is the same’. He concluded, ‘equality of choice and the option to participate, that’s what we were aiming at here’. Oliver was beginning to understand egalitarian practices (creating openings for voice) are not the same as everyone having equal rights. Lind 2007</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>‘It was meaningful for Jade, Shelly, Kelly, Grace, Debra and their peers because their positioning as curriculum negotiators allowed them space to tailor the curriculum to acknowledge their differing identities and collective agency.’ Line 668-70 Enright and O’Sullivan 2010</td>
<td>PAR Respecting individual difference</td>
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| ‘I’m here because I have to be here.’ There was lots of laughter as the high school students connected with the experience of mandates. In retrospect, though, this comment stirred up some level of critique both from the MSU students who felt it was inappropriate and the North students. During a later debriefing with the North students, responses to this comment resurfaced, exacerbating for a few of the high school students an unease they felt with the undergraduates and a resentment among several North students that some of the MSU students viewed the course experience and them disparagingly.’ Line 343-350 Galletta and Jones 2010 | Negative impact of being mandated to be involved | |
| ‘Ideological perspective in which those most affected by research are viewed as having a legitimacy in fully participating in the design and management of that research’ Line 211-4 Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010 | What is full participation? | Respecting difference and building understanding. |
| ‘ To work in a community psychological way and to embrace participatory practices can be time and resource intensive and may | Aims may be restricted by time | Time is needed to support co-researchers |
| Resources (time, support) are required for | | |
exacerbate existing work strain.’ Line 504-5 Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010’

‘It might have been somewhat convenient for us that the schools put a stop to these methods because of not having the necessary resources (both time and materials). Had each school agreed to these alternative methods we would have struggled ourselves to find the extra resources needed (i.e., co-ordinating the activities, collecting and analyzing vision and sound based data, and engaging in collaborative sense making with pupils of data produced by projective techniques).’ Line 518-522 Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010

In the early stages of the study, the researcher asked the group members whether they would like to be part of analysing the case-study data. Because of a lack of time, they felt this would not be possible. Thus, the group agreed that the data the researcher collected and the corresponding interpretations of these data (themes and patterns) would be shared with the group for their feedback. Goodnough 2014
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quote</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>“There was additional footage we wanted the students to view to further tighten their construction of themes and to begin to think about what footage illustrated these themes most clearly—for the purpose of editing and preparing the final film products concerning key themes. However, we were beginning to be swamped with film, and the process of creating iMovie projects that could be viewed and edited required considerable time, which neither of our schedules could support.” Line 499-504 Galletta and Jones 2010</td>
<td>Participation in data analysis takes considerable time</td>
<td>Time is needed to support co-researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Because of a lack of time, they felt this would not be possible. Thus, the group agreed that the data the researcher collected and the corresponding interpretations of these data (themes and patterns) would be shared with the group for their feedback’. Line 52-55 Goodnough 2014</td>
<td>Lack of time restricts full participation</td>
<td>Time is needed to support co-researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Team felt strongly that team members must have the opportunity to disseminate findings’ Line 765-7 Lind 2013 ‘Research questions and data collection strategies developed in partnership with adults and adolescents at the school’ Line 267-268 Lind 2013</td>
<td>Involvement in design, process decisions and dissemination are important parts of participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>‘Training (to co-researchers) for their roles beforehand’ Line 645-6 Lind 2013</td>
<td>Training for the role of co-researcher</td>
<td>Training and coaching co-researchers</td>
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</table>
‘prior to working intensely with students, the author worked closely with the teachers, reading literature and engaging in activities that would enhance their understanding of YAR.’ Line 352 – 353 Goodnough 2014

‘To provide some initial training for the students in research methods’ Line 234 Enright and O’Sullivan 2010

The purpose of this introductory phase, which spanned six weeks, was threefold: to get to know the girls, who they were and what they valued and cared about; to encourage the girls to critically appraise their relationship with PE and physical activity and identify barriers to their engagement; and to provide some initial training for the students in research methods Enright and O’Sullivan 2010

‘Data analysis training (included) development of metaphors’ Line 690-691 Lind 2013

‘we highlighted the themes as they were written on the paper roll, and encouraged the students to discuss them further and to cluster them. The students viewed more footage, fine-tuning the list.Subsequently, we entered the themes into project files and, providing some scaffolding here, we further developed the students’ initial clustering’ Line 492-496 Galletta and Jones 2010

| Training or scaffolding needed for data analysis | Training and coaching co-researchers |
‘One cannot simply say to adolescents ‘here is some power, now go and do something with it because I think you’re capable’. Adolescents need guidance and support to use power effectively and adults have an important role to play in assisting this process’ Line 475-478 Lind 2007

‘Research group members looked to me for assistance in carrying out the research steps, so my facilitation process included educating.’ Line 182-4 Lind 2007

‘Actualizing adolescent potential occurs through their experience whereby their competencies are facilitated Line 463-4 Lind 2007

‘many of the students, particularly the females, were reluctant to speak in front of others. I addressed this by having them work in pairs with more outspoken students who were leaders in the class and asked them to choose a spokesperson to present to the class what they discussed. I also invited a female leader of a local women’s group to work with the female students in class and encourage them to participate.’ Line 350-353 Roberts, Brown and Edwards 2016

‘The author assumed a dual role in this research; she was both a Support to access coresearcher role from adult researcher Ongoing support from experienced adults.
university researcher studying the experiences of the group, and a member of the action research group. As a group member, she was a teacher, enabling others to develop an understanding of the action research process; a facilitator, assisting with planning and implementation; and a sounding board, offering advice about unfolding events and data collection and analysis.’ Line 55-60 Goodnough 2014

‘I am quite pleased with how the group is evolving as a community. While we all have different roles, it is this very difference that is making the group productive. I am so impressed with the teachers and how they are working in such a considerate, respectful way with the students. It really is one of the key features of this community that is making it successful and helping these students to develop a variety of skills.’ Line 541-4 Goodnough 2014

‘An action research cycle was reflected in the debriefing sessions that occurred after each of the taster lessons. At the end of each lesson time was protected for the girls to ‘talk back’ about their experiences in PE that day. During these debriefs Roísín and Eimear facilitated the students in evaluating their experience of PE lessons’ Line 321-4 Enright and O’Sullivan 2010

Adults researcher/non researchers facilitate YP involvement during the participatory process

Ongoing support from experienced adults.
‘Although we were inviting the high school students into a situation in which they were expected to take considerable responsibility, we had not sufficiently supported them in the process, nor were we helping them prepare for this task. We also had not facilitated sessions for the MSU, North, and Lake students to problem-solve and build consensus toward solutions.’
Line 408-412 Galletta and Jones 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What the students enjoyed</th>
<th>Without support the YP may struggle to fulfill their role</th>
<th>Ongoing support from experienced adults</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact on mental health</td>
<td>Involvement leads to empowerment</td>
<td>Positive impact on co-researchers.</td>
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</table>

‘In discussions about the impact that the research process had on them students emphasized the mental health promotion aspect to the research ‘I felt like we were getting something done that makes people feel good and it made me feel good too’ Line 483-485 Lind 2007

‘They observed improvements in club students behaviour such as increased confidence, higher self- esteem and the ability to provide more detailed explanations’ Line 487-9 Roberts, Brown and Edwards 2015

‘We found that pupils experienced positive well-being from the socially supportive relationships that formed in the school environment with peers and with teachers. Socially supportive relationships were those that gave people a sense of being valued and cared for and where the exchange of support was reciprocal’ Ducket, Kagan and Sixsmith 2010
| ‘Students identified several positive outcomes to being involved in Youth Action Research including gaining insight into others perspectives, developing research skills and effecting change. Line 665 – 667 Goodnough 2014 | Positive effect on adolescents perspective, skills and from the impact of the research | Involvement leads to empowerment |
| ‘They were empowered by a learning environment that recognized their capacities as competent social agents.’ Line 684-686 Enright and O’Sullivan 2010 | Young people feel empowered | Involvement leads to empowerment |
| ‘The students felt empowered and viewed the community of practice as a means for ‘student voice’ to be heard’ Goodnough 2014 | |
| In our project, the opportunity to take part in an equal partnership with teachers to set and accomplish academic and personal goals led to feelings of shared power and decision-making Lind 2013 | |
| We came into this [project] and you said that we were going to make decisions too, and then we looked to you to make decisions for us. And when you didn’t make those decisions I guess it forced at least me into thinking more in-depth about what we’re going to do, as opposed to just doing what I was told. You’d figure at [this school] it’s not something that most kids would want to do is do what they’re told, but there’s a comfort in that. (Lind 2007 p 380). | | |
One adolescent said his interviewees told him it made them feel really good. He added,

it’s been really cool, I’ve been really sort of enthusiastic about it and it’s really felt [like] a positive experience. I think it was a benefit for both the interviewer and the interviewee. And I think like for the teachers and just the whole group it’s been good. It brings mental health out in both [sic] people.

Lind (2007) p 380

In focus group data, journal entries, and conversations and e-mails, the MSU students indicated that they learned a great deal about young people, their schools and neighborhoods, and about themselves in relation to these complicated settings. (Galletta and Jones 2010).

Each person had experienced an impact from involvement in the research project, with both negative and positive experiences. For example, one adult shared that he felt he had needed more practice interviewing Lind (2007).

