A realistic evaluation of the introduction of the Simple View of Reading in primary schools

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Assignments previously submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor in Educational Psychology

Assignment 1: submitted September 2004

The views and perceptions of teachers on the introduction of accelerated learning principles into their classroom practice

Accelerated Learning is promoted as a framework aimed at maximising the effectiveness of teaching and learning within the classroom which draws on a range psychological areas. The aim of this research was to elicit teacher views and perceptions relating to the introduction of Accelerated Learning into their classroom practice. Teacher views were elicited using questionnaires. These questionnaires were completed prior to any training having been received and again following INSET (In-service training) and ongoing classroom support. The findings were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Results indicated that teachers did perceive Accelerated Learning to be useful and felt that it improved the standards of both teaching and learning within the classroom. Teachers reported being able to incorporate the Accelerated Learning cycle into their practice and also identified the type of training received (INSET plus individual in class follow up support) as being a significant factor in facilitating a change in classroom practice. The findings of this research support the wider role of Educational Psychologists in improving teaching and learning for all children.

Assignment 2: submitted in September 2005

An evaluation of ‘Curriculum Plus’ -an alternative curriculum

This study aimed to evaluate Curriculum Plus, an alternative Key Stage 4 curriculum for disaffected students. Student and teacher views were gathered primarily through the use of focus groups The results revealed that both teachers and students perceived Curriculum Plus in a very positive way, noting the impact that it had on reducing student exclusions, re-engaging students with education and providing students with work-based learning opportunities. However, student feelings of isolation and social
exclusion featured significantly in the data gathered as did a feeling that Curriculum Plus restricted students in terms of the opportunity to study a broad academic curriculum. Numerous suggestions for improving Curriculum Plus were made, some of which arose from the focus groups and some from the literature review. The findings of this study also highlighted the lack of understanding within schools as to the role of the EP. It did however reinforce the role that EPs can have in relation to school development issues.

**Assignment 3: submitted in September 2005**

**The development of a screening questionnaire to help teachers identify dyslexia in bilingual children: A pilot study.**

The identification of dyslexia amongst bilingual students is problematic. This results in children from ethnic minorities being under-represented amongst those receiving additional support for dyslexia, both nationally and locally. As such, the aim of this piece of research was to develop a screening tool to help teachers better identify bilingual students who may also be dyslexic.

During the study, teacher reports on individual students were collected using a screening tool. Further information was gathered through assessments carried out by an Educational Psychologist. The findings were analysed using simple qualitative methods and then compared. Data from the screening tools revealed several areas in which those students considered to be dyslexic experienced difficulties. These included reading processes, reading comprehension, phonological skills and written work. As a result of these findings the original screening tool was revised. The use of standardised assessments with bilingual students was also considered. It was found that the dyslexic students had large discrepancies between the standard scores attained on the W.I.A.T word reading and numerical operations subtests (average 20 points) and the W.I.A.T spelling and numerical operations subtests (average 17 points). All of the bilingual dyslexic students in this study had low verbal IQ’s (as measured using the WISC.IV.UK) but their literacy attainments were even lower than this. There was also very little discrepancy between using FSIQ and PRIQ as predictors of literacy attainments for the bilingual dyslexic students in this study.
ABSTRACT

There are continuing concerns regarding literacy standards within education with these concerns having resulted in many literacy initiatives being introduced over the past 5 years. Much research has focussed on improving our understanding of literacy, our ability to identify literacy needs and our ability to subsequently address these needs. As a result of an independent review into the early teaching of reading the Government have promoted the use of the ‘Simple View of Reading’ (SVOR) in the Primary Framework for Literacy (DCSF, 2007c). The study reported in this thesis considers whether the Simple View of Reading is perceived by teachers as providing a useful framework for the identification of literacy learning needs. In addition, it also aims to contribute to our understanding of teacher development, identifying for whom, and in what circumstances, the introduction of the SVOR results in a change in practice.

Teachers working within five primary schools participated in this study. Data was collected through questionnaires and a small number of follow up interviews. It is important to note that these findings are likely to have been influenced by certain changes in context during the study, for example the delegation of funding to schools, a reduction in central support services and the introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy. Questionnaire data indicates that, on the whole, teachers perceived the SVOR as easy to use, as providing useful information and as providing an easy visual reference. Results also indicate reported increases in teacher understanding of, and use of, the SVOR, coupled with increased confidence relating to the identification of literacy learning needs. These differences were all statistically significant. Key findings from the interviews suggest that teachers who perceived the SVOR to be useful and helpful to them on a personal level, made links between the SVOR and their existing practice and were more concerned with improving outcomes for children rather than meeting their own personal needs were more likely to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. This study has implications for promoting the SVOR as a framework for identifying literacy needs, future teacher development and the use of realist research approaches within Educational Psychology.
DECLARATION:

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview
This thesis explores whether the Simple View of Reading provides a framework that can aid a primary teacher’s ability to identify the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. In addition, this thesis also examines those circumstances that either facilitate, or hinder, a teacher’s ability to incorporate the Simple View of Reading (SVOR) into their practice. As the identification of literacy learning needs and staff development are two very large areas, this thesis does not give in depth consideration to the notion of intervention. It could be argued that any intervention cannot take place without a prior assessment of need. It is for this reason that this thesis focuses on identification, the first essential step in meeting a child’s needs. If teachers are better able to identify literacy learning needs then it is more likely that appropriate interventions will be put into place to address these needs. It is hoped that the use of the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs will impact on intervention and, although not a primary focus for this study, the issue of intervention is briefly referred to throughout the thesis and reflected upon in the discussion.

This research took place over a period of 2 years, March 2007 to July 2009. During this time the Local Authority delegated all funding for literacy difficulties to schools. Teachers working in five primary schools were involved in this study. Teacher views regarding the SVOR, and their subsequent use of this framework within their practice, were elicited through questionnaires and interviews.

1.2 Rationale for this study
This research straddles two key areas in education; the identification of literacy difficulties and teacher development. This project was carried out within a broad national agenda of raising literacy standards (Letters and Sounds, DCSF, 2007b; Every Child a Reader, DCSF, 2008a; Family Reading Matters, 2009 and One to One Tuition, DCSF, 2009b). In addition, this study coincided with the publication of the Independent Review of the Early Teaching of Reading, (Rose, 2006) and the Primary Framework for Literacy (DCSF, 2007c). Both of these publications promoted the SVOR as the model to underpin a teachers understanding of literacy learning. The
Simple View of Reading was initially developed by Gough and Tunmer (1986) and suggests that reading comprises two key skills; listening comprehension and word recognition. There is a considerable body of evidence that supports the existence of these two distinct skills (Hoover and Tunmer, 1993; Nation and Snowling, 1997; Warner, 2000; Oakhill, Cain and Bryant, 2003; Hartas and Muter et al. 2004; Catts et al. 2006). In addition to a sound evidence base, the SVOR has also been found to have good levels of predictive validity (Demont and Gombert, 1996; Catts et al. 2003; Wren, 2003; Johnston and Kirby, 2006). Given this, it is surprising that Government1 publications do not make it explicit to teachers exactly how the SVOR could be applied to their everyday classroom practice. Instead, the Primary Framework for Literacy and the Rose Report simply suggest that the SVOR should underpin a teacher’s understanding of literacy development. The literature makes no reference to the SVOR being used as a framework to aid teachers in their ability to identify the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. This provided an original focus for this research at a time when teachers had an increasing need to perform this role for themselves. This need arose from all Local Authority funding for literacy difficulties being delegated to schools, thus schools not requiring outside agency assessments to access funding. More recently, a reduction in central support services has further placed this key role firmly in the realm of the classroom teacher. One consequence of the increased delegation of funding is that schools now have more responsibility to provide effective development opportunities for their staff.

Headlines frequently emphasise the failures and weaknesses of schools, (‘Policy to blame for failure of schools; The Independent, 21.10.06, Antiquated education systems failing a new generation, Newsweek, 12.06.06 and ‘Heads angry over surge in school Ofsted failures, The Independent, 06.03.10). Given the increasingly quality conscious, standards driven, agenda within education there is now an increased pressure to ensure that staff development for teachers is effective. This focus is important as many Educational Psychologists spend time providing training for teachers with only a limited understanding of either why or when changes in practice actually occur.

---

1 For the purposes of this thesis the term Government refers to the previous Labour Government as they were in power at the time when the bulk of this study was undertaken.
Much research has focussed on the area of staff development. It is clear that the factors contributing to teacher change are complex (Guskey and Huberman, 1993, Hall and Hord, 2001). There remains no clear consensus as to what constitutes effective staff development. Much research has focussed on effective schools, but less research outlines how to improve schools (Mortimore and MacBeath, 1994, Sadker and Zittleman, 2007). Proposed methods of staff development also vary.

Some researchers report on the benefits of outside agency led change (Baker, 1981; Henderson and Perry, 1981; Birman et al. 2000; Soulsby and Swain, 2003). Other researchers however report on the benefits of teacher led change (action research; Lewin, 1946, Walker, 2009, Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; experiential learning, Kolb, 1984 and the teacher as a reflective practitioner, Schon, 1983, 1987). Similarly, proposed models to explain the process of staff development at the level of the individual teacher are also contradictory. Guskey (1986) proposes that changes in practice and student outcomes precede, and are possibly prerequisites for, changes in beliefs. In contrast, other researchers including Clark and Peterson (1986), Fang (1996), Greenberg and Baron (2000) and Calabrese (2002) suggest that changes in teacher belief precede changes in practice. Models to explain how teachers may move from one stage of development to the next have also been proposed and include the work of Wideen (1992).

The model of staff development used throughout this study was primarily an INSET model, although limited opportunities were provided for collaboration amongst staff. Guskey’s (1986) model staff development and Wideen’s (1992) stages of instructional change were used to consider changes in teacher practice for those participating in the study.

This thesis aims to contribute to our understanding of staff development, with a particular emphasis on the implementation of the SVOR. In order to achieve this, a realist research approach was utilised (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). Until very recently this approach has not been applied within the field of education and, as far as I am aware, has not been used to consider to complex issue of changing teacher practice. Realist research considers why any changes in teacher practice occur, or fail to occur. This approach is in contrast to many of the more traditional studies which often focus on simply ‘if’ changes in practice have occurred. A realist approach seems ideally
suited to research within the context of a school as it views change as a complex process occurring within a social system. In contrast to more traditional approaches, realist research seeks a goal of specification rather than generalisation. As such realist research aims to determine where and how the introduction of the SVOR might be implemented with reasonable expectations for improved identification of literacy learning needs. In order to achieve this, realist research studies the context within which the teacher is working, the change mechanisms, the mechanisms sustaining the problem and the associated outcomes.

This research utilises the realist approach in order to achieve the following aims:

- To establish whether or not the SVOR provides a useful framework to help teachers identify the literacy learning needs of the children in their class
- To understand why teachers either incorporate the SVOR into their practice or not, so that this information can inform future practice.

1.3 Research Questions
The following research questions were formulated in order to achieve the aims outlined above:

1) Do the ways that teachers identify literacy learning needs change following the introduction of the SVOR?

2) In what ways do primary school teachers use the SVOR?

3) In what ways do teachers perceive the SVOR to be a useful tool in the identification of literacy leaning needs?

4) In what ways does the SVOR trigger (or fail to trigger) changes in teacher practice?

5) In what circumstances does the introduction of the SVOR effect a change in teacher practice?
6) Is it possible to identify the teachers for whom the introduction of the SVOR results in changes in practice?

7) In what ways can any changes in teacher practice (or failures to change), in this study, be explained in terms of the context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations used in realist research?

1.4 Outline of the study

Five primary schools were involved in this research. In order to carry out this study all teachers working in these five schools completed a questionnaire between May and July 2007. This questionnaire probed teacher views, and current practice, in relation to the identification of literacy learning needs. This questionnaire included both closed and open questions. Closed questions were presented in the form of a five point Likert Scale (Likert, 1932). This allowed responses provided in 2007 and 2008 to be directly compared.

Teachers were then introduced to the SVOR, and its potential application to the identification of literacy learning needs, during two training sessions (May-November 2007). This training followed a traditional In-Service Training (INSET) model (Chin and Benne, 1976) but included opportunities for collaboration. Additional follow up strategies were provided to support teachers in addressing any needs identified using the SVOR framework. During the next twelve months informal support was provided during regular school visits. Consultations, based on the SVOR, were also held with those teachers expressing concerns about a particular child’s literacy development. All teachers working in the five schools participating in the research then completed another questionnaire in July 2008. With the exception of two additional questions, requiring teachers to focus on factors that either prompted a change in their practice or maintained the use of existing methods, this questionnaire was identical to the one completed in 2007. A total of 28 teachers completed the questionnaire in both 2007 and 2008. This group is referred to as the ‘matched’ sample. Questionnaire responses for each teacher were then analysed. Questions involving a rating scale response were analysed using quantitative methods. All matched responses were analysed at the level of the individual using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test. Responses were also analysed at the level of the school,
although due to the small sample sizes involved, only mean scores were used for this purpose. Open-ended questions were coded in order to identify themes, using a process similar to the open coding process used in grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The information collected from the questionnaires allowed teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice to be distinguished from those and those who had not.

In June-July 2009, follow up interviews were conducted with five teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice and four teachers reporting no change in their practice. These interviews comprised a range of open ended questions and statements for teachers to rank. Interviews were recorded and the data subsequently analysed qualitatively. This data was considered at the level of the individual with factors influencing a teacher’s practice being identified and used to develop context-mechanism-outcome configurations. The information gathered from those teachers comprising the ‘change’ sample was also compared to the information gathered from the ‘no change’ sample. In order to make these comparisons a coding process similar to that used during the analysis of the questionnaire data was used. Factors that either facilitated, or hindered, a teacher’s ability to incorporate the SVOR into their practice were identified from this data.

1.5 Structure of the thesis.
The next two chapters of this thesis review the literature in two key areas; the identification of literacy learning needs (Chapter 2) and staff development (Chapter 3). The structure of the remainder of this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 4: Methodology.
This chapter provides a chronology of the research and considers the use of a realist research methodology. The design of the questionnaires and interviews is also examined in detail.

Chapter 5: Questionnaire Results
This chapter outlines the analysis of questionnaire responses both at the level of the individual and the school.
Chapter 6: Interview findings
This chapter outlines the analysis of the data gathered from the interviews. The data is analysed in relation to Guskey’s (1986) model of staff development and Wideen’s (1992) Stages of Instructional Change. Context-mechanism-outcome configurations are presented for each teacher and factors facilitating and hindering changes in teacher practice identified.

Chapter 7: Discussion
In this chapter the findings are discussed in relation to the research questions and all aspects of the study are reflected upon.

Chapter 8: Summary and Conclusions
In this final chapter the key findings of this study are summarised and the implications of these discussed.

References

Appendices.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERACY LEARNING

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The importance of literacy learning: a brief overview of the national and local context.

On a national level the importance of literacy was pushed to the forefront of education with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) in 1998. This made it compulsory for all schools to incorporate the ‘literacy hour’ into the daily timetable. League tables indicating the percentage of children attaining the national expected standards in literacy are published every year and therefore keep literacy in the limelight. At the time that this research was being planned Jim Rose had just published his Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading (2006). The principles from this report went on to be incorporated into the Primary Framework for Literacy (DCSF, 2007c). Since this time an ever increasing number of national agendas to improve literacy standards such as Letters and Sounds (DCSF, 2007b); Every Child a Reader (DCSF, 2008a); Family Reading Matters (2009) and One to One Tuition (DCSF, 2009b), have ensured that the importance of teaching children basic literacy skills is prioritised.

On a more local level, recent changes have affected the way in which literacy needs are needs met (i.e. not through a Statement of Special Educational Need but through funding delegated to schools). This change has resulted in schools being much more responsible for the identification of literacy needs, as outside agency involvement is no longer required in order to access funding or support for children. Unless schools are able to fulfil this role to good effect themselves, there is a possibility that some children may become excluded from literacy learning and their needs exacerbated. This study hopes to investigate whether the SVOR (outlined in section 2.2.2) can be used in order to help teachers identify literacy learning needs at an early stage. It is hoped that this in turn will result in children being included in literacy learning within
the classroom, thus addressing and hopefully ameliorating, any presenting literacy learning needs.

2.2 Models that inform a teachers’ understanding of literacy learning

Theories to explain the development of reading have long been a focus for psychologists. Academic theories/models aiming to describe the process of reading development are plentiful and include Marsh et al. (1981); Ellis (1984); Frith (1985); Goswami (1986) and Reason and Boote (1994). The depth and breadth of this work is extensive and as such will not be discussed in detail here. This literature review focuses only on the models of reading advocated by the Government in national guidance. These models, rather than the more academic theories debated by psychologists, inform a teacher’s conceptual understanding of literacy and are therefore considered to be highly relevant to this research.

In 1999 the White Paper, Modernising Government, emphasised that Government policy is based on research. If this is the case then changes in policy should be expected in the light of new knowledge becoming available. On a national level such a change took place in relation to literacy learning/reading in 2006/2007. Previous to 2007 a teacher’s understanding of reading was informed by the Searchlights model as detailed in the National Literacy Strategy (1998). Since the publication of the Primary Framework for Literacy in 2007, the Simple View of Reading has been promoted by the Government as the model that should underpin a teacher’s understanding of reading.

2.2.1 The Searchlights Model

For the last decade the model chosen by the Government to underpin the teaching of reading was the ‘Searchlights Model.’ This was outlined in the National Literacy Strategy (1998). Over the past 10 years, the Searchlights model of reading has been influential in moulding the way that teachers view the process of learning to read. The Searchlights model is based on the work of Clay (1972, 1979, 1985) who proposed that four different cueing systems (phonological, syntactic, visual and semantic) were required in order to read. The correlation with the Searchlights model
is clear. The Searchlights model consists of a series of four ‘searchlights’ (phonics, grammatical knowledge, graphic knowledge and knowledge of context), each of which is thought to shed light on a piece of text. The Searchlights model recognises the need to teach the skills required in order to decode texts as well as the strategies required in order to make sense of texts. However, as noted by Rose (2007 p. 74), ‘this model fails to delineate accurately which aspects of the complex process of reading texts with understanding are attributable to each of these components.’

An evaluation of the first four years of the NLS was undertaken by The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) in 2002. One of the conclusions of this evaluation was that ‘the searchlights model proposed in the framework has not been effective enough in terms of illustrating where the intensity of the ‘searchlights’ should fall at the different stages of learning to read’ (OfSTED, 2002, pg 17, para 58). OFSTED went on to suggest that the result of failing to recognise the importance of phonics skills for the beginner reader resulted in ‘an approach to word-level work which diffuse teaching at the earliest stages, rather than concentrating it on phonics’ (OfSTED, 2002, pg 17, para 58). Other researchers have also acknowledged the fact that the Searchlights model underplays the importance of phonics for a beginner reader. Stuart (2003) argued that the Searchlights model served to reinforce the seriously misguided opinion that phonic decoding and knowledge of printed words are optional searchlights despite both being fundamental. The essential role of phonics is clear, as no amount of grammatical knowledge or sensitivity to context can compensate for inadequate word level skills. Stuart (2003) also contends that the Searchlights model presents both grammatical knowledge and contextual knowledge as providers of information useful to the process of word recognition rather than reading comprehension. Research tells us that it tends to be poor readers who use grammar and context to identify words (Nicholson, 1991, Share and Stanovich, 1995). Given these research findings Stuart (2003) maintains that it is highly questionable for the Government to suggest that these strategies are a suitable basis for the ‘normal’ development of reading.

The Searchlights model has also been criticised by Nation and Angell (2006) for failing to capture the complexity of reading comprehension. The Searchlights model does not distinguish between the processes involved in word level reading and those
necessary for reading comprehension. Nation and Angell (2006) suggest that the Searchlights model does not succeed in recognising that reading skills develop from a firm foundation of oral language proficiency. Nation and Angell (2006) go on to argue that the roles of vocabulary knowledge, cognitive skills such as working memory and higher-level processes such as inference, are not recognised by the Searchlights model as being central to the process of reading comprehension.

In light of increasing concerns relating to the issues outlined above, the Searchlights model was superseded by the ‘Simple View of Reading’ (SVOR) in 2006. This shift in emphasis resulted from the DfES commissioned report; An Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading (Rose, 2006). This report will subsequently be referred to simply as the ‘Rose report.’

2.2.2 The Simple View of Reading

A description of the SVOR
The Rose report (2006) recommended the SVOR on the basis that it provides a valid conceptual framework for both practitioners and researchers. Rose argues that the SVOR clarifies the two main processes of reading thus helping teachers to better understand the two key areas of word recognition and comprehension. Riley (2006) notes that while this is not the whole story it does make good and practical sense for teachers to think of reading, and how they support children with this process, in terms of these two equally important, yet mutually exclusive, components.

The Simple View of Reading was originally developed by Gough and Tunmer (1986). The SVOR was an attempt to combine the two polarised approaches of ‘phonics’ and ‘whole language’ and as such has been described as the first ‘balanced literacy’ model (Pressley, 2006). The SVOR proposes that reading comprehension is the product of two processes; decoding and listening comprehension, terms to which specific meanings are ascribed. Gough and Tunmer use the term ‘decoding’ to refer to the ability to recognise words presented singularly and out of context. They also recognise that the ability to apply phonic rules is a crucial contributory factor to the development of word recognition. Gough and Tunmer also make it clear that, by the term listening comprehension, they refer to ‘the process by which, given lexical (i.e.
word) information, sentences and discourse are interpreted.’ The SVOR emphasises the fact that word recognition is necessary, but not sufficient, for reading and likewise that linguistic comprehension is necessary, but not sufficient, for reading.

The SVOR is often presented using the formula RC=LCxD (reading comprehension = listening comprehension x decoding). This formula accentuates the interaction of the two components. The SVOR is also frequently represented in the following diagrammatic form:

Figure 1: A diagrammatic representation of the SVOR (taken from The Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading, Rose, 2006).

This clear differentiation between the two dimensions of reading strives to inform a teacher’s teaching whilst at the same time providing a conceptual framework that according to the (DfES, 2006:78):

- Encourages teachers not to expect equal performance in each dimension.
- Offers the possibility of separately assessing performance and programmes in each dimension in order to identify learning needs and guide future teaching.
• Makes it explicit to teachers that different kinds of teaching are required in order to develop word recognition and comprehension of written and spoken language.
• Emphasises the need for teachers to be taught about, and understand, the cognitive processes involved in the development of accurate and fluent word reading and language comprehension.

The SVOR does not suggest that the two components of listening comprehension and word recognition are in themselves simple. Each component represents a host of complex and important processes. Listening comprehension in itself encompasses many other skills including working memory (Gathercole and Baddeley, 1990), vocabulary (Biemiller and Boote, 2006), morphology (Nunes and Bryant, 2006) and general language ability (Cain and Oakhill, 2006). The process of word recognition is equally complex, comprising phonology, orthography and semantics (Plaut, 2005), phonological awareness (Adams, 1990, Goswami and Bryant, 1990), rapid automatic naming (Kirby et al. 2003), reading experience and print exposure (Stanovich and West 1989).

Evidence to support the SVOR

The SVOR does appear to correspond well with other models that have been proposed. For example Whitehurst and Lonigan (1998) categorise critical emergent literacy components into two domains: outside in components (oral language skills such as semantic, narrative and conceptual knowledge) and inside out components (such as phonological awareness, an understanding of the alphabetic principle etc). Similarly Wragg et al. (1998) distinguish between two theoretical perspectives, one focussing on a search for meaning and the other focussing on the uncovering of the writer’s meaning through the application of decoding skills.

The past 25 years has also seen the emergence of a growing body of research that supports the view of two broadly specified skills (i.e. decoding and comprehension) contributing distinctly to the process of reading; Hoover and Tunmer (1993); Nation and Snowling (1997); Hartas and Warner (2000); Oakhill, Cain and Bryant (2003); Muter et al. (2004); Catts et al. (2006). Equally, research also provides evidence for the varying patterns of performance observable across the two dimensions of word
recognition and language comprehension. Snowling and Frith (1986); Jackson et al. (1988); Bishop and Adams (1990) and Stothard and Hulme (1992) all found evidence of good word recognition skills alongside poor language comprehension skills. Spooner et al. (2004) and Catts et al. (2005) provide evidence of poor word recognition abilities alongside good language comprehension skills. To this end Wren (2003) suggests that the SVOR is a very powerful tool as it has good levels of predictive validity i.e.: there is no evidence to show that people become good readers whilst being poor at either decoding or comprehension. Research has found that the SVOR does prove to be a good predictor of future reading comprehension performance over the first 4 years of reading acquisition (Demont and Gombert, 1996; Catts et al. 2003; Johnston and Kirby, 2006). Other research also supports the validity of the SVOR, with studies showing that it accounts for approximately 40-80% of the variance in reading comprehension for readers between 8-16 years of age (Dreyer and Katz, 1992; Joshi and Aaron, 2000; Catts et al. 2005).