‘The project taught me about cooperative team building and gave me lots of challenges in terms of personal comfort’

Adults and Yp learned about themselves  Participation leads to new personal/group insights

Developing skills for working in a group  Participation leads to new personal/group insights
I just feel that more preparation could have been made before the beginning of the project Galletta and Jones 2010

When decisions are made in the context of a group, sometimes members subsume their wishes to others’ wishes Lind (2007) p 380

‘Teachers communicated numerous instances of student gains illustrating the positive impact of participatory approaches Line 405-6 Roberts, Brown and Edwards 2015

Impact – student gains from participatory approaches Participation leads to new personal/group insights

‘While the president assumed a primary role in coordinating activities and providing leadership, with assistance from the teachers and the researcher, other group members had opportunities to assume leadership roles, contributing to an individual sense of ownership’ Line 423-7 Goodnough 2014

Opportunities for leadership creates sense of ownership Group build ownership

Group members had opportunities to assume leadership roles, contributing to an individual sense of ownership. Goodnough, 171.

‘Participating in PAR lead to ownership of curriculum ‘It’s our project’ Enright and O’Sullivan.

They reported that students enhanced their decision-making and leadership skills, developed a sense of ownership and accomplishment, and gained insight into how to effect change. Goodnough, 2010
PAR opened a space for ownership in this project, but ownership was difficult and came with responsibilities. He called it, ‘the Socratic method of teaching… and it took a bit of getting used to … I’ve never experienced that before’.

‘As mutual engagement was fostered through the action research process group members negotiated meaning and collaboratively engaged in decision-making about the activities that would be adopted by the group to answer their research questions’ Line 47-50 Goodnough 2014

‘Evidently gained invaluable insights into the teaching and learning process by engaging in the curriculum construction process and by taking on teaching roles within the class.’ Enright and O’Sullivan 2010

Mutual engagement and learning within the community are enhanced by diversity, with each member bringing unique ideas and perspectives. While tensions and challenges may arise as results of this diversity, these tensions and challenges become a context for community members to develop shared perspectives and understandings, and to move their work forward. Eventually, the community develops a joint enterprise, Goodnough 2014

| Mututal engagement and collaboration lead to new insights | Participation leads to new personal/group insights |
‘We could not have done this on our own. We have gotten a better understanding of each other, we had a better understanding of what each other thinks and we talked to each other more openly than just the classroom student-teacher relationship.
Appendix 8 Ethics

8 a Ethics Approval

Dear Patricia

Ref: PGR-9866994-Diss

Project Title: A focus on belonging, alongside identifying unmet social and emotional needs may help to make a successful transition into 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 8b Briefing and Consent Forms

Co-researcher Information Sheet

Dear Colleagues

My name is Tricia Euston and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist. I am currently in my final year of the Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology and as part of the course I am hoping to conduct participatory action research with co-researchers within school.

During last academic year I conducted a pilot study within another high school looking at whether facilitating a sense of belonging for students with social and emotional needs can support a more positive transition into school.

Before you decide to become involved it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve, both for you and for school.

The following information is provided as background information. Please take your time to read this briefing, feel free to discuss this with others in school if you wish, before making the decision to take part. Your participation is completely voluntary.

If you, or others in school, have any questions or issues you would like to discuss ahead of agreeing to take part, please do not hesitate to contact me (details below).

Who will conduct the research?

Tricia Euston, Manchester Institute of Education, School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED), Ellen Wilkinson Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

Title of the Research

A focus on belonging, alongside identifying unmet social and emotional needs may help to make a successful transition into school.

What is the aim of the research?

I am interested in the way in which schools, working with other professionals, such as Educational Psychologists, can facilitate a sense of belonging for children and young people with social and emotional needs as they transition to a new school setting.

A knowledge gap has been identified in this area and I am proposing to conduct participatory action research, using a cooperative approach with all parties acting as co-
researchers within the project, to explore whether this model can support positive change in this area

**Why have I been chosen?**

I understand that school have been working on a project to improve transition for children and young people entering school. Mr xxxxxx, who is leading on this project, has observed that you are one of a range of staff with a depth of experience in this area and you are invited to be part of this project. We will be exploring school and individual practice and working to improve transition for young people. I am interested in your views and experience and, as part group of a team researchers, we will hopefully work together on this project.

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

I would like to invite you to be part of a series of workshops which will take place each half-term, from the Autumn term 2016 until Autumn term 2017. You will be a vital part of the research, agreeing the scope of the project and the ground rules for the group. Further workshops will involve taking part in discussions and activities and agreeing actions to take forward.

Together we will work on a way of putting actions in place and monitoring their effects. Any agreed action may or may not directly involve you, but may be for others to put into effect. All actions will only be agreed where there is the resource (time) to put it into place.

Each workshop will consider the feedback on any previous actions and will involve your personal reflection on the actions, the process and your experiences within this.

The research side of the project uses a methodology known as cooperative inquiry. I will provide information on the cooperative inquiry framework, prompts, questions and activities for discussion for the sessions, however, the process is very much cooperative in nature and you will be invited to participate as fully as your time commitment allows, ensuring that the process, activities and discussion points are relevant to the direction of change most suited to school.

**What happens to the data collected?**

Each workshop session will be audio recorded and partially transcribed to corroborate the themes produced in the activities and discussions. All names, including that of individuals, your school and the Local Authority will be anonymised. The data will be used to report findings and will be discussed, anonymously, in my thesis submission or other research undertaken during my time at the University of Manchester.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**

We will agree confidentiality as part of the groundrules for the group. Further, all data will be securely stored, using encryption to ensure confidentiality is maintained. Transcription and analysis of data will take place in a confidential space and will only be available to
myself and my supervisor. All data will only be kept for the purposes of this research and destroyed (shredded or deleted) when the process is complete.

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

All parties within the process are able to choose to take part in the process and to have the right to withdraw from the process at any time. No reason is required if you choose to withdraw from the process. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**

There will be no payment for participating in this research.

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

It is expected that the sessions will take no longer than 2 hours each. It is expected there will be 5 -7 sessions over the year.

**Where will the research be conducted?**

At school TBC

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

The research will be a doctoral thesis submission and assessed as part of the researcher’s professional doctorate studies. It is hoped that the research will be published in a scientific journal.

**Contact for further information**

If you would like more details about this research project, please contact Tricia Euston at Patricia.euston@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

You may also contact my university supervisor Dr. Catherine Kelly at the University of Manchester on: catherine.kelly@manchester.ac.uk

**What if something goes wrong?**

You should contact the supervisor named above 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 Coordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of
A focus on belonging, alongside identifying unmet social and emotional needs may help to make a successful transition into school.

Information Sheet for the Guardian or Parents of participants

Dear XXXX

My name is Tricia Euston and I am a trainee Educational Psychologist based at xxxxxx in Manchester. I am currently in my second year of the Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology and as part of the course I am hoping to conduct participatory action research with co-researchers within Anytown High school. I am also hoping to involve a small group of students to gather their views, to feed into the main research project.

This research is focused on children and young people at their transition from primary school to high school. We are considering what will work well and what could work better.

XXXX has been chosen to be part of the small group of students feeding into the research. They have been chosen as school thinks they will be able to draw on their own experiences and say what worked well and what could be better during transition.

Participation with the group is totally voluntary. The students have to agree that they want to be involved and we will need your consent for them to join in.

Before you decide whether to agree to their involvement is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve, both for XXXX and for school.
The following information is provided as background information. Please take your time to read this briefing, feel free to discuss this with others in school if you wish, before making the decision to take part. Their participation is completely voluntary.

If you, or others in school, have any questions or issues you would like to discuss ahead of agreeing to take part, please do not hesitate to contact me (details below).

**Who will conduct the research?**

Tricia Euston, who is a student at Manchester Institute of Education, The University of Manchester

**Title of the Research** A focus on belonging, alongside identifying unmet social and emotional needs may help to make a successful transition into school.

**What is the aim of the research?**

I am interested in the way in which schools, working with other professionals, such as Educational Psychologists can help children and young people feel a sense of belonging to school. The focus is on children and young people and what schools can do to support children during their transition.

A knowledge gap has been identified in this area and I am proposing to conduct action research to explore positive change in this area. This means working together with staff in school as co researchers and making sure we listen to the views of the students too, when deciding what changes to make

**Why has XXXX been chosen?**

I have been working with staff and school and they identified a group of students that would be helpful to contribute to the project. XXXXXXX has volunteered to be involved in the project. I am interested in their views and experiences and will complete a short initial interview and an interview as part of a group with other students who are also in year 7.

**What would XXXX be asked to do if taking part?**

I will provide information on what we might do during an initial interview and will use that meeting to explain what we will do during the group meeting. Both meetings are a way of getting their views and ideas. We may ask the group to meet again as the research carries on and hope that they can be involved in to help evaluate the project at the end.

The meetings will take place at school over the next 12 months, at a time which suits both students and school.

**What happens to the data collected?**

Each meeting will be audio recorded. The main points from each recording will be written up and the students will have the chance to check that the information recorded is accurate

All names, including that of individuals, your school and the Local Authority will be anonymised. The data will be used to report findings and will be discussed, anonymously, in
my thesis submission or other research undertaken during my time at the University of Manchester.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**

All data will be securely stored, using encryption to ensure confidentiality is maintained. Transcription and analysis of data will take place in a confidential space and will only be available to myself and my supervisor. All data will only be kept for the purposes of this research and destroyed (shredded or deleted) when the process is complete.

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

All parties within the process are able to choose to take part in the process and to have the right to withdraw from the process at any time. No reason is required if you choose to withdraw from the process. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form on behalf of XXXX.

**Will XXXX be paid for participating in the research?**

There will be no payment for participating in this research.

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

It is expected that the sessions will take no longer than 30 – 40 minutes each. It is expected there will be no more than 3-4 meetings over the next 12 months.

**Where will the research be conducted?**

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

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

The research will be a doctoral thesis submission and assessed as part of the researcher’s professional doctorate studies. It is hoped that the research will be published in a scientific journal.

**Contact for further information**

If you would like more details about this research project, please contact Tricia Euston at Patricia.euston@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

You may also contact my university supervisor Dr. Catherine Kelly at the University of Manchester on: catherine.kelly@manchester.ac.uk

**What if something goes wrong?**

You should contact the supervisor named above 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

Thank you very much for considering participation. Please sign and return the consent form below.
A focus on belonging, alongside identifying unmet social and emotional needs may help to make a successful transition into school

Information Sheet for Students

Hi. My name is Tricia.

I am a student at Manchester University. I am writing to invite you to join in my research project which is looking to make changes to how children settle into school, when they move from primary school. Before you decide to take part, please have a read of this information sheet, which tells you more about the project and how you might be involved, if you choose to go ahead. If you have any questions you can ask me or staff at school.

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to gather students and staff view’s on what helps students to feel they belong at school and how this can be encouraged when young people move from primary school to secondary school.

The project is called an action research cooperative inquiry. I will be working together with staff from your school to do the main research project. We want to build on the successful things that school do when students move school and then to make any improvements.

We are hoping to involve students, like yourself, as we think you have a really useful view on this, having been through something similar yourself. We will add your views into the main research group to help make decisions about what we do during the research project. We will make sure your view on what works well in school and what school could do a little better is part of what we consider when taking action

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

First of all you would meet me for a short chat, either on your own or with another student, about your experiences and ideas.
We would then get together with some other students and share these ideas. As a group we would then agree what we think are the main successes and ideas for improvement for helping students belong to school when they first move on their own.

The meetings will take place at school and might involve 2/3 meetings over the next 12 months, at a time which suits you and school. Each meeting will be audio recorded. The main points from each recording will be written up and you will have the chance to check that the information recorded is accurate.

**What happens to the data collected?**

The data will be analysed by myself AND the staff from school that I will be working with. When we have analysed this data this will then be written up and submitted to the University of Manchester in May 2018.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**

All names (including yours and the name of school etc.) will be changed and direct quotes will be made anonymous. The research will be written up and assessed at the University of Manchester.

**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, Tricia Euston at  patricia.euston@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

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

  catherine.kelly@manchester.ac.uk

Thank you very much for considering taking part in this research!
ASSENT/CONSENT FORM

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

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 have these answered satisfactorily.

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.

3. I understand that the workshops will be audio recorded

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes
5. I agree that any data collected may be used in future research

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

I agree to take part in the action research

____________________________________  __________________________  ________________
Name of participant             Date                Signature

____________________________________  __________________________  ________________
Name of person taking consent    Date                Signature
Appendix 9: Notes from Action research project initial meeting
1/12/16

Record of workshop. Annotated (bracketed red text) to provide a record of which sections were co-produced within group theming/analysis, which are a record of notes recorded during the meeting and which are a record of the project from audio recording, agreed at the start of the following workshop.

**Introduction to project and researcher** Tricia Euston, University of Manchester

**Explanation of confidentiality**

**Ethical approval – confirmed by all in advance. Any questions?**

**Introductions of people**

- x, Assistant Head, ks3 and Transition
- xSenco, (not present for those introductions)
- x, Inclusion coordinator
- x ex primary school head
- x, Literacy coordinator, (not present)
  - x, Maths coordinator, (not present – Madeline Burroughs attended in her place)

**Initial Question for consideration**

What practices, approaches and resources are important for young people as they transition to secondary school? (use of post its and collectively theme the post it notes). Agreed themes from sort and group activity

See below themes page 218-9
Second Question

What good practice is already in evidence at xxxxx?

See below transition good practice bullets.

(All above notes from audio recording and previously agreed agenda)
The cooperative inquiry process

The action researcher provided an overview of the cooperative inquiry process including an explanation of cycles of action and reflection. Plus overview of principles

- **Group Inquiry:** Actions and decisions take place within the group with some actions to take place outside the group. We may all be involved in action between workshops. Must find way to monitor or record actions taken between workshops (ideas include diaries, take photos, notes of meetings etc.

- **Different forms of knowing,** experiential, presentational, propositional, practical

  (The idea is to use rich picture to gather reflections

- **Open Boundary Inquiry:** need to consider how to include other stakeholders, SLT, children and young people (ideas start parallel groups (YP) or invite people to attend workshop where relevant)

  (above notes from audio recording)

Agreement for how we would work together:-

- Work in congruence with aims
- Collaboration – listening to each other
- Open to new ideas
- Share thoughts and feelings
- Be aware of and engage with disagreement
- Acknowledge our different roles
- Be alert to consensus collusion
- Remain in charge of our own emotions, seek help where needed and stay alert to others feelings (emotional competence)
- Work together to empower all those involved.
- Cut off time for the meetings 3.45 - 5 pm
- To consider the number of workshops required.
- Explanation of rich picture. Visual record of the process + timeline across the year. Assent from the group for this.

(taken from record of discussion and agreement of groundrules made within meeting)

**Think about the priorities for the project**

Institutional, academic and social/pastoral

**Academic**

**Maths**

- Madeline described specific methods used. Head has previously raised an issue about the bar method.
- Considering training up some gifted and talented pupils out to year 6 classrooms to work with students.
- Priority action? Setting up a working group to look at how this will be done?

**Literacy**

- The head is really interested in getting reading age of our current year 7s
- Going to use technology Star reader to obtain this information.
- TAs are running the interventions and will have greater information about specific gaps in knowledge.
- Abigail - Lit coordinator – would like to go out to schools and see examples of work. To talk to y6 teachers and
- Priority action? Consider whether Star reader has been done in feeder primary schools.
- Priority action? 19th century texts in y7. Anything that can be shared with primary schools to prepare children for this?

**Academic Overall KS3**

- Want to avoid this idea that we are starting again. Staff feel like that they are starting again
- Want to avoid that – sense that want to eliminate it
- Do you really know what the children can achieve?
- What they already know to build on – not gaps in knowledge (Strengths based approach)
- Priority Action – To try and make sure that there is less of a sense of starting again for the children and this is a continuation of their education.
Institutional

- RAG rating in place as well as school questionnaire
- Finding out information from children
- Could put the children through a bank of questioning. Staff going out to primary school may want to go and administer it. Make it fun and exciting.
- Organising new information on forms collected from primary for the children
- Currently considering when we put the children into forms and when they know. Is it before the induction day or after it. May need to consider pros and cons and how to do this.
- Communication with wider staff
  - Staff within this core action research group are very good at telling each other what we are doing
  - Perhaps the wider staff – y7 form tutors – to engage them – so staff in general are more
  - Possible Action to communicate transition good practice with wider staff.
- One Induction day rather than 2
- Consider how to do this/ how will it work

Social

- Katya described how important it is to try and work with parents/carers and family. Time and again this is the background to the potential issues in school.
- Potential action – how to get hard to reach parents on board/more engaged?
- To consider how to engage with parents
- Consider belonging as a way to ensure that young people settle in socially.
- Do we really know what they are worried about? Do we drill down to what is in their minds?
- Ensure that we take the clubs to the children and encourage their involvement
- How do we make it easier for children to say what they are worried about
- Researcher to share the research around belonging.
- Social and cultural continuity – not having to reset
- Review social interventions in place and consider any gaps
- Socially speaking – ‘I did that at primary school’
- Social skills work - continue
- Restorative justice – does anybody know which primary schools are involved in this??

(Record from flipcharts produced within workshop)

Agreed – research Question

How can we build on existing good practice to improve year six-seven transition practice within academic, social and organisational systems?

Next time

What is realistic within the priorities?

(Record from audio recording)

216
What is important to YP as they transition to secondary school?

- Y7 buddies so children can see a familiar face
- Students visit new secondary school – more opportunities for these visits
- Secondary staff visit primary school
- Moving up days
- An opportunity to build relationships before making the move
- A common goal/partnership between primary and secondary school
- Support making friends

- Work in y6 about how high school will be different
- Knowledge of the physical geography of school
- Help with how to get to school
- Rapid inclusion into clubs and sports
- Y 7 on day 1 start school before other years

- Time
  - Effective sharing of pastoral information and data, thorough handover
  - Observation of y6 classes and meeting with y6 teachers
  - Sharing academic attainment and progress info
  - Opportunity to share success with y6 teacher

- Help with organising themselves
  - Ensuring they have appropriate equipment
  - Being clear and outlining expectations
Having a key point of contact for concerns and for parents of vulnerable students
Family support
Engagement from partners and stakeholders (primary schools and other organisations)

Graduated approach
Students feel safe and secure
Targeted support and interventions
Pupil voice – what are your wishes and fears as you move from one setting to another?
Students feel their worries are taken seriously
Removing the fear
See the move as a continuation/journey and not a new thing
Social consistency

Consistency in curriculum – academic continuity
Y7 teachers aware of primary methods
Collaboration with Y6 teachers – SOL/weakness
Common teaching approaches
Comfortable and confident with their school work
Examples of their work from primary school
Are they showing Y7 teachers what really capable of?
Transition Good Practice at Anytown School

(Record from flipcharts produced within workshop)