Some researchers have raised concerns regarding the Rose report and the evidence used to support the use of the SVOR. The Rose report uses data from factor analysis studies to support the dissociation between decoding skills and comprehension. Kendeou et al. (2009) argue that closer analysis of this research indicates that only two such published studies existed at the time the Rose report was published; Pazzaglia et al. (1993) and Nation and Snowling (1997). Only one of these studies, (Nation and Snowling) was in English but focussed on older children i.e. 7-10 year olds. Despite this, the Rose report promotes the SVOR as a model to frame the teaching and learning of early reading, including children under the age of seven. As a result of these concerns, Kendeou et al. (2009) carried out a study to explore the SVOR in relation to English speaking children aged four and six in the USA and Canada. Findings from this study did provide evidence for the dissociation of decoding and comprehension skills in young children. This study does therefore provide more supporting evidence for the SVOR, specifically in relation to young, English speaking, children. However, closer analysis of this study indicates that it can be criticised on several grounds. The study only comprised 113, four year old children, all from the USA sample. Clearly further research is needed to ensure that these findings are reflective of larger samples of young children, as details regarding the sampling were not provided. The listening comprehension task used with the
USA sample comprised the children listening to an audiotape of a story. As the children listened to the story they were also shown pictures to accompany the story. This may have confounded the task, resulting in it not being a true listening comprehension task thus affecting the results obtained. It also seems slightly unrealistic to have expected four and six year old children to complete six subtests during a single assessment session. Consequently, the order in which the tasks were presented may have affected the results obtained.

Criticisms of the SVOR

There seems to be very little research suggesting that the SVOR is fundamentally flawed and that the two key components do not exist. Some researchers do however imply that the SVOR is too ‘simple.’ In a call for papers, Barrs et al. (2007) found that the SVOR was criticised for being reductionist. It has been noted that reductionist models ‘miss(ing) so much about the essence of the phenomena as to be useless or harmful’ (Kirby and Savage, 2008). Goswami (2008, p.73) supports this view in relation to reading arguing that, 'Brain imaging is revealing the immense complexity of the human brain and of the neural networks that develop to support human skills. Reading is one of the most complex cognitive skills that humans learn. It is supported by multi-modal networks uniting motor systems, language systems, semantic systems and reasoning systems. It seems inherently unlikely that a 'simple view' of reading can provide a framework for teaching that is sufficiently rich to capture this complexity. ' In some circumstances however, a reductionist model can be useful. Such models can make complex processes, arguably including reading, more accessible to a wider audience, for example teachers without a psychology background. If a model is to be effective in informing a teacher’s understanding of both the process of reading and ultimately the teaching of reading then this model must not be overcomplicated. Kendeou et al. (2009) suggest that the SVOR is relatively transparent and fosters understanding of a relatively complex phenomenon.

Purcell-Gates (2002) argues that the SVOR assumes a purely ‘cognitive lens’ and in doing this ignores the many socio-cultural factors that contribute to the development of literacy. Purcell-Gates maintains that the cognitive SVOR model is unable to explain the systematic failure of whole groups of children in schools, and fails to
explain the almost straight-line relationship between family income and reading achievement around the world. As a consequence of these concerns Purcell-Gates suggests that there is a need to embrace complexity as literacy development for different people, in different contexts, from different socio-cultural worlds, for different purposes, places the study of literacy in a complex arena.

Research has also indicated that word recognition has a semantic component (Plaut, 2005). There is evidence that the reading of exception words (words that do not follow phonic rules) requires the use of semantic and wider listening comprehension resources (Nation and Snowling, 1997, 1998; Bowey and Rutherford, 2007). Kirby and Savage (2008) note that this evidence is ‘slightly awkward’ for the SVOR as semantics would normally be perceived as part of the listening comprehension component. For this reason Kirby and Savage suggest that it is important that the two components are not viewed as entirely independent, but as interacting with one another. Kirby and Savage (2008) also raise the issue of fluency in word recognition, stating that the word recognition component of the SVOR has been measured as reading accuracy in virtually all of the studies into the SVOR. Clearly, if decoding is accurate but very slow it may not be adequate enough to support comprehension. The issue of fluency is not actually ignored by the SVOR, but rather needs to be made more explicit as one of the processes important in the area of word recognition, both in the classroom and research.

The SVOR has also been criticised for not taking into account the different procedures involved in listening comprehension and reading comprehension (Kirby and Savage, 2008; Dombey, 2009). Research indicates that the processes involved in making sense of written language and spoken language differ in important ways, the majority of which are related to the fact that during reading comprehension tasks the text remains visible and as such can be referred back to (Kintsch, 1998). More research in this area would add to the SVOR.

**Summary of the evidence and implications for the use of the SVOR.**

It is very reassuring that the same model of reading, i.e. the SVOR, is being used both by practitioners in the classroom and by researchers to frame their studies.
Despite the SVOR clearly having some limitations and criticisms it seems that the majority of the literature written in this area does agree that the act of reading is complex, but that proficient reading consists of two key components: word recognition and language comprehension. As such the SVOR is well supported by empirical evidence with the dissociation between listening comprehension and word recognition suggesting that the more educational practice can help each child to move forward along each dimension, the more it insures against failure (Cain and Oakhill, 2007). This review of the literature also indicates that there is broad agreement that the SVOR is helpful in conceptualising these skills, thus placing two teachable skills, namely listening comprehension and word recognition, centre stage in the classroom (Kirby and Savage, 2008). As Dombey (2009) reminds us, we must ensure that as we teach children to read, a simple equation does not obscure the need for attention to such matters as enjoyment, engagement and perseverance. The SVOR does however, free up educationalists, educational psychologists, parents and teachers from the expensive, inefficient and deterministic assumptions associated with the more traditional psychometric visions of cognition (Savage, 2001).

2.3 Teacher identification of the literacy learning needs of primary aged children

2.3.1 The need for assessment

Clay (1992) predicts that however effective the teaching in primary schools, there are a minority of pupils who will remain in need of some additional support if they are to learn to read and write. The early identification of literacy difficulties is promoted, encouraged and generally considered good practice worldwide (Siegel and Brayne, 2005 and Lyytinen and Erskine, 2006). However, the context of the wider cultural discourses that the process of identification creates should not be overlooked. Allington and McGill-Franzen (1989) suggest that, once identified as experiencing literacy learning difficulties, children become caught in a problematic and discursive web. Allington and McGill-Franzen suggest that for this group of children the problem is often represented as a trait of the child rather than the instructional environment, that the identification process groups children with similar needs together and that the children are moved into a system that specialises in ‘problems.’ Given this, ensuring that a comprehensive assessment is undertaken is vital.
The primary method used to identify literacy learning needs is that of assessment. In order to avoid the difficulties outlined above, assessment should be an integral aspect of teaching and learning, as recommended in the Assessment for Learning Strategy (DCSF, 2008c). Information concerning particular aspects of a pupil’s literacy development should be collected and then used to generate ideas and strategies to improve and optimise a pupil’s literacy learning. Research suggests that assessment should be viewed as a process rather than a one off activity (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Leahy et al.2005). Through the ongoing monitoring of the children in their class teachers are perfectly positioned to establish what each individual can do, identify the strategies used by a child and establish each child’s stage and rate of development at any given point in time. This information can then be used to develop long, medium and short-term plans, ensure that appropriate teaching/tasks are provided and inform a teacher’s choice of materials/resources.

2.3.2 A whole school approach to literacy assessment
Many researchers highlight the fact that literacy assessment is a whole school, rather than individual teacher, responsibility and should be consistent across a school (Wragg et al.1998; Wearmouth, Soler and Reid, 2003). There is a growing consensus that a co-ordinated, whole school system of early identification and intervention in literacy, and other areas, is of benefit to a wider range of children than an individual assessment focus (Bullis and Walker, 1994; Forness et al. 1996; Simmons et al. 2000). Recent Government initiatives such as Quality First Teaching and Assessment for Learning (DCSF, 2008c) also emphasise a whole school focus. Assessment for Learning suggests that the early identification of any difficulty, not just literacy difficulties, should be viewed as emerging from teachers carefully monitoring children’s responses to (literacy) teaching and their progress on an ongoing basis. Some researchers have looked in more detail at whole school approaches to literacy assessment in an attempt to prevent reading difficulties. Hill and Crevola (1999) found substantial measurable improvements in early literacy in schools using a whole school approach.

The National Reading First Assessment Committee (Kame’enui, 2002) in the United States considered the general characteristics of a comprehensive system for
identifying literacy learning needs. They concluded that a comprehensive school wide early literacy assessment system should include assessments that accomplish 4 purposes: screening, monitoring, diagnosis and measuring student outcomes. According to Kame’enui (2002), a screening tool should be capable of determining which children are at risk of experiencing reading difficulties. Screening assessments are not designed to tell teachers everything about a child’s literacy profile. Such assessments should however answer the following questions; which children are at risk of experiencing reading difficulties? and which children will require additional support to meet their reading goals? (Coyne and Harn, 2006). When teachers have answered these questions they are able to provide intensive and timely reading intervention for students identified as being at risk. The SVOR, as used during this study, fulfils this role. The SVOR framework provides primary school teachers with the opportunity to use the knowledge that they have about their pupils to outline literacy learning in the distinct areas of language comprehension and decoding. The aim of this process is to make apparent which children are potentially at risk of developing reading difficulties due to problems with either language comprehension or word recognition. Once identified, appropriate interventions can then be provided and targeted to the specific area of need (language comprehension and/or decoding).

Progress monitoring is the second purpose of a comprehensive, school wide early literacy assessment system identified by Kame’enui (2002). Progress monitoring allows teachers to determine whether students are making adequate progress towards meeting their goals. This ensures that teachers are responsive to student learning and able to recognise when change is necessary, in order to make their teaching more efficient and effective. The purpose of progress monitoring assessments is to provide a quick yet reliable indication of a child’s literacy ‘well being.’ As progress monitoring assessments are used frequently, multiple forms (to reduce practice effects) are needed. These need to allow for efficient use of time and be sensitive to skill growth over a short period of time. The SVOR could be perceived as providing a framework within which teachers can record their own observations of a child’s reading development (alongside assessment findings if desired) on a regular basis, so that progress can be monitored, creating an easy visual reference for tracking pupil progress.
The final 2 stages of a comprehensive assessment system identified by Kame’enui, (2002) are diagnosis and measuring outcomes. Diagnostic assessments involve teachers collecting more specific information about a child’s strengths and weaknesses. Obviously, for some children this is a necessary step, although the SVOR itself does not allow for this. The SVOR may, however, act as a catalyst for this process and identify more precisely the focus of this assessment i.e. language comprehension or word recognition. The final purpose of a school wide early literacy assessment identified by Kame’enui is measuring student outcomes. Student outcomes can be assessed either through the use of formative or summative assessments (discussed in section 2.3.3). Again, the SVOR could be perceived as providing a framework within which teachers can make sense of the findings of either formative or summative assessments.

2.3.3 Approaches to assessment

Assessments differ depending on the perspective used to frame the assessment process e.g. whether a teacher considers literacy learning needs as being a within child difficulty or from an interactionist or socio-cultural perspective. In addition, approaches to assessment vary depending on the type of assessment used e.g. formative or summative assessment. Each of these areas will now be considered in turn.

Differing perspectives on assessment

In order to carry out meaningful literacy assessments Ehri (1999) and Riley (2006) suggest that teachers need a range of skills including:

- Knowledge of the reading process (including an understanding of both the psychological processes involved and the stages involved in the learning of literacy).
- Knowledge about teaching methods and how these facilitate the reading process.
- Knowledge of observational procedures that allow teachers to analyse the outward, observable signs of the perceptual and cognitive operations involved in reading.
The ability to identify the processes that readers are using and those with which they have difficulty.

The above skills all assume that the root of literacy learning difficulties lies within the individual. Over the past 20 years an appreciation of the interactive nature of literacy difficulties has emerged. This school of thought subscribes to the view that factors within the learning environment can either support or militate against the learning of pupils. This approach considers that barriers to learning arise as a result of an interaction between the characteristics of the child and what is offered through pedagogy and supporting resources. This body of research leads to a broader conception of assessment which includes consideration of the provision being made and the learning environment, rather than focussing exclusively on within child factors. Ysseldyke and Christenson (1987) provide a framework for the systematic collection of such data (The Instructional Environmental Scale (TIES)). This framework allows the contextual barriers to a pupil’s learning to be analysed in 12 areas (instructional presentation, classroom environment, teacher expectation, cognitive emphasis (including metacognition), motivational strategies, relevant practice, academic engagement time, informed feedback, adaptive instruction/differentiation, progress evaluation, instructional planning and student understanding, collecting information through classroom observations and pupil and teacher interviews). Similarly, Brofenbrenner’s model of ecological systems (1977) could also be used as a framework to ensure that all environmental factors are considered systematically during the assessment process. Brofenbrenner identifies 4 levels that may influence student outcomes, all of which should be considered during the assessment process; the microsystem (the immediate context for the student – classroom, home, neighbourhood), the mesosystem (links between two microsystems e.g. home and school), the exosystem (demands/influents in the adult’s life that may affect the student) and the macrosystem (cultural beliefs or institutional policies that affect the behaviour of an individual).