- New and improved transition forms completed and data gathered from all primary schools
- Use of transition forms to gather data which may support transition, such as interests and matching students up with in school clubs
- Flagging all SEN needs not just for those students with a statement/EHCP
- RAG for all students before they arrive, communicated to SLT and key staff
- Transition day
  - New intake evening – try to make sure there are no surprises
  - Transition workshop for students transferring on their own or for those identified as more vulnerable – included a treasure hunt tour
- SEN and inclusion visits to all primary school
- Every school with a child attending TDS had a visit from a member of staff
  - Sessions within y6 at primary school. Ensuring students are ‘secondary ready’. Completion of hand activity to think about transition.
- Parent feedback forms sent out to all parents. There is a specific question about settling in
- Clubs year 7s can access at lunch and after school e.g., opportunity for restorative justice programme, nature club
- 1st Day additional time in form with form tutor
- Social focus for 1st day activities
- Having name cards for students which included their interests (taken from new information collected)
- Having year 7 photographs
  - Term 1 year 7 parents evening, ‘settling in evening’. Feedback is provided based on information students filled in themselves.
- Primary feeder schools have the opportunity to use the school for shows, e.g., dance festival or other uses and students have an opportunity to get used to some of the physical space in school.
- Meeting with primary heads, breakfast meeting to agree priorities for improving transition
- Gathering of best piece of English work from students transferring to school, provided to English department.
- Intervention groups set up for those students who may need additional support to catch up

Social = RED, Institutional = GREEN, Academic = PURPLE

ENDS

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## Appendix 10 Evaluation Workshop

### Appendix 10 a Member checked codes and themes from evaluation workshop and written feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Quotes</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Sub themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>how xxxxx school fits into that. I’ll be going to the meeting saying,</td>
<td>School model is ready to work with primaries</td>
<td>Model from Anytown AR project ready to upscale for wider project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘I'm ready to go. We’re ready. It’s up and running’.1210-22P1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I will look to catch up with you in January and we'll talk about what we can start planning, what's doable, really. That's it to start with what's doable. I think you've put together a really clear way of working

| Look at being involved in wider transition. We have a clear way of working to share |
| Model from Anytown AR project ready to upscale for wider project |

I only think we’re still at the beginning of the journey, I think. Yes, for me as a retired headteacher, the impact, for me, is to what I would have done if I was going back to my school, but I'm not. It's how you're going to capture that now and what are you going to do with it…. To me, I think it would be so sad if all this work -- Because this work that's been done here with yourselves leading it and I point to you too as leading it forward, P1, in particular, this to me is the vehicle to make that group more structured because you've got the money, haven't you, coming in there.

| We are at the beginning of the journey. This group could be the vehicle to make the LA more structured |
| Model from Anytown AR project ready to upscale for wider project |

1167-1179 P3

We've done a lot of background work on this to save people time and

| Could use this group as a |
| Model from Anytown |
to structure it up and say, ‘Well, this is a model.’ We've done a year's work on this, not two minutes. Here, we can do some time-saving stuff here with Anytown school quite rightly so, having the headline for the work that they have done. It's how we're going to sharpen that into a tool now, a transition tool that other people will want to take.

P3 1181-86

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It’s a model of good practice. 1197P1</th>
<th>The group is a model of good practice</th>
<th>Group is a model of good practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes It’s a model of good practice 1199 P6</td>
<td>Model of great practice but still to work on academic transition</td>
<td>Model of good practice but still to work on academic transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I do feel that the step before I'm able to stand or sit in front of anybody and say, ‘Here's a model of great practice,’ and that from Anytown high school, clap at the end …..we need to bottom out what happens in terms of academic transition because I still feel there's a little bit of a gap there
I said I was happy to lead a team of interested partners on social and institutional transition. Because I think, that's what we're very very good at here, and I wanted to be on the other side of things where colleagues were sharing their expertise in terms of, academic and curriculum transition line 71-74P1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School leading on transition</th>
<th>We are good at social and institutional transition</th>
<th>Anytown school leading on social and institutional transition useful in wider project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>quite a bit with Anytown school, of course, I mean you’ve always been leading transition maybe not calling it that, but leading that for years that I was ahead, 255-257 P3</td>
<td>Anytown school leading on social and institutional transition useful in wider project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharing with LA group - At our school for the last two years we have worked on transition</th>
<th>Anytown school leading on social and institutional transition useful in wider project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>listening to it was I was dying to say, 'At the xxx school for the last two years-- we’ve done all this on transition ' ln 114-115 P3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘It’s a year ago we were talking that this is what needed to be done. I have been doing something on transition with xxxx School. P3

Sharing with LA group I have been doing something on transition

Anytown school leading on social and institutional transition useful in wider project

it’s up to the coordinators to start getting the right people together around the right tables and having the right conversations. That’s I think where things are going and where it’ll start to wobble because I don’t think they know who-- Certainly, from what I heard this afternoon, they were very nice, don’t get me wrong. The people who were standing up at xxxx school and saying this is what we’re doing seemed very nice, but again, a little bit vague about what they were supposed to be doing maybe. I think that’s something (we are doing)

Start to get the right people together, although LA not sure who they are

Need right people and space for wider project
I think learning from this group is the right people around the table to think about it, probably something about the size of the group. Not too big. Probably something about a mixture of leaders and non-leaders, so that people who can get on with the action and people who can make strategic decision and bring that to the table. There's a whole range of things that I think if you won't pick what had happened within this group, you'd be able to take to something outside of.

963-68
it's essential to create time for the right people, to be sitting down around the right table, and talking to each other. Line 74- 75P1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Create time for the right people to sit down to talk in wider project</th>
<th>Need right people and space for wider project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

And maybe getting at (talking to) your school leaders first of all and explaining to them. You need to get at that level

….. And then it has to come down then because if your school leaders
….. Start in your area then have it as a model way of working that you can then disseminate to others, this is what we did etc, etc. This is the power and the impact the projects have brought 840-847 P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Get school leaders on board to create a model of prim/sec colleagues working together, model from our project</th>
<th>School leaders instrumental in supporting prim/sec colleagues to model how to work together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
do we have a core group that can lead transition on behalf of school leaders? Do we have a group that pulls together school leaders, primary and secondary, who have a mandate from the leadership of both? 873-5 P9

LA core group to lead on transition includes school leaders and staff from prim/sec

School leaders instrumental in supporting prim/sec colleagues to model how to work together

Need to establish a work hub with mandate from school leaders

School leaders instrumental in supporting prim/sec colleagues to model how to work together

What you need is primary heads and secondary heads to say, ‘Right, we agree to the establishment of a work hub.’ Or theyre a work group that will report back to primary heads group, that will report back to secondary heads group, and we give them the mandate 878-81 P9
If it comes from the top, you see, and the head is saying, ‘This is a great idea. I've been to the meetings, we're going to do this.’ Because I often found the practitioners were really willing…..But if the head wasn't willing, whatever I tried to do as a head you were wasting your time. 913-8 P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads agree and practitioners willing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School leaders instrumental in supporting prim/sec colleagues to model how to work together</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gosh, it would have been great to do some CPD with my staff around expectation year seven and above.’ Because it doesn't end at primary and yet we were ending it. I'm thinking it would have been handy for me to know the curriculum because I was a primary head and I've no idea what the expectation is on secondary colleagues. 787-91 P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary staff training around y7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase primary and secondary practitioners knowledge of others’ setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trying to continue and to develop is this parity between the secondary and the primary and this collegiality-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>832-3 P2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to develop parity and collegiality with primary colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parity and collegiality with primary colleagues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If we were starting smaller, the greatest impact through starting smaller would be to conduct this with those five. If others are part of it, that's great and that's wonderful and no one would exclude, but actually to kick on with those five would make a really big difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with 5 primaries as a small group in future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a model of wider transition work with small number of primary schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Then have a working group of who is going to be on the working group from the cluster chairs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working groups working within primary clusters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Primary secondary colleagues working on literacy scheme of work s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yes, I made the time. It was very useful because I thought--poetry and you could do this. I saw the gaps really through speaking and having those conversations which I thought was really useful 515-7 P6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversations (with primary colleagues) allow you to see the gap between primary and secondary</th>
<th>Model Primary secondary colleagues working on literacy scheme of work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Is that the project they're looking to design utilising the funding is to get year-five, six and seven teachers working together on a literacy unit of work. While it’s the next stage, they’re not to come up with what this unit of work might look like, calling these colleagues together, maybe, first of all, from a cluster, your cluster. Call your cluster before because that won’t be visited again after this initial meeting. 1217-1222 P3

| Get funding to work across y5-7 on a literacy unit within primary clusters | Model Primary secondary colleagues working on literacy scheme of work |
We all get a model together of that with a few like-minded primary schools, even if you're the only secondary school. You go for xxxx you go for xxxx school. So your teachers aren't travelling too far. Do it geographically. Then put a piece of work together that shows the impact of that unit of work because we’re all about units out a little bit earlier ,, Make it a unit of work that's going to benefit the primary schools but with the impact and the impetus from your literacy leads in high school 1233-9 P3

that will be year six teachers literacy coordinators, in the primary sector, creating time to have a dialogue, to share practices, to come up with something, that's long term between themselves. Line 76-78P1

Model work with primary colleagues within small clusters to show impact for replication in other areas

Creating time to have a dialogue between literacy practitioners

Model Primary secondary colleagueus working on literacy scheme of work
They were talking about year five and six teachers working with years seven and eight literacy coordinators. They were talking about the summer term, planning a unit of work, of course, that's what we have been talking about, planning a unit of work. I thought, ‘Gosh, if only we'd said it because we said it, what, the first meeting,’ or something like that. Yes. Writing a unit of work, but together for the year five, six and seven practitioner or heads of English. Line 92-94

Your summer term unit of work (literacy) would be that collaborative that can take half a day of getting them out of school and the funding could be used to see…to release them because the heads are going. ‘Oh, thank you very much. I don't have to pay for that. I've got something coming back in return. So you're on a win-win 1344-50 P3

Obtaining funding for collaborative piece of work would help release staff
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Something a little bit more creative, a little bit -- a bit more pro value for money, something that's longer term. Is there a view in the room, that it will be better started at the end of year five, into year six, all the way through year six, into year seven. Line 62-64</th>
<th>Transition starts from y5</th>
<th>Transition planning starts earlier than y6 in primary to flatten the hump of transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you know what syllabus says and what it's looking like and you can't start to bring some of that in earlier. Even down to year four [crosstalk] could be some in that year, cos year 6 is a bit too late really so is that coming together, isn't it? Looking at primary curriculum, looking at secondary curriculum and talking to some ….Fusing them together. 521-26</td>
<td>Work towards secondary curriculum earlier</td>
<td>Transition planning starts earlier than y6 in primary to flatten the hump of transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It's a one to 11 is what it is. Let's start thinking about one to 11 where ultimately, in 11, this is what they're going to need to do. I'm only talk in terms of literacy in English, but every curriculum subject, we'll have an ultimate year 11 exam where they're required to do certain things. P1

It's about tracking back from that and the hump, I guess, is between year six and year seven. If we can flatten that hump and we we roll that stuff right down to one in the way that primary specialists are able to do to that level then up to secondary where subject specialists are able to bring that on, that's what we need to try to be doing. That changes the conversation really. P6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work across both sectors within the curriculum and flattening the hump y6-7</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition planning starts earlier than y6 in primary to flatten the hump of transition</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
A lot of the teachers were very keen to come in and observe how years seven are taught. That’s it to see how we manage them, in the classroom and how we want to push them, and develop them cause when they can see that this is what you're going to be doing with these children. Then how can we hope that journey, and p3

I also feel secondary practitioners should go to primaries. 610-614 P6 and P2

It’s critical for secondary colleagues and primary colleagues to be working together for it to be effective and for it to be successful. …. ? I don't know because I still feel to this day that there's still a massive
division. Why that's there? It could be dozens of reasons. It's time, it's geographical, conceptual, whatever it is. A lot of conversations need to be had between primary and secondary colleagues about the process and about how it works. 813-8P1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>transition, conversations to start how to make it work</th>
<th>primary/secondary settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to break down for primary/secondary staff to work together</td>
<td>Sharing knowledge/skills across primary/secondary settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships and communications with</td>
<td>Need relationships with primaries or gaps in information about</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You have a whole load of barriers to break down there, I think, with your leadership 805 P3

, as well as perhaps relationships or communication between primaries and us needs to start well before those first weeks of the term because sometimes it only takes a week and those kids we've
lost them. Whereas, I’ve certainly found there have been gaps from some primary schools where we haven't had the information, we haven't had all the background or what's worked, what hasn't. I think that’s something we need to build up or place that communication between primary schools and us.377-378 P2

if that work that's carried out is not valued when the transfer [crosstalk] Yes, because I've seen it before. We've done all of these wonderful unit of work, big floor books being delivered, a piece of work for every child and it's all done by us to but nobody's bothered by it 583-5 P3

in the first few weeks picking up and building on it. Without that is complete waste, but it's so easy to do it across a number of subjects as been done it lots of places where actually you have little elements and you have certain things that the child does over the summer as part of Summer holiday project picked up in y7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lost them. Whereas, I’ve certainly found there have been gaps from some primary schools where we haven't had the information, we haven't had all the background or what's worked, what hasn't. I think that’s something we need to build up or place that communication between primary schools and us.377-378 P2</th>
<th>Work carried out for transition in y6 needs to be valued in y7</th>
<th>Value transition work in y7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>if that work that's carried out is not valued when the transfer [crosstalk] Yes, because I've seen it before. We've done all of these wonderful unit of work, big floor books being delivered, a piece of work for every child and it's all done by us to but nobody's bothered by it 583-5 P3</td>
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<tr>
<td>in the first few weeks picking up and building on it. Without that is complete waste, but it's so easy to do it across a number of subjects as been done it lots of places where actually you have little elements and you have certain things that the child does over the summer as part of</td>
<td>Summer holiday project picked up in y7</td>
<td>Value transition work in y7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
bridging unit, such as visiting a museum, such as going on a bus. There's all sorts of things they might do. They fill that in as a passport of activities because then they've got a sense of personal experiences to write about in English, to paint that context in math or in sciences and so on. Then right across the whole curriculum, you're making use of that because you build the right experiences in. 588-595

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes and Impacts from Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the bit seems to be very effective in this project. Around the affective and emotional, the affective aspect so that the emotional needs of children are dealt with. The system as well supports those and of course that's exactly what all the national research told us, this being the best anyway and 669-672 P9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I did come to the transition day, last year. I’ve worked recently in three large schools. I was very very impressed with the actual running of the day, the activities for the children, the coordination of it all. I think it was absolutely brilliant. What I worry a bit more about is not just that one snapshot day, it’s more of the long-term. We’ve seen it with certain year-sevens who were okay on that day. Everything was in place for them.

Then the reality of a full timetable, even with support is a much bigger leap and a bit. I think that’s something that I certainly want to do more work around is the day was absolutely brilliant for them. For all of them, for the SEN, for the vulnerable, for the gifted and talented, it’s brilliant. I think it’s now looking at how do we ensure that those groups of cohorts of kids are fully supported when they actually start here in September, rather than just on that one day. 362-373 P8

it’s been different and I feel it’s worked, much better from my

Transition day meets student needs. To focus on vulnerable as they settle in effective planning for emotional needs of children

The ideas generated in group Deeper understanding
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective and the ideas that would generate around the table help to</th>
<th>helped put new transition plan in place</th>
<th>and new ideas lead to improved transition practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>put that plan into place; 268-269 P6</td>
<td>I’m looking at transition from a different point of view</td>
<td>Deeper understanding and new ideas lead to improved transition practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what I am going to say is through the process of the last twelve months or so, 18 months for me since I was put in charge of it, it's not that anymore; I'm looking at it from a very, very, different point of view kind of similar to what P2 said.319-321P1</td>
<td>Sharing knowledge about how primaries work</td>
<td>Deeper understanding and new ideas lead to improved transition practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just little things like when we were sending the forms out, one said, ‘Well, you can’t send them that way. It’s SAT week.’ Not sending the forms that way, they’re doing that – It’s been interesting to know that…441-443 P2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What needs to happen, and then I guess I'm slightly more practical in terms of what can we deliver, and how can we deliver it, and is it useful but not is it useful for us as a school, is it useful in terms of what needs to happen for the pupils who are going through the transition process, not what can we do as a school. It is similar what P2 said it's more about I've a much deeper understanding now I feel of what needs to happen or what the pupils need, 321-324P1

| What needs to happen, and then I guess I'm slightly more practical in terms of what can we deliver, and how can we deliver it, and is it useful but not is it useful for us as a school, is it useful in terms of what needs to happen for the pupils who are going through the transition process, not what can we do as a school. It is similar what P2 said it's more about I've a much deeper understanding now I feel of what needs to happen or what the pupils need, 321-324P1 | Much deeper understanding of what the pupils need | Understanding pupil needs, see transition from child’s view |
| I've reflected on the most and taken the most from is a greater understanding of what the needs of the pupils are and how we can possibly, as far as possible cater for them. 809-811P1 | Greater understanding of needs of pupils and how to cater for them | Understanding pupil needs, transition from child’s view |
Students who have been flagged up as students who might present with very challenging behaviour or are very vulnerable. They settle in much much better than they have done before myself and P2 were working so closely on transition.338-340P1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vulnerable students settle in better than before</th>
<th>Understanding pupil needs, transition from child’s view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus has changed to be on the needs of the student as opposed to what school can deliver</td>
<td>Understanding pupil needs, transition from child’s view</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are still gaps in terms of academic and curriculum transition but in terms of how far we've come in the last 12, 18 months since me and P2 have been working together on this, the focus is very much the needs of the students and how can we cater for them, as opposed to what can we deliver as a school that will work that will fit into this timescale that we have.