More recently Lankshear and Knobel (2002) have argued that literacy learning should be perceived from a ‘socio-cultural’ perspective, thus taking into account differing social and cultural contexts for literacy development. A socio-cultural
approach believes that children come to school with differing world views, values, beliefs and practices, among which are schemata for, and about, literacy. Subsequently, rather than children having a literacy difficulty per se, it is possible that certain procedures are evident within the culture of schools that interact with a child’s varying linguistic, socio-economic, gender and cultural backgrounds to heighten differential patterns of success and failure in literacy achievement (Luke, 1993). These procedures include streaming, testing and choice of texts.

**Differing types of assessment**

The nature of assessment can also vary widely. For the purposes of this literature review discussion centres around two contrasting types of assessment; formative and summative assessments. Delandshere (2001) argues that these opposing views frequently result in a clash of discourse. This results in the functions of summative and formative assessments being forced together in school systems, catching teachers in the middle.

**Summative Assessment**

Summative assessments are concerned with progress, generally take place after a period of teaching and require judgements to be made about the learning that has occurred (Boston, 2002). Chappuis and Chappuis (2008) note that summative assessment is sometimes referred to as assessment of learning, typically documenting how much learning has occurred at a given point in time. The feedback provided by summative assessments simply tells teachers and students who has, and who has not, made it to the learning destination. Summative assessments are often carefully constructed, piloted, standardised and objectively scored.

Summative assessment allows teachers to compare a child to their peers. In some circumstances, this type of information may be useful, for example in supporting requests for additional funding/resources. This type of information can however, also create problems in terms of inclusion and the model of learning assumed. ‘High stakes accountability testing,’ (e.g. SATS), has consistently been demonstrated to undermine teaching and learning (Smith, 1991; Smith and Rottenberg, 1991; Allington and McGill-Franzen, 1995; Morrison and Joan, 2002; Rex and Nelson,
This finding is particularly true for lower achieving children (Harlen and Crick, 2003). Consequently summative assessment is viewed, by some researchers (McNeil, 2000), as being restrictive and defeating the original intention of improving (literacy) learning. McNeil believes that summative assessment essentially rewards and punishes students, teachers and school systems, thus shifting participant’s goals towards avoidance of punishment. This, it is considered, thwarts the goal of improving the quality of (literacy) learning for all students and particularly for low achieving students. Johnston and Costello (2006) express similar concerns, namely that SATS testing implies that schools both as organisations and the individuals within them, are not able to monitor their own performance. In addition, they suggest that it also implies that schools are unlikely to provide the best instruction that they can unless forced to do so through annual rewards and punishments (e.g. league tables).

Another shortcoming of summative assessment is the lack of a feedback mechanism during the learning process (Ming, 2005). Summative assessments take place too far down the learning path to provide information at the classroom level and to make instructional adjustments and interventions during the learning process.

The issues discussed above, coupled with the fact that most summative assessments are narrow in focus, artificial, fragmented in nature and provide limited information to inform future teaching, should bring into question the sole use of this type of approach to assessment within education.

Formative Assessment
Johnston and Rogers (2001) suggest that, although assessment is often viewed as a technical matter of developing accurate measuring instruments, such as those used during summative assessments, it is more centrally a set of social practices. These social practices include noticing, representing and responding to children’s literate behaviours and rendering them meaningful for particular purposes and audiences. This type of assessment is often termed ‘formative assessment.’
It is difficult to establish a clear definition of ‘formative assessment’ from the literature. For the proposes of this study, the following definition, proposed by Melmer, Burmaster and James (2008, p.3) will be used; ‘formative assessment (is) a process used during instruction to provide feedback for the adjustment of ongoing teaching and learning for the purposes of improving student achievement related to instructional objectives.’

Formative assessment includes techniques such as teacher observation, classroom discussion, questioning, goal setting with children, pupil record keeping and self/peer assessment. Chappuis and Chappuis (2008) describe formative assessment as an ongoing, dynamic process, delivering information during the teaching process rather than after it. As such formative assessment can be described as assessment for learning. An important element of any formative assessment is feedback. In contrast to summative assessment, this feedback occurs while there is still time to take action. Boston (2002) notes that feedback given as part of a formative assessment process helps pupils to become aware of any gaps that exist between their desired goal and their current knowledge or understanding and guides them through the actions necessary to obtain their goal. Formative assessment is considered important for everyday teaching due to it providing contextualised diagnostic information that can be used flexibly in order to develop teaching programmes (Dockrell and McShane, 1993). Chappuis and Chappuis (2008) suggest that formative assessment supports learning in two ways; allowing teachers to adapt instruction on the basis of evidence, thus making changes and improvements that will yield benefits to pupil learning, and pupils using evidence of their current progress to actively manage and adjust their own learning (Stiggins et al. 2006). This view of formative assessment supports Shephard’s (2000) assertion that it is not necessary to separate assessment from teaching, instead teaching practices can and should be informed by, and coincide with, assessment practices and outcomes.

Johnston and Costello (2006) suggest that formative assessment is dependent upon factors such as trust, sensitivity, the social supports within the classroom and the motivations of the classroom. Johnson and Costello go on to propose that the essence of formative assessment is; noticing details of literate behaviour, imagining what they mean from the child’s perspective, knowing what the child knows and can do and
knowing how to arrange for that knowledge and competence to be displayed, engaged and extended. To the extent that formative assessment is a technical matter, the instrument used is the teacher and their mind.

Black and Wiliam (1998) conducted a review of 250 journal articles and book chapters with the aim of determining whether formative assessment raised academic standards in the classroom. They concluded that efforts to strengthen formative assessment did produce significant learning gains. In particular Black and Wiliam found that formative assessment helped low-achieving children, including those with Special Educational Needs, more than it helped other children. Dunn and Mulvenon (2009) question whether Black and Wiliam’s research, widely accepted within education, is actually supported by empirical evidence. Dunn and Mulvenon argue that the eight research articles presented to support the conclusion that formative assessment produces significant learning gains can be criticised for a variety of reasons. They note that one study (Fuchs and Fuchs, 1986) had a sample comprising 83% special educational needs children, thus making the generalisation of these findings to a wider population inappropriate. A second study by Whiting et al. (1995) was criticised for the fact that only one teacher was studied making it difficult to separate formative assessment effects from teacher effects. Similarly Bergan et al’s (1991) study was also criticised. In this study formative assessment was embedded within a larger program of measurement and planning with it being questioned whether formative assessment alone would have resulted in such significant gains in achievement. As a result of these issues, Dunn and Mulvenon (2009) suggest that the evidence presented by Black and Wiliam in 1998 does not support the conclusion that was drawn. Since this time, however, other studies have been carried out that do support the use of formative assessment as a method of improving educational outcomes (Thompson et al. 2004; Wininger, 2005). Similarly studies within the educational technology literature also support the conclusion that formative assessment results in gains in pupil achievement (Sly, 1999; Buchannan, 2000; Henly, 2003).
2.4 The use of the SVOR as a framework to aid the assessment process.

The previous discussion has highlighted that the identification of literacy needs is complex because pupil achievement in literacy is influenced by a multitude of factors. Individual factors, the learning environment, methods of teaching and the wider social environment both singly, and in complex interaction with each other, combine to complicate assessment (Wearmouth, Soler and Reid, 2003). Further complications arise from the differing perspectives from which literacy learning can be viewed; a mechanical perspective, an interactionist perspective or a socio-cultural perspective.

There are concerns that many assessment practices over sample narrow aspects of literacy whilst under sampling others, such as the enjoyment of reading, writing, media beyond print and critical literacy (Stallman and Pearson, 1991). Even very recent Government publications such as the Primary Framework for Literacy (DSCF, 2007c) continue to support a largely individualised view of learning that focuses on a relatively narrow, cognitive perspective. The need to sample a wide variety of literacy-based behaviours does appear not only sound but also well founded. For example, Johnston and Costello (2006) found that a ‘brittle’ disposition (lack of resilience) prior to first grade negatively predicts word recognition in grades 1 and 2 and is a better predictor of reading success than assessments of phonological awareness. It is disappointing then that the focus of literacy assessment in UK schools remains focussed on league tables and objective measures of attainment e.g. SATS. The difficulties associated with the use of such summative assessments, coupled with the emerging views of literacy being more than simply a mechanical process, lead to questions regarding the process of literacy assessment in schools. Some researchers are now suggesting that summative assessment can be used for formative purposes (Bell and Cowie, 2000). Dunn and Mulvenon (2009) state that it is the methodology, data analysis and use of the results that determine whether an assessment is formative or summative, rather than the actual tool used. The framework provided by the SVOR could be used in order to analyse data gathered from summative assessments in a formative way. As such it is possible that the SVOR could provide a tool that is able to bridge both formative and summative assessments. This would maximise the advantages of each type of assessment whilst
minimising the limitations. Using the SVOR in this way would also fit well with current Government legislation such as Assessment for Learning (DCSF, 2008c).

Given the arguments outlined above, this seems an opportune time to argue that the identification of literacy learning needs is better based on observations of reading behaviour over time and in a range of situations, than in relation to a single symptom in a single situation. The proposed use of the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs in this study encourages teachers to use their existing knowledge of a child, their daily observations of a child in different contexts and discussions with other important people in the child’s life (e.g. parents/carers) in order to informally assess literacy learning on an ongoing basis. This allows Johnston and Costello’s (2006) view of literacy as a social process to be incorporated into the assessment method. This seemingly simple notion was recognised over a decade ago by The International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English Joint Task Force on Assessment (1994) who suggested that the teacher should be the primary agent of assessment because the bulk of literacy assessment occurs moment by moment as part of the activity of teaching.

This research does fit well with the national context within which teachers are expected to work and current Government agendas and initiatives. During this piece of research I hope to determine whether or not the SVOR is able to provide a framework that enables teachers to use the rich knowledge that they gather about children during their daily interactions with them to identify need. However, the SVOR and the proposed use of it within this study does fail to emphasise the complex nature of literacy as a social process. The SVOR also, by its nature, encourages teachers to view literacy learning needs as a within child difficulty rather than an environmental or socially constructed problem. This is a continuing concern given the preceding discussion.

2.5 Summary

The preceding review of literature has discussed the models proposed by the Government to underpin literacy learning. The complexities associated with the
identification of literacy learning needs have also been discussed. Many children have literacy learning needs yet the lack of a clear assessment framework to help teachers identify these needs, and subsequently implement appropriate teaching strategies, is an issue that has not been explicitly addressed. Directives from Government hint at the idea that the SVOR could be used to this end but fail to describe how teachers can use this model for the purpose of identifying literacy learning needs within the classroom. Ensuring that the link between theory, assessment and instruction, in the area of reading, is made explicit to teachers is paramount to increasing the number of children who become successful readers at primary school. This study hopes to determine whether the SVOR can be used to fulfil this function.

2.6 How the preceding literature review informs the study

This chapter has highlighted the importance of ensuring consistency between approaches used to identify the literacy learning needs of children and guidance provided by the Government. This study focuses on the Simple View of Reading (SVOR), as promoted by the Government in the Primary Framework for Literacy (DCSF, 2007c). This research will go beyond the use of the SVOR for the purpose of developing a teacher’s conceptual understanding of reading to consider the use of the SVOR for the purposes of identifying literacy learning needs. This research aims to determine whether the SVOR is perceived by teachers as providing a useful framework to guide the identification of literacy learning needs within a primary school. This approach does fit with the national context within which teachers are expected to work, which was considered of prime importance for this project. However, it is also recognised that the SVOR does fail to emphasise the complex nature of literacy as a social process and by its nature encourages teachers to view literacy learning needs as a within child difficulty rather than an environmental or socially constructed problem. Despite this, the use of the SVOR proposed in this study does aim to facilitate inclusion through avoiding the labelling of children based on one test and keeping the child within the classroom system rather than removing them into a different, special educational needs, system. The SVOR could also be viewed as providing the basis for a comprehensive school wide early literacy assessment system (Kame’enui, 2002), offering a framework that enables teachers to
screen, monitor and measure student outcomes in the area of literacy learning whilst acting as a catalyst for the further, more detailed stage of diagnosis that may be necessary for some children.
CHAPTER THREE: STAFF DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

In the UK there is a long history of rapid change in education. In the 50 years spanning 1950 – 2000, comprehensive schools have been established, the school leaving age has been raised to 16 and GCSEs, the National Curriculum, the National Literacy Strategy, the National Numeracy Strategy and Foundation Stage Curriculum have all been introduced. Such changes occur for a wide variety of reasons including demographic and economic trends, politics, social/cultural developments, new research/knowledge and new technological advances (Sikes, 1992). Despite these legitimate reasons for change, the primary motivating force for change in education seems to be the assumption that things are not right. Sikes (1992) suggests that in the case of schools this often means that students are not reaching their full potential either as a result of their teachers being inadequate or the teaching being inappropriate. More recently the use of the term ‘school improvement’ and the introduction of School Improvement Partners (DCSF, 2007a) also implies that existing practices are not as effective as they might be.