341-345P1
I go to all the core group meetings now, I can't go to conference because I'm not professional adviser, but I go to core group, I go to summer term safeguarding meetings for the vast majority of children. If parents refuse to have me there this was within we can't. We've had that once, which was a bit strange because I don't know. I would say that's a big change… We have got better information and better knowledge. We don't have children turning up and then suddenly a month later, we discover they're on a plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>728-735 P2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>how do we assess whether that's been effective for the students or not? Going on from that, if it's effective for the students, then it's effective for the school because the purpose is for it to be effective to the students. If we can say, and I think we can, 333 – 335P1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Going to safeguarding meetings for y6 students to prepare for transition – gives better prior information |
| Understanding pupil needs, see transition from child’s view. |

| Assess that if effective for students is effective for school |
| Understanding pupil needs, see transition from child’s view. |
This year….. we’re also putting on presentations…drop ins for parents…..being available for Q and A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personalise parents settling in evening</th>
<th>Understanding pupil needs, see transition from child’s view.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and because it's not the same for everybody, it's not one size fits all so, which is why I really I think we've developed very successfully with P2, with that highly personal, as personalised as it can be with 200 students coming from 33 different primaries 324-329P1</td>
<td>Personalised transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how does it have to look mechanically to, talking a step back now, what do the students need? and how can we deliver that? In as personalized way as we can?</td>
<td>Opportunity to take a step back and think about personalized transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>so I just felt like we have that more focus on transition, more so than ever before but obviously … needing it more 265-266 P6</td>
<td>More focus on transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If you can just flatten down like P1 said that transfer and share that to start with how'd you get your reluctant readers going [crosstalk] what to do. 955-57 P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flatten the hump</th>
<th>Flatten the hump of transition</th>
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</table>

I broke down my key stages because I have just that problem. What I did, I had an early years team then I made a transition team in the middle of the school and that was year two, year three, and year four. So to try and stop that dip after year two when to trying blend it and we did have some success, it wasn't totally successful but we did because those three practitioners worked together all the time, planned together all the time, monitored work together all the time 638-43 P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning from primary systems to flatten hump y2-3</th>
<th>Flatten the hump of transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Transition is not a break – we don’t want that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT – Positive and negative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I guess we tried to do something like that (summer project) on ourselves and we gave summer homework challenge, but in that, we were reliant on parents to drive that… been difficult to know what is meaningful and how to work in school 599-601</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Need training on phonics and teaching reading</td>
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</table>

P6, you have talked about the skills and the knowledge we now perhaps realise we need more primary training don't we on phonics and teaching kids to read. 759-61 P8
classroom this is where we start, this is what we do, and it's like, it's a help towards not knowing everything and you start a new job to think, knowing nothing. If there is that element of familiarity, new teacher but I know how you're teaching, I know what you're expecting of me, I know what we are going to do about this English lesson because this is how we do it. I just want to think that someone worry and panic. I have no idea, might lessen slightly. 655-659 P8

| classroom this is where we start, this is what we do, and it's like, it's a help towards not knowing everything and you start a new job to think, knowing nothing. If there is that element of familiarity, new teacher but I know how you're teaching, I know what you're expecting of me, I know what we are going to do about this English lesson because this is how we do it. I just want to think that someone worry and panic. I have no idea, might lessen slightly. 655-659 P8 | Primary school transition work can help familiarity with curriculum | Primary school curriculum transition work helps familiarity |

| all the English teachers, all the year six teachers and then going, ‘Well, xxxxx, that's brilliant.’ Then .. and you'll say, ‘But I've got so much from it as well and we are working together in transition utopia of everyone getting something from it. I think we're a long, long way away from that. P1 | Ideal of prim/sec teachers working together a long way away | Some barriers to prim/sec teachers working together |
and they're challenges around that in terms of the number of feeders schools that we have and you know I think is it ….33 schools, and they will all be slightly different in how they do things and in their classroom routines, and I think there's a lot more similarity in primary school these days; I think, there's over the last few years primary practice is been a lot, you know you go in and see the same kind of things you see; the same kind of behaviour systems, you see the same kind of language being used around resilience, working rules all of that is kind of becoming very…..Things to build Independence towards P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge in terms of number of feeder schools,</th>
<th>Practical challenges for effective transition planning</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 subthemes</td>
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<tr>
<th>Process of project</th>
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you were already doing these actions and reflections, thinking about it actions and reflections and I joined you for that bit of it, and it was going on before I was here and it’ll be going on after I will leave the project line 231-233 P7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions and reflections before during and after</th>
<th>AR cycles before during and after project</th>
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</table>

I’m hearing that you really hope won't be the end. It's the end for the project in terms of, I have to evaluate this to write it up in January. However, I still got a paper to write about dissemination that I'll write later in the year. I'll be involved in anything that comes out of that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This wont be the end of the project</th>
<th>AR cycles before during and after project</th>
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</table>
happily and I would happily give my time to come because I feel personally invested in what's happened P6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>went to what are the positive things happening in Anytown school?</th>
<th>Always positively framed</th>
<th>Use of positive (Appreciative) approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So it was always positively framed and it's was always from the basis of your understanding I suppose. 251-253 P7</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| I think the right people have been in the team. I have to say I think that has been one of the major contributor, of course, to success. Obviously, myself as the person who has overall responsibility for the transition into school and obviously, P2, who I worked very very closely with, but having the same cohort, a literacy coordinator, a primary school headteacher line 423 – 427P1 | The right people have been in the (AR) team | Right people in AR team – good group recipe |

| really has been a very very good recipe if you pardon the anaolgy For tapping in on individual people's expertise, I'm very practical, | The recipe of the group – different views | Right people in AR team – good group recipe |
whereas P2’s very fluffy, P6 is superb at literacy and would make things happen. Maths has been a bit hit and miss. How could we have what we’ve done without having the view of somebody who works as a head teacher in a primary school, with that view? 429-434

having the right people around the table enabled a mixture of….. three kind of elements really. A mixture of the practical, let's think about the practical steps that we need to do this. Whether that was in terms of, ‘We've got a star reader. How do we find out who’s got it?’ Those kind of practical. Then there's been this kind of alchemy of idea generation that you've all contributed to. Then I think the third thing has been strategic thinking 447-452

| having the right people around the table enabled a mixture of….. three kind of elements really. A mixture of the practical, let's think about the practical steps that we need to do this. Whether that was in terms of, ‘We've got a star reader. How do we find out who’s got it?’ Those kind of practical. Then there's been this kind of alchemy of idea generation that you've all contributed to. Then I think the third thing has been strategic thinking 447-452 | Right people in group enabled focus on practicals, generating ideas and strategic thinking | Right people in AR team – generated ideas and strategic thinking |
If we haven't had that view then we may not have talked about the things we talked about or taken the views that we've taken on board because without your view, we're, especially me, I'm the worst of all, making assumptions that P2 often corrects me about in terms of what primaries want, what they need, what they like, what they don't like, how they run, what they do, what they don't do. We've had somebody sitting around the table who's a head teacher of a primary school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People in group to talk to what primaries need in transition</th>
<th>Right people in the group – knowledge 4 subthemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is an open forum focus on children to move this area on’. I thought ‘No, you don't want to diverting it off at a tangent somewhere else. We needed to focusing on our core business, didn't we really?

1144 – 1153 P3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on children</th>
<th>Group shared commitment to child-focused aims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The child.</strong> The children have always got to be the heart of it. Then the school's got to make the change and make it happen for the children. I think it's still a balance of both really, looking at it from both points of view. There's got to be impact both as a school and how we drive transition. Because it's a journey, transition, isn't it. It's not stagnant. It'll change year on a year. 1163-67 P6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children at the heart of it. Transition is a journey, will need to make improvements and change year on year</th>
<th>Group shared commitment to child-focused aims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
I've just felt that the group has been supportive of what we've wanted to do even though we're all coming from different places. Aren't we?
To feed into a central desire to make a difference for children. 1022-7

<p>| I think for me because obviously I have come from primary practice to this.....and for me it was always very child-focused in all our decisions, 275-278 P2 |
|---|---|---|
| Central desire to make a difference for children | It was always child-focused | Group shared commitment to child-focused aims |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I think we're a bit fluid sometimes between a few of them. Because we relied on P1, to come today with the information that he had to bring some clarity to the table……But I think we've needed a leader and yourself (P7) sometimes as well to keep us focused and also to put additional information on the table that the rest of us didn't know. 1006-1011 P3</th>
<th>Sometimes we have needed a leader and someone to keep us focused or provide extra information</th>
<th>Sometimes need leadership within the group to move forwards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm agreeing with my colleagues, but somewhere between one and two, I would say less three but certainly depending on what the needs of the time were. Well, what the common style was at the time would range between the top two. I think sometimes you have to make a decision about who needs to do what or people will -- that's often not necessary these people around this table have recognised that there's something that they are happy to take hold off. 1029-35P1</td>
<td>Working at level 1 or 2 (group control of the process or leader has initial idea – taken forward by group). Sometimes someone needs to make a decision and then others take hold of it</td>
<td>Sometimes need leadership within the group to move forwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But I think we've grown as a group…… I feel differently today sitting around the table than I did in the initial meeting. It's funny isn't it</td>
<td>Grown as a group, group been supportive of central desire to make a difference for children</td>
<td>Grown as a group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
because I've just felt that the group has been supportive of what we've wanted to do even though we're all coming from different places.

Aren't we? To feed into a central desire to make a difference for children. 1022-7 P3

degree of trust and a degree of professionalism but people will follow through with what they have and coming back and saying what everyone said. I trust the people around the table if they say they're going to do something in a dialogue where people are committing to do something. Then they'll go away and do it without the pressure of thinking ‘Well, I'm going to be checked up on’. 1040-46P1

Degree of trust and professionalism on people taking forward actions and coming back to group

Trust and professionalism within group lead to actions
what a number of us have gone away and done or taken is as a result of what something else somebody else has said. I can't tell you how many times someone else has said something. I would have never thought myself or thought of myself and thought I can go away and I can do that.

I can think that. I can take that idea away and do something with it. It's happened organically. There must be 10 or 20 things that have been actioned, that benefited students who are in our school now. That hasn't been my idea but it hasn't come from my head, it comes from somebody else'. .. P4 said and hers is just one example.