Two decades of research have outlined the characteristics of effective schools. Sadker and Zittleman (2007) identify five factors of effective schools; strong leadership, a clear school mission, a safe and orderly climate, monitoring of student progress and high expectations. The Department of Education and Training in Australia (2005) also identified the characteristics of an effective school. A number of these were similar to Sadker and Zittleman, including professional leadership, high expectations for student learning, rigorous systems of accountability and stimulating and secure learning environments. In addition, The Department of Education and Training in Australia also identified a focus on teaching and learning, ongoing opportunities for staff development and agreed expectations and coherence regarding the quality of teaching as characteristics of an effective school. It is interesting that this research appears to tell us more about the ‘what’ of a good school than the ‘how’ of making schools better (Mortimore and MacBeath,1994). Research does however provide
information relating to differing models of staff development. After reviewing the literature in this area the remainder of this chapter will consider:

- Factors contributing to effective staff development
- Barriers to change
- How the literature review informs the research project.

3.2 Models of staff development

It seems that literature focussing on models of staff development can be conceptualised in terms of those that are teacher led and those that are led by someone external to the school. The majority of the teacher led models tend to be what Stake (1987) describes as evolutionary in nature. These models are based on the idea that new experiences result in teachers re-evaluating problems and intuitively thinking of alternative solutions. In contrast, staff development models reliant on/led by an agency external to the school, seem to focus more on what Stake (1987) refers to as replacement change. These models seek to replace existing practices with new practice founded on the basis of research or prompted self analysis.

3.2.1 Outside agency led change (Replacement change)

The most traditional, and probably well-known, method of outside agency led change is that of In-service Training (INSET). INSET was driven by the belief that persuading teachers that a new idea was better than their existing practice would result in the new idea being adopted and implemented successfully. This process was viewed as addressing any deficiencies and resulting in improved teacher performance (Chin and Benne, 1976). Initially INSET tended to take place at a central venue. Little attention was paid to either the mismatch between the personal needs of a teacher and the content of the INSET or the difficulties faced by teachers when returning to their respective schools and trying to implement what they had been shown (Henderson and Perry, 1981). In the late 1970s the area of staff development came under increasing scrutiny and policies for staff development began to emerge. As recommended in the ‘Making INSET Work’ publication (DES, 1978), INSET began to develop into a more school-based process. In 1988, this shift was supported by the introduction of five INSET days for teachers per year. School based INSET
was developed with the belief that a school, as a learning community, could identify and tackle its own problems in a relevant and professional manner (Henderson and Perry, 1981). School based INSET is considered to be more effective because a needs analysis relevant to the individual school can be carried out. Following this INSET activities can be matched to the needs of the school, barriers to implementation identified and steps taken to either lower or remove these (Henderson and Perry, 1981).

Some research does suggest that INSET is an effective method of staff development. Baker (1981) carried out an evaluation of INSET and found that varied INSET over an 18 month period seemed to result in positive changes in classroom teaching and pupil learning for seven out of nine teachers. Six of the nine teachers also reported that the whole school had benefited from the INSET process. In addition, Henderson and Perry (1981) suggest that INSET can be useful in terms of assisting teachers to redefine their needs and provide an off-the-job context in which existing skills and methods can be challenged. A DfES review of award bearing INSET was carried out by Soulsby and Swain in 2003, who found that 81% of award bearing INSET courses were rated as either good or very good on impact measures. There was also evidence of specific improvements in teacher effectiveness including changes in planning and assessment methods, re-written schemes of work and alternative methods of teaching. An HMI survey (2003) evaluated the extent to which TTA funded INSET facilitates sustainable school improvement and represents good value for money. Interim findings of this study indicated that 90% of courses produced demonstrable gains in participants’ effectiveness as teachers. The impact on school improvement was rated as good in just over 50% of courses and very good in just under 50% of courses.

Despite the evidence outlined above, INSET has also been widely criticised. These criticisms include there often being a mismatch between the needs of teachers (either on a personal level or arising from the needs of the school context) and the content of the training (Henderson and Perry, 1981) and the failure of one off training approaches (Johnson, 1989; Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991). Clarke and Hollingsworth, (2002) found that INSET resulted in little more than a surface level of improved awareness, knowledge and understanding, with little evidence of implementation or sustained use of the innovation in question. Other criticisms
include there being little time for reflection and follow-up (Duncombe and Armour, 2004) and teachers experiencing difficulties in applying theoretical knowledge to their practice (Burbank and Kauchak, 2003). Wright (1993) suggests that INSET can also result in teachers feeling more ignorant and less confident than they did at the start of the process.

A review of research carried out by Joyce and Showers (1980) found that traditional INSET models of staff training had no effect on classroom practice. As a result, Joyce and Showers (1980) extended the notion of INSET by identifying 5 fundamental components that they perceived to be required if skills were to be transferred into regular practice. These components were; theory presentation, demonstration, feedback, practice and coaching. Although the initial four stages of this model may resemble traditional INSET, Joyce and Showers highlight the importance of the coaching stage. During this stage feedback is provided in order to contribute towards the adaptation of teaching skills. In addition, hands-on, in-class assistance is also provided to aid with the transfer of skills and strategies thus providing a greater impact upon teacher development. O’Regan (2010) identifies several advantages of adopting a coaching approach when working with teachers. These include;

- Increasing the understanding and role of teachers in achieving their own success.
- Increasing a teacher’s ability to view obstacles to success as challenges to be overcome.
- Increased willingness to accept differing roles and others’ ideas.
- Increased ability to become proactive in locating solutions to the difficulties.

In contrast to the advantages outlined above, there are also difficulties associated with coaching. These include the coaching process being extremely time intensive, feedback sometimes failing to be consistent with teacher views and feedback sometimes being given in the form of advice and support rather than facilitating the learning of the teacher (Hill and Hawk, 2000).
In summary, outside agency led models of staff development tend to encourage dependence on external expertise and focus exclusively on the acquisition of teaching skills/strategies. As such it could be argued that this type of staff development does not equip teachers with the skills and confidence required to create solutions to their own problems as and when they arise. More importantly, outside agency led change tends to focus on a deficit model of teacher development which has been shown to be ineffective by several researchers (Howey and Joyce, 1978; Wood and Thompson, 1980; Guskey, 1986). Clearly it is very difficult to define the demands of a professional career like teaching in terms of narrow, prescribed, behaviourally construed skills. Therefore placing the focus on eliminating deficits is not always either appropriate or particularly useful when considering a career that takes place within the complex system of a school. As Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) note, the deficiency view of staff development also fails to take into account the fact that teachers are professionals and therefore have something to contribute to the process rather than simply requiring support to address their ‘deficiencies.’ Arikan (2006) also notes that the growing critical review in teacher education signals a paradigm shift in which the transmission (thus deficit) model of professional development becomes replaced by models based on reflective practices (Smylie and Conyers, 1991).

3.2.2 Teacher led approaches (Evolutionary change)

As a result of the criticisms of outside agency led approaches to staff development, there has been a shift from a deficit model to a developmental model that emphasises growth (Ismat, 1989). Gibbons and Norman (1987) recognised the need for a shift in thinking. They suggested that rather than viewing the teacher as the receiver of training/information, teachers, or groups of teachers, should begin to take responsibility for this themselves. In order to do this Gibbons and Norman suggested a process involving teachers in identifying issues, looking at the most effective approaches to obtain their goals, reviewing available materials and subsequently developing an understanding of new elements and becoming committed to them. This process clearly places the emphasis on teacher led, rather than outside agency led, models of teacher development. The key shift is one of agency: from programs that change teachers to teachers as active learners shaping their own professional growth.
Experiential learning (Kolb, 1984), action research (Lewin, 1946; Stenhouse, 1975; Elliot, 1991; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1990; Walker, 1993, 1995, 2009) and the teacher as a reflective practitioner (Schon, 1983, 1987) are all examples of teacher led approaches to staff development. All of these approaches view the teacher as a professional and place the teacher firmly at the centre of systematic enquiry and critical self reflection. Through a process of self reflection teachers are able to identify weaknesses, plan improvements, action these improvements and evaluate any revisions thus starting a new cycle of reflection. Denny (2005) suggests that this process is the same as action research with the exception of the evaluation stage. The evaluation stage in action research, suggests Denny, involves more rigorous data gathering and analysis than is normally undertaken in reflective practice due to the main aim often being to publish the results. The following outlines the ‘common sense view’ of action research outlined by McNiff (2002):

- Review our current practice.
- Identify an aspect that we want to improve.
- Imagine a way forward.
- Try an alternative method.
- Take stock of what happens.
- Modify plans in light of what we have found and continue with the action.
- Monitor what we do.
- Evaluate the modified action.
- Continue with this process until we are satisfied with the aspect of our work.

The above can be seen to overlap very closely with the process of reflective practice. Both of these processes are also similar to the experiential learning cycle outlined by Kolb (1984). The experiential learning cycle comprises 4 stages. The first stage is to do something concrete, or use a specific experience, to provide the basis for stage 2. Stage 2 comprises observation and reflection on the experience as well as a response to it. These observations are then assimilated into a conceptual framework or related to other concepts, a teacher’s past experience or knowledge from which implications for action can be derived. The final stage in the experiential learning cycle involves testing and applying the conceptual frameworks generated in different situations.
The models of teacher led approaches to change outlined above could all be described as ‘cyclical processes alternating between action and critical reflection’ (Dick, 2002). All are also reliant on teachers taking control of their own professional development and working with the purpose of improving their own professional practice. A teacher led approach to staff development clearly addresses some of the criticisms of the more traditional outside agency led models of change. Denny (2005) notes that reflective practice is a bottom up process because it is self directed, thus can be focussed on an individual’s area of perceived need. As a result of this process being initiated and driven by the teacher, it is often viewed as being more empowering than top down models of teacher development. Denny (2005) also suggests that teacher led approaches to development are flexible within certain guidelines, clearly an advantage for a busy teacher. Such models also have the advantage of viewing the teacher as a professional contributing to an on-going process of development rather than a one-off activity (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002).

Despite the advantages listed above, there are also many criticisms of action research, experiential learning and the teacher as a reflective practitioner, as models of teacher development. John’s (2009) notes that such approaches may result in some people, particularly those lacking commitment to their practice, feeling threatened. John’s (2009) also notes that these approaches are less prescriptive and therefore require more responsibility and self direction on the part of the teacher. This type of development is viewed by Johns as being more difficult than conventional learning, due to it requiring critiques of a person’s own practice. In addition, these approaches are very labour intensive, slow and generally involve small numbers of teachers. Although such approaches clearly have the potential to change the practice of an individual teacher, school wide changes using this approach are more difficult to effect. Eraut (1994) suggests that the use of these approaches in a profession such as teaching, where time is extremely short, results in decisions having to be made rapidly, thus reducing the scope for reflection.

More recent teacher-led approaches to staff development seem to emphasise the notion of collaboration, not at the level of individual but rather at the level of the whole school. One such example is that of the ‘Professional Learning Community’
A PLC is an infrastructure, or a way of working together, that results in continuous school improvement (Hord, 1997). PLCs are generally composed of teachers, although support staff routinely participate (Huffman, 2000; Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, & Wallace, 2005). In some schools, PLCs are extended to community members and students, as appropriate (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006; Stoll & Louis, 2007).

There is no agreed definition of a PLC. Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (2003) define a PLC as ‘group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive learning-oriented and growth-promoting way.’ Seashore and colleagues (2003, p.3) elaborate on this further, stating that ‘By using the term professional learning community we signify our interest not only in discrete acts of teacher sharing, but in the establishment of a school-wide culture that makes collaboration expected, inclusive, genuine, ongoing, and focused on critically examining practice to improve student outcomes. . . . The hypothesis is that what teachers do together outside of the classroom can be as important as what they do inside it affecting school restructuring, teachers’ professional development, and student’s learning.’

Following a review of literature, Bolam et al. (2005) concluded that PLCs share five key characteristics; shared values and visions, collective responsibility, reflective professional enquiry, collaboration and the promotion of group as well as individual learning. Other research identifies three further shared characteristics of a PLC.