Something that she said, suddenly P2, said something, I said something, somebody else said something. Before you know it we want 10 minutes later, we've got a plan ready for the transition evening about the summer work. That wasn't P4 on her own, that was a starting point. That was the flame. Then bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, me and P2, off we go. Done1059-73P1

| Over 10-20 Actions taken based on ideas of the group, which have grown organically and benefited students |
| Trust and professionalism within group lead to actions |
I feel like very quickly, trust developed. You said it P1. I've heard it repeatedly in the way that you communicate with each other. Trust was established very quickly with you as professionals. Professional respect between colleagues. The way the ideas were generated everyone was listened to. You said that P3. There's that idea that no idea was a bad idea because it might send you to something else……
Yes. Those discussions that I have been having have been really collaborative. There's been that reassessment of goals along the way without having to say---- terrible idea 1013 – 1026 P7

| Trust developed, professional respect, all listened to each other, no idea a bad idea, collaborative, reassessment of goals together | Trust and professionalism within group lead to actions |
Not afraid to have past practice challenged, to make changes, to fail, but to remember it is an open forum with a focus on children to move on transition

Trust and professionalism within group lead to actions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not afraid to have past practice challenged, to make changes, to fail, but to remember it is an open forum with a focus on children to move on transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People are passionate about what trying to achieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People are passionate have desire to improve transition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Not afraid to have the past and the previous challenge that there might be a better way for us to scrap that and move on…. To be able to fail. Sometimes in the early meetings, I used to sit and feel a teeny weeny bit uncomfortable when I'd hear little threads of messages about primary schools and primary practice. I thought ‘No, don't say anything. It's not the time yet. There will be another time to say it’. That was very restricting for me as a person, ‘No, no, no. We're not having any defence. P3 |

| Because people around the table as you said are passionate about what it is we're trying to achieve 1051-52 P8 |
natural desire, isn't there, around the table to make sure transition is as best and seamless as it can possibly be. Looking at it from both points of view (primary and secondary) how we drive transition. It’s a journey – how it changes year on year

1053-6 P6

Like a lot when it comes down to the kind of person you are and I think we're all genuinely passionate about kids and progress. Quite honest, not afraid to -- certainly not afraid to make a fool of yourself. If you throw something out there-

…..The kind of people we all are rather than something that we've learned or it's just the team that we are, I think.
I have worked on this project. I’m passionate about it. We do a lot in terms of institutional readiness. This is all everything. We’ve done a lot in terms of social readiness. All of that is ongoing and is evolving and is organic. This is the journey that we’re on. Here's all the things that we’ve done. This is what has been effective in terms of institutional and social adjustment 1211 – 1215 P1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shared aim and shared value. 1057 P8</th>
<th>Shared aims and values</th>
<th>Shared aims and values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

We're always, not just me at xxxx, we're always welcome to working with partners from all different sectors, all different people. I do hope that this isn't the last time that you're open to come and work with us on anything that you do or any of your colleagues. I think that it's great when you're working with people who aren't necessarily, working in your building. It’s a real shot in the arm, isn't it sometimes.1379-84P1

| Working with partners from different sectors, all people can reinvigorate | Working with range of people from different sectors | Working with partners from different sectors, all people can reinvigorate | Working with range of people from different sectors |
post session of these groups as well is self-reflection. When I've gone away I've thought what do I need to do in terms of my own professional teaching to make transition better and .... It's been phonics for me. Because I'm not primary trained, even though I do a lot of literacy in the school that is still my weaknesses, have I got phonic training. How do I teach such low ability children to be able to read better, spell better, and write back down to the basics .... Had I have not been part of this because I just think when I've gone away I felt I still feel like my own teaching I need to change that to a transition focus. That's going to the primaries. I want to go into the primaries again and look at how they teach phonics.

An ownership of the group as well, and a commitment to it, isn't it?

968-9 P3

Self-reflection from action and reflection within the group

Project lead to self-reflection on own knowledge, skills and understanding.
at different stages when we've met. Sometimes some of our number have been missing, and we haven't been able to move, I didn't feel, anyway quite swiftly on those occasions. Because bits of the puzzle we're missing, and we needed those other people to feed into the main agenda and it didn't work. 1013-7 P3

It wouldn't have happened without a group discussion and every member of the group feeling they've got something valuable to contribute. Whether that's initiating, or adding, or contributing, or disagreeing, or contrasting. I think largely speaking it's the top bracket that I think that our group is working within 1074-7P1

, it was a very collaborative exercise, the first one we did. We did the what we think kids need from transition; that was where we started 249-250 P7

Need all elements of group present to move actions forward.

Every member feels they have valuable contribitions, initiating, adding, contributing disagreeing, contrasting

Project relied on contributions and involvement of all parties in the group

Collaborative

Egalitarian and Collaborative Approach
I felt it was quite collegiate in the beginning really opinion mattered and there was a great deal of listening to each other wasn't there? And then putting down main messages and then trying to find out direction and our vision from there. That's how I see it really line 245-248 P3

| Collegiate, listening to each other, putting down main messages | Egalitarian and Collaborative Approach |

It's been a really collaborative and enjoyable process. But it’s that shared values that's made me want to keep coming back. We are all trying to make a difference to those children who experience a really big drop or shock when they start 1303 P7

| Collaborative process with shared values | Egalitarian and Collaborative Approach |

I felt very comfortable with the group I was working with as well. But I could say what I felt P2

| Comfortable to say what I felt | Egalitarian and Collaborative Approach |
From what I've seen, and I've only been involved for a couple of months. I'm tempted to say the top one. Because I honestly wouldn't like to say who has had power or control or more ideas than anybody else. I think it's been a really nice experience for everybody to chip in. Well, I think this. Well, I'll do that and I found this and you -- personally, but I've obviously not been involved for a full year. I think they have been slightly different. But I do think, I really don't know,, the top one and driven by the group. I don't think there's any one person. I know obviously a lot of it lands at your feet, but I do think it's been very much everybody's ideas have been involved, included just as important as somebody being told or I don't know. That's just my

| Thought 995-1005 P8 | No one had power or control. Nice experience for everyone to chip in. Everybody’s ideas been involved and included | Egalitarian and Collaborative Approach |
Although the composition of the group changed during the project due to staffing changes, the opinions and views of new members were held to be equally valuable to those who had been part of the project since the beginning. Indeed, these new contributions often helped to develop the thinking of the group P2 written feedback.

Group changed but contributions of all members held to be equally valuable

Egalitarian and Collaborative Approach
Appendix 10 b. Coded Extract Evaluation Workshop

Codes in red

‘You start with bottom level manipulation. It's on person who comes like you said about your meeting today, I'm not dising the people who do that meeting. However, they came with a PowerPoint and they presented info -- That's hard then. If you stand up with a PowerPoint it's hard then to generate a discussion with a big group.

Annie: It becomes a lecture almost.

Laura: It becomes a lecture. Someone to come and give me some information. I've not really been involved in decision making. This one (next level) is consultation where I might come and say, ‘I've got a questionnaire for you to fill in about how Anytown school do transition. How have you done it? Can you give me some data on this, this and this?’ I think we're at this level, (within participation levels) but I'm not quite sure. I wanted your opinion on where we are within these. The first on the participation bit is partnership, the groups involved in the decision making, but a leader has initiated the actions.

There's delegated power where leaders have the initial idea, and then the group go out and do it. Then there's group control which is that the aims, actions and agenda arise from, and are driven by the group. I'm interested in what you think has happened within our group. I'm also interested in why you think these things have happened
**Annie:** From what I've seen, and I've only been involved for a couple of months. I'm tempted to say the top one. Because I honestly wouldn't like to say who has had power or control or more ideas than anybody else. I think it's been a really nice experience for everybody to chip in. Well, I think this. Well, I'll do that and I found this and you -- personally, but I've obviously not been involved for a full year. I think they have been slightly different. But I do think, I really don't know. No one had power and control

**Laura:** Group control.

**Abigail:** Yes, the top one and driven by the group. I don't think there's any one person. I know obviously a lot of it lands at your feet, but I do think it's been very much everybody's ideas have been involved, included just as important as somebody being told or I don't know. That's just my thought. No one had power and control

**Julie:** I think we're a bit fluid sometimes between a few of them. Because we relied on Jack, to come today with the information that he had to bring some clarity to the table. Even though, and I wasn't keeping it from it, I was going to share it after the meeting if he didn't know, [chuckles] all this money. But I think we've needed a leader and yourself sometimes as well to keep up us focused and also to put additional information on the table that the rest of us didn't know. I think we've gone between -- Sometimes we have needed a leader

**Laura** These three. (points to top 3 in ladder of participation)
Emma: - probably those three, I can see at different stages when we've met. Sometimes some of our number have been missing, and we haven't been able to move, I didn't feel, anyway quite swiftly on those occasions. Because bits of the puzzle we're missing, and we needed those other people to feed into the main agenda and it didn't work. Need all people to move forward

Laura: Any thoughts from the other two of you?: No. I felt that we didn't move between I think the top two definitely. Flowed between those two. But like you say, information as well, sometimes a few of the people missing. If there's missing gaps of information and yes I agree. Need all people to move forward

Julie: But I think we've grown as a group. Grown as a group

Abigail: Oh, yes.