These can be summarised as:

- A focus on examining outcomes to improve student learning (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1994; DuFour, 2004; Louis, 2006; Feger & Arruda, 2008).
- Supportive and shared leadership (Kruse, Louis & Bryk, 1994; Louis & Kruse, 1995; Hord, 1997; Mitchell & Sackney, 2006; Feger & Arruda, 2008)
- Shared personal practice involving teachers working and learning together as they continually evaluate the effectiveness of their practices, needs, interests and skills of their students (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 1994; Hord, 1997; Thompson, Gregg, & Niska, 2004; McREL, 2003).
There is a clear overlap between the characteristics of a PLC and the characteristics of an effective school detailed in section 3.1. It is possible that this is because the type of collaborative approach advocated through the establishment of PLC’s has been found to help sustain momentum and therefore help participants through the challenges presented by change (Borko et al.1997; Hall and Hord, 2001; Whelan, et al. 2001). The Centre for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2009) go on to identify the following benefits of PLCs; reduced isolation, increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school, shared responsibility for student success, greater job satisfaction and higher morale. Hord (1997), also found that the use of PLCs resulted in lower rates of staff absenteeism.

Although collaborative approaches to staff development are currently perceived as favourable, some issues remain. Research suggests that peer collaboration does not always translate into changes in classroom practice (Huberman, 2001). Clearly the individuals participating in any collaborative group also need to be both committed to it and motivated by it if it is to prove successful. Stoll et al. (2003) suggest that this can sometimes be difficult to achieve. There is also a need for those participating in a collaborative approach to view difference, debate and disagreement as a basis for improvement rather than as a criticism. This could be viewed as being in contrast with the performance management model of staff appraisal frequently utilised in schools. Collaboration is also reliant on trust between the members of the group so that information can be shared (Hall and Hord, 2001; Huberman, 2001). This level of trust may be difficult to establish quickly especially if a group is comprised of teachers who do not already know each other or have significantly differing priorities and/or amounts of time. Wright (1993) suggests that the involvement of an outside agency within a collaborative group may be useful in order to encourage critical reflection, help teachers to feel more in touch with the world beyond their classroom and utilise knowledge of the processes of both change and learning.

3.2.3 An eclectic approach to teacher development

The above discussion has presented two contrasting models of staff development; outside agency led change and teacher led change. In practice this distinction may
unhelpful in that both approaches do contain positive elements which, when combined may help to alleviate some of the criticisms. Sarland (2001) highlights the importance of outsider support, with outsiders acting as mechanisms of support for teachers, providing outsider views and in some instances providing financial support. Similarly, Sarland emphasises the need for teacher involvement but suggests that teacher involvement in change and development is very complex, with this complexity not always being reflected in the literature. Despite this Sarland argues that, in order to make the link between classroom practice and theory, the involvement of teachers is crucial. In addition, Sarland also argues for the role that authenticity plays in teacher development, taking the view that only teacher knowledge and experience is authentic.

Wright (1993) also advocates the use of a combination of outside agency led and teacher led approaches. Wright refers to outside agency led change as the ‘University model’ and teacher led models as ‘teacher centre models.’ Wright notes that neither of these models are ideal as both offer only one area of expertise and independently tend to have little effect on classroom practice. Wright does, however, argue that a combination of the two methods may be a more useful model for the purposes of staff development. Wright goes on to suggest that this may take the form of both parties initially meeting in order to explore a topic together, thus maximising the outsiders’ knowledge of content and the teachers’ knowledge of children, classrooms and schools. My own personal experiences of professional development would suggest that it is also possible for INSET to act as the catalyst for future collaborative, teacher led, staff development both within and across schools.

3.3 Staff development: Models of teacher development at the level of the individual teacher

Models of teacher change at the level of the individual teacher have been conceptualised in a number of ways. For the purposes of this research only the models directly informing this study will be discussed in detail.

It is widely accepted that long term changes in beliefs and attitudes are very difficult to achieve. Many researchers advocate that the most important influence during staff
development activities is a teachers personal belief system (Driscoll and Stevens 1985; Clark and Peterson, 1986; Leithwood, 1992; Fang, 1996; Greenberg and Baron, 2000; Calabrese, 2002; Duke, 2004) These researchers argue that teacher beliefs, regarding either the new introduction or the process of change itself, have a powerful effect on what teachers learn during staff development activities, thus ultimately determining whether changes are accepted or rejected. In contrast, Guskey (2002) maintains that improvements and positive changes in outcomes for children are likely to precede, and are possibly a pre-requisite to, changes in the beliefs and attitudes of teachers. This view is strongly supported by other research including Huberman and Miles (1984), Steadman et al. (1995) and Ingvarson (2003). The process of change at the level of the individual teacher, initially proposed by Guskey in 1986, is represented in Figure 2:

![Figure 2: Guskey’s (1986) model of staff development.](image)

Fuller and Brown’s (1975) work is similar to Guskey’s model. Fuller and Brown suggest that there are three phases of teacher development and that these characterise the course of a career in teaching. Fuller and Brown suggest that in the initial years of teaching teachers are most concerned with fitting into the school environment. This phase links well with Guskey’s first stage of teacher change, as both are concerned with changing classroom practice. Fuller and Brown then suggest that teachers become more task focussed before moving on to consider how effective their teaching is for pupil learning. This final phase of Fuller and Brown’s model correlates well with the middle stage of Guskey’s model. The models differ in terms of the identified end point with Guskey believing that this lies in changes in teacher
beliefs and attitudes whilst Brown and Fuller envisage the end point as being more effective pupil learning.

Guskey’s account of change at the level of the individual has been criticised for representing change as a linear process. In an attempt to address this issue, Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) developed an Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Growth. This model suggests that change at the individual level occurs through the mediating processes of reflection and enactment across 4 distinct domains; personal (teacher knowledge beliefs and attitudes), practice (professional experimentation), consequence (salient outcomes) and external (sources of information, stimulus or support). Although this interconnected model of professional growth does, to some extent, reflect the complexity of change within a school environment it does not have an ‘end point’ in the way that the model proposed by Guskey does. This limits it’s applicability to research.

Guskey’s model can also be criticised for other reasons. This model fails to explain the processes involved in a teacher moving from one stage within the model to the next and fails to encompass other factors demonstrated by research to impact upon a teacher’s level of interest in, and response to, change. These factors include the age and gender of the teacher (Krupp, 1989), the context within which people work (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992) and the stage of the teachers career (Huberman, 1992). As Guskey’s model is proposed to help us understand how an individual responds to the introduction of change at any point during a teacher’s career, the model may not be as simple, or linear, as initially perceived. The rate at which change is introduced in teaching means that teachers are unlikely to move in a step-by-step manner through each stage. It may be that teachers do not reach the final stage of a change in beliefs and attitudes before another change is introduced. It is therefore possible that at any one time teachers will be at differing points in this model with regard to a number of different initiatives.

Guskey’s model can be perceived as focussing primarily on the outcomes of change and, as already been noted, does not explain how teachers move from one stage to the next. One model that does attempt to clarify this issue was developed by Wideen in 1992. Wideen suggests that there are 4 stages associated with instructional change.
and that a teacher’s response to change will involve moving through the following stages.

- **Stage 1:** The starting point involving teachers talking about changes, considering their practice in the general area being considered and implementing elements of the suggested change that they perceive may work for them.
- **Stage 2:** Integrating practice so that the teacher becomes involved in the process, rather than simply adopting someone else’s method, whilst actively contemplating both changes planned and changes made.
- **Stage 3:** Sharing experiences with colleagues and through this process encouraging and motivating colleagues to try things for themselves.
- **Stage 4:** Generalising practice and communicating practices to a wider school community, whilst contemplating a broader set of educational issues and undertaking a process of personal inquiry into teaching and their own feelings as a teacher.

Within this model change clearly presents a challenge to everyone regardless of the length of their teaching career. These stages correlate well with other models of teacher development including the professional expertise strand of Leithwood’s (1993) staff development model. Wideen’s model could also be seen as providing useful guidance for teachers as to steps that would help them to incorporate changes into their practice. For the purposes of this study this model is conceptualised as complimenting the model proposed by Guskey (1986). The stages identified by Wideen could be used to explain the processes through which teachers may move from one stage in Guskey’s model to the next. This use of the model does present some difficulties. Wideen is not explicit regarding the extent of time/effort required at each stage in order to either move to the next stage or result in a change in practice. Similarly, Wideen is not explicit about which level within the model is sufficient for sustained changes in practice. This model could also be criticised for reducing change to a set of simple steps, resulting in the process of teacher development being over simplified. As is the case with most models of teacher development this model does not truly recognise the complexity of the pressures that may prevent teachers
from engaging with each stage of the model. This model is also subject to the criticisms of Guskey’s model due to it presenting teacher development as a linear process.

From this brief review it can be seen that staff development at the level of the individual is far from clear, with differing models having been formulated to describe this complex process. Indeed it is likely that more than one model is needed to try and fully understand this complex issue. For the purposes of this study both Guskey’s and Wideen’s models will be used to consider teacher change in relation to the introduction of the SVOR. These models are thought to compliment each other, as each focuses on a slightly different aspect of staff development. Both models also offer the opportunity to make judgements about the nature of teacher change and provide frameworks that are easy to work within.

3.4 Conditions needed to facilitate effective staff development

Research into change and staff development indicates that certain conditions are needed/favourable, if change is to occur. The following summarises the conditions thought to contribute towards effective staff development.

Leadership

Supportive leadership is one condition identified in the literature as being necessary for, and predicting, teacher professional development (Orr and Orphanos, 2007). Harwell (2003) highlights the importance of leaders in establishing a context to support professional development. Effective leaders are said to establish policies and organisational structures that support ongoing professional learning and continuous improvement, ensure equitable distribution of resources, allow adequate time for learning and collaboration and distribute aspects of leadership (National Staff Development Council, 2001). Sikes (1992) and Huber and West (2002) focus more on the management style of a school’s leadership suggesting that giving teachers a sense of control and ownership is advantageous in the promotion of staff development. Sikes (1992) and Huber and West (2002) go on to suggest that this type of management style is characterised by an active, participative and democratic approach to the management of change that encourages teachers to discover new
opportunities and learn through acquiring, sharing, and combining knowledge. Wideen (1992) suggests that if school leadership allows/facilitates school staff working together as a group the group becomes the vehicle for bringing about change. This enables teachers to learn, become inspired by, and find their identity within the group. This type of group atmosphere also provides the shelter conditions under which the risks necessary for growth can be taken, as well as providing the encouragement necessary to counter any anxieties. Strong and supportive leadership has also been found to be necessary for building and sustaining Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) (Eaker and Gonzalez, 2006, Mitchell and Sackney, 2006 and Hargreaves and Fink, 2006).

School Culture
Closely linked to leadership is the culture of a school. The culture of any school will impact on the success, or otherwise, of any staff development programme (Hargreaves, 1995; Guskey and Sparks, 1996; Peterson 2002). Peterson (2002) describes a school culture conducive to staff development as one that has a set of values that supports professional development, a shared sense of responsibility for student learning and the celebration of success. School cultures that support the professional lives of teachers (Langer, 2000) and are respectful and trusting (National Staff Development Council, 2001) have also been linked to successful staff development. Henderson and Perry, (1981) highlight the importance of a school culture that is an open system, accessible to influences from outside agencies on the basis of partnership rather than superior/inferior relationships. If a school culture is open to outside agency influences, a long-term relationship between the school and the outside agency/person has been found to be key (Neufield and McGowan, 1993). This finding places the Educational Psychologist in an ideal position to support a school with staff development activities.

Recognition of a problem
Another key condition for staff development is the recognition that a problem exists (Henderson and Perry, 1981; Ferry and Ross-Gordon, 1998). Harwell (2003) suggests that if the professionals in a setting agree about the problem then change is possible, even likely. Once identified, the Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest (2009) suggest that the problem then needs to be clearly defined before steps can be taken.
towards addressing the difficulty. The identification and clarification of a problem can then lead teachers to engage in a process of reflective problem solving, as described in sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3, or seeking advice and support from relevant outside agencies as described in section 3.2.1 and 3.2.3.

Other factors

Other conditions described in the literature as being conducive to staff development include; development activities being collaborative in nature (Little, 1993; Hall and Hord, 2001; Showers and Joyce, 2002; Richards, 2003), individuals being determined to effect change (Gibbons and Norman, 1987), a shared vision (Stoll and Fink, 1996; Hall and Hord, 2001), a view of staff development as ongoing, participatory and a key component of school life (Hall and Hord, 2001) and using the events and dynamics of the classroom to frame the development activity thus ensuring that its purpose is relevant to the teacher and grounded in the context of the classroom (Griffin, 1987; Duncombe and Armour, 2004).

3.5 Barriers to change

3.5.1 How our understanding of barriers to change has changed over the past 30 years

Change is notoriously difficult to achieve. Gibbons and Norman (1987) suggest that this is because, in the struggle between the familiar and the new, the familiar prevails and, in the struggle between learning and management, the demand for efficient management prevails. Approaches to staff development have, over the decades, struggled to dislodge these powerful forces.