Julie: I feel differently today sitting around the table than I did in the initial meeting. It's funny isn't it because I've just felt that the group has been supportive of what we've wanted to do even though we're all coming from different places. Aren't we? To feed into a central desire to make a difference for children. Group been supportive even though coming from different places

Jack Well personally I'm agreeing with my colleagues, but somewhere between one and two, I would say less three but certainly depending on what the needs at the time were. Well, what the common style was at the time would range between the top two. I think sometimes you have to make a decision about who needs to do what or
people will -- that's often not necessary these people around this table have recognised that there's something that they are happy to take hold off. As you said Abigail I'm going to go and see these schools and do this. Then you've gone and come back and reported that you've already done it. I have enough to say, not that I would because that's not my style. Well, I’ve not had to say well right, Abigail, I need you to go and do that and come and let me to know when you've done it or how I’m comfortable doing my job. Sometimes someone needs to make a decision and then others take hold of it

But at the same time, they has to be a degree of trust and a degree of professionalism but people will follow through with what they have and coming back and saying what everyone said. I trust the people around the table if they say they're going to do something in a dialogue where people are committing to do something. Then they'll go away and do it without the pressure of thinking ‘Well, I'm going to be checked up on’. Degree of trust and professionalism

Because sometimes-

**Abigail:** I think there's a natural desire

**Annie:** - can be sometimes a difficulty in school of everyone gets tripped up on everything. I don't think this is the right group to do that in. Because it's not necessary. Because people around the table as you said are passionate about what it is we're trying to achieve. Passionate about what we’re trying to achieve
Abigail: yeah natural desire, isn't there, around the table to make sure transition is as best and seamless as we can possibly. Looking at it from both points of view (primary and secondary) how we drive transition. It's a journey – how it change year on year Natural desire around the table to make sure about transition is as best and seamless as we can possibly

Annie: Shared aim and shared value.

Julie: Yes.

Jack Which is fine I think but the predominant style has been the top rung in the ladder because a lot of the things….what a number of us have gone away and done or taken is as a result of what something else somebody else has said. I can't tell you how many times someone else has said something. I would have never thought myself or thought of myself and thought I can go away and I can do that. I can think that. I can take that idea away and do something with it. It's happened organically. There must be 10 or 20 things that have been actioned, that benefited students who are in our school now. That haven’t been my idea but haven’t come from my head, it comes from somebody else'. I might have done them. But I remember things that Alexis is not even here now.

Katya said and hers is just one example. Something that she said, suddenly Emma, said something, I said something, somebody else said something. Before you know it we want 10 minutes later, we've got a plan ready for the transition evening about the
summer work. That wasn't Katya on her own, that was a starting point. That was the flame. Then bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, me and Emma, off we go.

Done." Over 10-20 Actions taken based on ideas of the group, which have grown organically and benefited students
Appendix 11: Extract Rich Picture Reflections

Figure 9: ALTC D-cubed Framework for Dissemination

- **Assess climate of readiness for change**
  - Understand the intended impacts and perceived benefits
  - Address an evident need
  - Consider the feasibility of project implementation
  - Ensure the project is grounded in existing knowledge
  - Identify targeted potential adopters
  - Identify potential change enablers
  - Understand the culture and structures of institutions
  - Ascertain a willingness and ability to change including readiness of leadership to bear reworking costs

- **Engage throughout the project**
  - Engage with targeted potential adopters on an ongoing basis
  - Plan for interactions and respond to changes and opportunities
  - Build flexibility and trustworthiness
  - Cultivate readiness for change
  - Build empowerment and ownership in adopters and institutions

- **Enable transfer of project outcomes**
  - Make the outcomes adaptable
  - Make the outcomes findable
  - Determine the capacity of the project to provide ongoing support
  - Articulate the value of the project outcomes
  - Nurture ongoing commitment, ownership, and capacity to adopt

**Dissemination is most effective when all three elements are in place, resulting in the greatest possibility of...**
Appendix 13 Information disseminated to school leaders

Appendix 13 a Factors that supported actions during action research project
Appendix 13 b: Practice improvements across project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good Practice at the Derby High School 2016</th>
<th>Improved Practice 2017</th>
<th>Planned Improvements 2018+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
<td><strong>Academic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gathering of best piece of English work from students transferring to school, provided to English department.</td>
<td><strong>MATHS</strong></td>
<td><strong>MATHS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intervention groups set up for those students who may need additional support to catch up</td>
<td>• Y10s have gone out to primary schools to support with maths learning</td>
<td>• Breakfast meeting with key staff from y5-6 classrooms in primary to share teaching methods in maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Breakfast meeting with primaries to share good practice academically</td>
<td>• Maths held a meeting of primary school teachers, only one person attended, but primary school heads are still keen to be involved in working</td>
<td>• Consider use of Lego activity on transition day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ENGLISH</strong></td>
<td><strong>ENGLISH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To set a piece of creative writing on the transition day and analyse this to build into work of English department</td>
<td>• Consider sending high performing KS4 students out to primary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Working with one primary school closely on the Bar method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ENGLISH</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Continue with creative writing work on transition day, providing a baseline of English work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   | Bring in the reading software screening tool and provide interventions based on this  
|   | Change to English to have a director of English, to improve literacy across the curriculum  
|   | Focus on reading age. Gather information on reading screening used in primary. Work with primary schools that already use the same software screening tools for reading. Consider how to analyse and use data already gathered in primary school.  
|   | Work together on which of the reading interventions has the best evidence base and implement these  
|   | To work with y6 teachers on preparation for high school focused on 19th century literature and improving inference  
|   | Work across one primary and TDHS school on a unit of work.  
|   | Consider pen pals between the schools.  
|   | Consider investigating correlation between reading age and SATS scores.  

**Aim and overall**

- To work towards academic consistency and continued progress from KS2 – KS3  
- Encourage closer working on transition based on OFSTED recommendations.
Ofsted recommendation

Ensure that transition from KS2 – 3 focuses as much on pupils academic needs as it does on their pastoral needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>Organisational</th>
<th>Organisational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• New and improved transition forms completed and data gathered from all primary schools</td>
<td>• Amendments to transition forms, based on feedback 2016</td>
<td>Aim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of transition forms to gather data which may support transition, such as interests and matching students up with in school clubs</td>
<td>• Successful integration and communication of new information on transition forms</td>
<td>• Streamline procedures, maximising information on and for students/families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flagging all SEN needs not just for those students with a statement/EHCP</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Review of transition day, seeking to consider flow around the school and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

280
- RAG for all students before they arrive, communicated to SLT and key staff
- Transition day
  - New intake evening – try to make sure there are no surprises
  - Every school with a child attending TDHS had a visit from a member of staff
  - Sessions within y6 at primary school. Ensuring students are “secondary ready”. Completion of hand activity to think about transition.
- Parent feedback forms sent out to all parents. There is a specific question about settling in
- Having year 7 photographs
  - Term 1 year 7 parents evening. “settling in evening”. Feedback is provided based on information students filled in themselves.
- Primary feeder schools have the opportunity to use the school for shows, eg dance festival or other uses and students have an opportunity to get used to some of the physical space in school.

- Acquiring information on families with social care involvement
- Representative of TDHS attending social care review or other meetings, summer term y6.

- Moving to 1 transition day, with parents induction evening on same day
- Offer of gym/hall activities on transition day.

- Investigating the number of pupils with pupil premium. Consider how this fund is used.

- Ensuring consistent message about the summer project; both on the induction evening and the induction day/first half term.

- Investigate use of transition booklet for primary schools

- Consider how best to use pupil premium to boost progress/engagement

- any improvements to be made to logistics for the day.
**Meeting with primary heads, breakfast meeting to agree priorities for improving transition**

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

- Force Field analysis.
- Summer project
- Timing and frequency of parent forums
- Children complete a document about how they have settled in which is shared with parents at parental engagement evening.
- New Parental Engagement Evening Nov 2017
- Feedback gathered on transition process

**SHARING RATIONALE AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSITION**

**WORK WITH WIDER SCHOOL**

- Disseminating evidence and findings from the project to wider school and local authority. Consider SENCO network
- Ask for staff feedback on transition

**PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

- Consider current feedback from parents on transition process. Any other way of gaining feedback on this issue
- Ongoing consideration of how to engage harder to reach parents.
- Review of new parental engagement evening and consider offer for 2018.
- Working with staff across school about parental engagement
- Consider other social occasions to involve parents
- Fed back to SLT
- Communication of new transition day and new induction day to all staff, particular focus on Y7 form tutors.
- To discuss with head teacher for dissemination in school.
- Considering change practices and participation within action research process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Social</th>
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| - Transition workshop for students transferring on their own or for those identified as more vulnerable – included a treasure hunt tour  
  - SEN and inclusion visits to all primary school  
  - Clubs year 7s can access at lunch and after school e.g, opportunity for restorative justice programme, nature club  
  - Social focus for 1st day activities  
  - Having name cards for students which included their interests | - Children were put in forms for their transition day  
  - 2 hour form time on induction day  
  - Completing name plate on induction day which references their interests  
  - Provided booklet – getting to know me.  
  - Established restorative justice group | - Consider best use of time in form during first day, week, and half term.  
  - Improving the offer at unstructured times on induction day and during the first term of Y7. Considering use of outdoor space and offer of clubs/activities.  
  - Consider how Y7 students move around the school during their first few weeks. |
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Involving parents at the start and end of SEN transition day.</td>
<td>• Consider ways for Y7 students to share their concerns anonymously</td>
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<td>• Changes to format for SEN transition day.</td>
<td>• Use of person centred planning to produce 1 page profile on children with SEN (could roll out to other vulnerable children too)</td>
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<td>• Changed the dinner time queueing system</td>
<td>• Consider communication to all staff regarding vulnerable students</td>
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<td><strong>STUDENT ENGAGEMENT</strong></td>
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<td>• Y10 mentors, Y8 buddies and justice ambassadors were allocated to a Y7 form and worked with them on transition day.</td>
<td>• Gather views of Y6 students about their worries and revisit this to show progress.</td>
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<td>• Students complete feedback to provide to parents</td>
<td>• Involve students in planning for Y6-7 transition</td>
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<td>• Gathered student views of transition to high school on SEN transition day and when visiting primary schools</td>
<td>• Working with Y7 students regarding school rules during HT1.</td>
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