The literature identifies a whole range of barriers to change that may hinder the process of staff development. It seems that over time there has been a shift in the nature of the barriers identified. For example, Gross (1977) analysed longitudinal studies of efforts directed towards planned organisational change in educational settings in the United States and identified 8 major barriers:

1) A failure to properly diagnose problems.
2) A failure to anticipate or resolve implementation problems.
3) An ad-hoc approach to educational innovation with little concern being given to the effect of innovations on other parts of the school.
4) The uncritical acceptance of existing innovations with little understanding of the unique social context of a school.
5) The absence of monitoring and feedback mechanisms that allow for the early identification of barriers.
6) A lack of teacher and community involvement.
7) Inadequate planning with no targets for change.
8) The absence of leadership.

The majority of the barriers identified above relate directly to the actual implementation of the change itself and do not consider any of the wider issues that may impact upon the ability of an individual or school to respond to change. In the 1980’s Pink (1989) did identify such barriers. These included under funding, staff turnover, limitations of teacher knowledge regarding how to successfully implement change, competing demands/overload and attempts to manage projects from a central office rather than developing a school’s own leadership and capacity.

In the 1990s research indicated that potential barriers to change were even more complex and difficult to manage than previously considered. Wideen (1992) suggests that in addition to the difficulties associated with the actual implementation of change and the wider, generally school based, issues noted by Pink (1989), other potential barriers to change exist. Wideen (1992) identified these as including the norms and practices of other local schools, the perpetual and insidious erosion of energy and the introduction of new initiatives, contributing to fragmentation in education whilst trying to improve education.

More recently, research findings have focussed on teachers emotional responses as barriers to change. Research suggests that change sometimes leads to the school environment feeling unsafe for teachers, thus resulting in teachers becoming defensive and resorting to old habits (Goleman, Boyatziz and McKee, 2002). Similarly Fullan (2001) and Greenberg and Baron (2000) found that change results in teachers fearing the unknown, thus losing their sense of security. Other emotional responses to change that may act as barriers include teachers feeling demoralised
(Nias, 1991), losing confidence (Helsby, 1999), feeling deskilled (Aspland and Brown, 1993) and the pain inflicted by change being organisationally disruptive and personally demoralising (Abrahamson, 2004).

The preceding discussion has identified a wide range of increasingly complex barriers to change. The following briefly summarises some of the barriers to change that recur in the literature.

3.5.2 Terminology

Kemmis (1987) suggests that the term staff development can itself be a barrier to change. Kemmis suggests that the term ‘staff’ implies a homogenous group of people without names, faces or characters, whilst the term ‘development’ implies that a group of people can be the object of a ‘development’ plan that an unspecified person/group has for them. Stoll (1992) also disagrees with the use of the term ‘development’ suggesting that the term ‘growth’ should be used instead as it encourages schools to build on previous successes and focus on strengths. The term ‘learning’ rarely seems to be used in relation to staff development. This is interesting as teachers are obviously very familiar with both the term learning and the processes it involves. The use of the term ‘learning’ may mean that teachers are better able to engage in change as a process. The terminology used is clearly important in eliciting a positive response and may require a move away from the negative connotations of the term ‘development,’ on the basis that this could be perceived as focussing on weaknesses and therefore encouraging a deficit view of teacher practice.

3.5.3 Teacher Attitudes

The role of teacher attitude in the change process was recognised many years ago by Lewin (1947). Lewin suggested that ‘frozen’ or fixed group attitudes and behaviours can present a barrier to change. It is suggested that, if change is to occur, a process of unfreezing old behaviours and attitudes must be undertaken. If this process does not occur, Lewin states that teachers are likely to find ways of adapting new methods to better-fit old ways of working/old habits. As well as unfreezing old habits, Lewin also suggests that failing to ‘refreeze’ new attitudes and behaviours presents as another barrier. The ‘refreezing’ process can only occur if changes are
institutionalised i.e. absorbed into the total structure of the system and the everyday behaviour of individuals. Although this model of freezing – unfreezing – refreezing seems a useful concept, it could be viewed as over simplistic as it only deals with a single innovation and in a time of rapid change within education this is very rarely the reality. Another difficulty with this model is that it is not dynamic, it does not take into account the wide range of factors that contribute to the formation and maintenance of attitudes, such as the culture of the school, the stage of personal/professional development or the pressures exerted on teachers from the wider community e.g. parents, the Government or the Local Authority.

An individual teacher’s attitude towards change and staff development is influenced by his/her own personal beliefs, values and attitudes. These beliefs, both about teaching and the innovation, often act as a filter thus determining what is and is not taken from any staff development activity. Driscoll and Stevens (1985) suggest that this filter allows teachers to learn, and/or use, what they perceive will enable them to work more effectively and/or more efficiently, whilst ignoring or failing to act on the rest. Leithwood (1992) extends this idea suggesting that teachers strive to accomplish both implicit and explicit goals that are personally important to them in their work. Therefore, if a teacher judges a new approach as being helpful in accomplishing his/her own personal goals then they are likely to try and understand it by matching it to what they already know.

More recently researchers have suggested that, rather than a teacher’s attitude to the new introduction, it is a teacher’s attitude to the process of change that determines whether or not that change will be accepted (Greenberg and Baron, 2000; Calabrese, 2002; Duke, 2004; Zimmerman, 2006).

### 3.5.4 Leadership

Mackeogh and Fox (2009) state that, although the support of senior management is required for change, top-down approaches alone do not work and therefore can act as a barrier to change. It could be argued that this style of management is not appropriate in the dynamic social system of a school, where development depends on shared responsibility for mutually agreed goals. Fullan (1987) agrees that the constant
top-down policy making that seems inherent within the education system, frequently stifles rather than stimulates professional learning. Top-down approaches from Government have recently been criticised by Hargreaves (2004, p.4) who notes that, ‘I am sympathetic to those governments, like my own, which have intervened in the education service from a conviction that externally imposed reform was necessary and that educational professionals could not be trusted to make the necessary improvements if left to themselves. But there are limits to what can be imposed.’ A top down approach to change is also likely to result in resistance if, as Mills (2007) notes, teachers perceive their participation to be external to the dialogue and planning of the change, as would be the case in a top-down approach. Clearly leadership style is important if staff development is to result in change. The leadership factors found to facilitate staff development and change were discussed in section 3.4.

### 3.5.5 Lack of time

Collinson and Fedoruk Cook (2004) found that a lack of time was a perennial issue for teachers. More specifically, Fiszer (2004) found that a lack of time for reflection and dialogue negatively impacted on professional development. Vrasidas (2010) conducted a study examining why teachers do not adopt the use of technology in the classroom. In this study, reasons relating to time differed slightly with 71.7% of teachers claiming that the amount of time required to integrate ICT into the classroom prevented them from doing so. In addition, 60.4% of staff cited the time required outside the classroom for preparation as an insurmountable barrier. This study implies that although the concept of time appears, on the surface, to be one issue, it could in fact relate to a number of different issues. Sikes (1992) puts the issue of time within context of rapid changes in education. As such, Sikes suggests that teachers are rarely given enough time to acquaint themselves with a change and therefore are not able to plan and prepare for it, as imposed changes are often a fast response to a perceived problem and, as a result, time is normally at a premium.

### 3.5.6 Application of research

Historically teachers have a relatively poor record of applying research findings to classroom practice. Hopkins (1987) notes that the differing conceptions of teaching held by teachers and researchers is one potential barrier to change. Helmsley-Brown and Sharp (2003) identified several barriers to teachers applying educational research
to their practice. These barriers included a lack of access (i.e. teachers having limited access to academic libraries and not subscribing to journals), teachers finding the volume of research daunting, the research being full of jargon and statistics that are difficult to understand and research being too theoretical thus perceived as unhelpful and irrelevant to teachers in their daily role. Educational Psychologists seem to be ideally placed to bridge this gap between theory and practice in the field of education.

3.5.7 Stage of teaching career

The long-term development of a teacher is not characterised by steady, cumulative growth. Instead, teacher development is punctuated by externally devised curriculum changes, the impact of new technology, changing responsibilities and variations in personal circumstances. Some researchers believe that a teacher’s response to change is dependent upon the stage of their teaching career. Ball and Goodson (1985), Huberman (1983, 1987, 1993) and Fessler (1985, 1992) believe that the life cycle of a teacher is characterised by the presence of certain phases of development. This results in teachers of a similar age sharing similar experiences, perceptions, attitudes, satisfactions, frustrations and concerns which impact on a teacher’s motivation and commitment to change. Sikes (1992) suggests that younger teachers may well be enthusiastic about change but often lack the skill and expertise necessary to realise their intentions. Similarly Clements (1985) found that more experienced teachers were better able to adapt their practice in response to change. Clements concluded that this finding may have been due to experienced teachers already having the conceptual framework(s) necessary to know when to use what they had acquired during staff development activities. Other researchers disagree with these findings. Ruddock (1987) suggests that experienced teachers become immersed in a world of routine practice that over time presents as a barrier thus reducing their capacity to contemplate alternatives and gain insight from everyday classroom events. Sikes (1992) concurs with this view but instead suggests that experienced teachers may perceive change as a criticism of what has been done to date, rather than as an opportunity, thus presenting another barrier to change.
3.6 Summary

The growing range of knowledge relating to teaching and learning coupled with the rapid nature of change, both in society and schools, places staff development at the centre of ongoing school improvement.

This chapter highlights the complexity of the process of staff development and the wide range of factors that influence the process of change within the school context.

Various models of staff development exist and, although there seems to be a shift from more traditional, injection-model, approaches to staff development to more collaborative approaches, both within and between schools, a combination of both approaches could ensure that the advantages of each are maximised, whilst the difficulties are addressed. Some recent research indicates that the majority of schools are still using the more traditional methods of staff development (Birman et al. 2000).

The literature in this area identifies stages of teacher development (Guskey, 1986) and the steps/processes that may explain how teachers move from one stage to the next (Wideen, 1992). For the purposes of this study these two models will be used to consider the notion of changes in teacher practice.

Research findings consistently identify a range of factors that contribute towards effective staff development, including supportive leadership, the recognition/acceptance that a problem exists, the active involvement of the teacher, the provision of support following the introduction of a change and the national/local context. Similarly research has also consistently identified a range of barriers to change including leadership, limited resources (particularly time), teacher attitudes and beliefs, the terminology used and the relevance and application of research to the classroom.
3.7 How the preceding literature review informs the study

This research aims to investigate for whom and in what circumstances the introduction of the SVOR results in changes in teacher practice. In order to consider this, this study drew heavily on the work of Guskey (1986) and Wideen (1992).

Although Guskey’s model (Figure 2) has been criticised for its linear presentation and simplicity, it does offer the opportunity to make judgements about the nature of teacher change. This model also provides a framework that is easy to work within given that this is only one of the aspects being considered in this research. Within this context, Guskey’s model is considered to be a useful tool for analysing the extent of teacher change in relation to the introduction of the SVOR. The use of Guskey’s model for this purpose is outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Guskey’s (1986) model of staff development in relation to this study.
In addition to using Guskey’s model, Wideen’s Stages of Instructional Change (1992) were also used. This model can be viewed as complimenting Guskey’s model as it describes the processes through which teachers may move from one stage of development to the next. As described in Section 3.3 this model identifies 4 stages of instructional change and although presented by Wideen as a series of concentric circles with Stage 4 being at the centre, in the context of this piece of research these will be viewed in the following way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIDEEN’S MODEL</th>
<th>WIDEEN’S MODEL WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THIS RESEARCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1:</strong> Teachers talking about changes, considering their practice in the general area being considered and implementing elements of the suggested change that they perceive may work for them.</td>
<td><strong>Stage 1:</strong> Teachers identifying and addressing the literacy learning needs of the children in their class through the use of existing methods whilst talking about the SVOR and maybe using some elements within their practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2:</strong> Teachers integrating the change into their practice so that they become involved in the process rather than simply adopting someone else’s method. At the same time teachers are also actively contemplating both changes planned and changes made.</td>
<td><strong>Stage 2:</strong> Teachers using the SVOR and adapting it to meet their own particular requirements while actively contemplating both the changes made and any further changes that are planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3:</strong> Teachers sharing their experiences with colleagues and encouraging and motivating others to try things for themselves.</td>
<td><strong>Stage 3:</strong> Teachers talking to other members of staff about the usefulness of the SVOR, therefore inspiring colleagues to adopt the use of the SVOR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 4:</strong> Generalising practice and communicating practice to a wider school community, whilst contemplating a broader set of educational issues and undertaking a process of personal inquiry into teaching and their own feelings as a teacher.</td>
<td><strong>Stage 4:</strong> Teachers communicate their work to, and discuss their work with, a wider community, possibly others within their own cluster of schools.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Wideen’s Stages of Instructional Change model in relation to this study.
It was acknowledged that certain factors, such as the ethos of the school, the leadership of the school and the time available to teachers, could not be ‘managed’ in order to try and successfully influence changes in practice. Other factors identified in the literature as contributing towards effective staff development were incorporated into this research. Staff were encouraged to work together in teams during the initial training session in an attempt to promote partnership in working as suggested by Little (1992). In addition it was felt that the purpose of the research was important and pertinent to teachers without being overly idealistic (Stake, 1987). Participation in the research was not viewed as evidence of a deficiency. Instead teachers were introduced to the SVOR within the context of new guidance from the DCSF that could have useful applications within the classroom environment (Stake, 1987), rather than needing to address a particular difficulty. Stalling’s (1989) idea of asking teachers to commit in writing to applying new ideas/strategies to their classroom practice was also used. As highlighted in this literature review, Educational Psychologists are in an ideal position to bridge the gap between theory and practice for teachers. In the case of this piece of research, I had already established a long-term relationship with those participating schools. Neufield and McGowan (1993) highlight that this is helpful if an outside agency is to be involved in staff development.
CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Outline of chapter

This Chapter discusses issues relating to the design and implementation of this study and covers the following:

- The aims of the study and the research questions.
- Chronology of the research.
- The application of realist research methodology within this study.
- Participants involved in this study.
- Questionnaires
  - Construction of the questionnaires
  - Piloting procedures
  - Validity
  - Reliability
- Interviews:
  - Purpose of the interviews
  - Construction of the interviews
- Ethical considerations
- Analysis of data

4.2 Aims of the study and Research Questions

This study has two aims. The first aim is to establish whether or not the SVOR provides a useful framework to help teachers identify the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. For the purposes of this study ‘usefulness’ will refer to three separate issues; whether teachers use the SVOR in their practice, how teachers use the SVOR in their practice and what teachers think about the SVOR. The second aim of this study is to understand why teachers either incorporate the SVOR into their practice or not, so that this information can inform future practice.
The following research questions were formulated in order to achieve the aims.

1. Do the ways in which teachers identify literacy learning needs change following the introduction of the SVOR?

2. In what ways do primary school teachers use the SVOR?

3. In what ways do teachers perceive the SVOR to be a useful tool in the identification of literacy learning needs?

4. In what ways does the SVOR trigger (or fail to trigger) changes in teacher practice?

5. In what circumstances does the introduction of the SVOR effect a change in teacher practice?

6. Is it possible to identify the teachers for whom the introduction of the SVOR results in changes in practice?

7. In what ways can any changes in teacher practice (or failures to change), in this study, be explained in terms of the context- mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations used in realist research?

4.3 Chronology of this research.

Two small scale pilot studies were carried out prior to the commencement of this research (Appendix 1). These pilot studies indicated that the framework provided by the SVOR did have some potential in terms of facilitating the identification of literacy learning needs within the classroom. As a result it was felt that further research in this area would be useful.

A detailed account of the chronology of this research is contained in Appendix 2. In summary this research involved five primary schools, each expressing an interest to participate in the study. In the Summer Term of 2007 a baseline questionnaire was
completed by all teachers in the five participating schools (Appendix 6). This questionnaire provided information regarding teacher views concerning the identification of literacy learning needs as well as their understanding/use of the Searchlights model and SVOR. A training session in each school then introduced teachers to the SVOR and suggested that it could be used to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs (Appendix 3). One activity during the training session required teachers to use the SVOR as a framework to identify the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. Following this activity, teachers were asked to complete a reflection sheet (Appendix 10) thus eliciting initial views as to the usefulness of the SVOR. The purpose of this reflection sheet was to elicit teacher views regarding the practicalities of using the SVOR as a framework to identify literacy learning needs, this information was used to supplement data gathered from the questionnaires. At the start of the next academic year a staff meeting was used to remind teachers of the SVOR and provide them with a range of strategies outlining ways of addressing any needs identified using the SVOR framework. These strategies were developed using the ideas provided by the teachers during the initial training sessions (Appendix 4). Follow up support was provided for staff during my regular visits to the schools and during consultations with teachers regarding individual children. In the Summer Term of 2008 the same questionnaire was completed again. Questionnaire data was then used in order to identify those teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice and those who had not. Follow up interviews with selected teachers were carried out in the Summer Term of 2009. One teacher in each school was selected for interview on the basis of them reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice. Similarly, one teacher from each school was also selected for interview on the basis of them reporting not to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice.

4.4 The application of realist research methodology within this study.

4.4.1 Why a realist approach was chosen
Teacher views regarding the SVOR, and teacher insights and reflections on changes in their practice, are central to addressing the aims and the research questions outlined in Section 4.2. In order to consider these issues this study has drawn heavily on realist research principles. This research starts from the premise that interventions
‘are not ‘things’ that may (or may not) work; rather they contain certain ideas which work for certain subjects in certain situations’ (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). It is my opinion that, in addition to trying to establish whether the SVOR is useful in helping teachers to identify literacy learning needs, consideration also needs to be given to understanding why any changes in teacher practice have or have not occurred. Establishing the reasons underlying any changes in practice, or indeed any failures to change practice, is of more value than simply indicating whether or not there has been a change in practice associated with the introduction of the SVOR. These findings can then be used to inform and improve future practice.

A realist approach also seems to be ideally suited to work undertaken within the context of schools as it views change as a complex process occurring within a social system. Pawson and Tilley (1997) describe realist research as recognising that people are aware of the choices that channel their activities as well as the broader social forces limiting opportunities. Change is viewed as unpredictable as a result of people having an imperfect knowledge of the contextual conditions that limit their actions. In addition, Pawson and Tilley (1997) highlight the issue of salience of the context in terms of the operation of the change mechanisms, recognising that new mechanisms may or may not gel with the social relations and cultural preferences which pre-date and permeate the programme. It is suggested that mechanisms will not be effective if they are introduced into an inhospitable context that sustains the problem mechanisms, regardless of the attributes of the programme being introduced. As a result of the importance placed on the context, Pawson and Tilley (1997) also consider it natural that there will be contextual variation within any programme.

Traditional research methods generally appear to have failed to capture the complexity of school systems and the powerful influence that the context of the school system has on the introduction of any change. Realist research is based on the same ‘wheel of science’ (Wallace, 1971) that is traditionally used in research although takes a slightly different stance on each element. Realist research believes that the nearer researchers move to the supposed methodological pinnacles of randomisation, control and statistical power, the more likely they are to fail to recognise the importance and explanatory power of mechanisms and contexts. Despite this, realist research principles are not yet frequently utilised in educational
research, although papers are slowly beginning to appear. Matthews (2010) considers the concept of Educational Psychologists using realist principles during consultations with teachers, whilst Syed, Mingers and Murray, (2010) use realist research to investigate how the research-practice gap in the field of business and management can be bridged by the realist approach that does not confine research within a methodological purism and allows consideration of context and causality. Papers in other fields such as mental health (Byng, Norman and Redfern, 2005) and social care (McDonald, 2006) are also beginning to emerge. Byng et al (2005) aimed to evaluate a programme (Mental Health Link), designed to develop systems to improve care for patients with long term mental illness. Through the use of realistic evaluation, Byng et al were able to construct C-M-O configurations and develop mid range theories useful to those developing care elsewhere. McDonald (2006) used realist research to understand and explore the challenges facing social workers arising from developments in the contemporary environment including the rise in workfare, the dominance of neoliberal politics and the reconfiguration of service delivery systems. Figure 4 is adapted from the work of Pawson and Tilley (1997) with the realist research principles being highlighted in red and the more traditional format of research being displayed in black.
4.4.2 How this study encapsulated the essential elements of realist research

The following outlines how this research encapsulated the essential elements of a realist methodology.

- It sought a goal of specification rather than generalisation; it aimed to determine where and how the introduction of the SVOR might be implemented with reasonable expectations for improved identification of literacy learning needs.
- An attempt was made to go beyond the observable ‘input’ (the introduction of the SVOR) and ‘output’ (teacher use of the SVOR). This is important because realist research is built on the premise that outcomes are the result of...
a combination of external observable causes and changes in internal features. In essence this means that causality is a matter of the internal potential of a system being activated in the right conditions. As such, this study attempted to identify any underlying forces (e.g. attitudinal, individual, institutional and societal processes) that may have contributed to teachers changing/failing to change their practice.

- It was acknowledged throughout this research that interventions are implemented in a changing and permeable social world. As such the impact of the introduction of the SVOR on changing teacher practice could have been reduced or enhanced by the introduction of unanticipated changes in context. Possible contextual changes include the introduction of new DCSF initiatives, new school priorities identified as the result of an Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) inspection or a change of personnel within the school.

- Thinking throughout this study was orientated towards context-mechanism-outcome pattern configurations, i.e. the ways in which mechanisms, contexts and outcomes come together. Table 2 defines these terms as they are used in the area of realist research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>The existing social contexts and prevailing social conditions of the environment into which a change is introduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanism</td>
<td>A resource/approach/theory that has the potential to create disequilibrium and result in change. Mechanisms can function at the macro level (systems level) or micro level (individual level).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>The end result – the extent to which changes in practice have, or have not, occurred.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Definitions of the terms used throughout this study.

Thinking about this research in terms of C-M-O configurations involved stating what it was about the introduction of the SVOR that worked for whom and in what
circumstances. Table 3 outlines an initial hypothesis developed to shape my early thinking:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>New Mechanism</th>
<th>Outcome pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y4 NQT teacher in a mainstream primary school with a high number of SEN children</td>
<td>SVOR promoted by the DCSF in the Primary Framework for Literacy</td>
<td>Increased teacher ability to identify and address the literacy needs of the children in their class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction, in a regular staff meeting, of the SVOR as a tool to help identify and address the needs of children who struggle with literacy learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of follow up resources that could be used by the teacher to address any needs identified using the SVOR framework.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher encouraged to use the SVOR to guide their thinking during a consultation about a child presenting with literacy learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Early thoughts regarding possible C-M-O configurations

- The diversity of potential intervention mechanisms was anticipated. Data was analysed in order to determine whether the change mechanisms were capable of disabling the sustaining mechanisms responsible for the original problem (teachers relying on others to identify children who struggle with literacy learning). Figure 5 outlines this type of thinking:
4.4.3 Difficulties associated with realist research

A realist research methodology was chosen as it was considered, for the reasons listed above, to be ‘best fit’ for the purposes of this study. However, as with any choice of methodology there are some difficulties associated with its use. It would be very difficult to fully generalise the findings of this study because the research took place at a specific point in time, i.e. to coincide with the DCSF launching the SVOR as the model to underpin teacher understanding of reading. In addition, the factors affecting a school’s/individual’s response to the introduction of the SVOR e.g. OFSTED inspection, new Headteacher, personal circumstances, staff morale etc, will also have been very specific to that time. Clearly these circumstances can never truly be replicated. However, rather than seeking to attain empirical generalisation, realist
research is more concerned with causality and the identification of causal mechanisms. Inferential statistics are used in this study in order to analyse the questionnaire data and identify some of the contexts and mechanisms that may have been responsible for the outcomes observed. It is hoped that the CMO configurations developed as a result of this study can be used for the purposes of bettering practice through the identification of certain circumstances and certain mechanisms that both facilitate and hinder changes in teacher practice. The identification of such factors will result in this study contributing both to the theory of why changes in teacher practice may occur as well as considering the utility of realist research within the field of schools and in particular teacher development.

Crabbe and Leroy (2008) note that a major difficulty associated with the use of realist research is that it can create a false impression of certainty. They expand on this suggesting that that there is a danger that once an explanatory mechanism has been unravelled (in conjunction with a context) causation will be proven when this is not the case. In addition it seems extremely unlikely that all of the mechanisms and contexts associated with any study will be fully uncovered due to the multi-faceted and very complex nature of the social situations that lend themselves so well to realist research. As such Crabbe and Leroy (2008) state that there will always remain some ‘unopened black boxes.’ Consequently some factors that may have been very influential in either maintaining the use of existing methods, or prompting change, could be overlooked thus limiting the usefulness of any C-M-O configurations developed.

As this study was reliant on teacher self report, the results obtained were dependent on the teachers, their motivation, honesty, memory and ability to reflect on their own practice. As this was identified as a potential problem consideration was given to triangulating the data in some way, possibly through the numbers of referrals to support services or SATs results. However, following a period of reflection it was decided that, as suggested by Bryman (2010), it would be wrong to assume that sets of data obtained using very different research methods could be compared and considered as equivalent in terms of their capacity to address the research questions. It was decided that, rather than using a ‘hard measure’ as a way of triangulating the data obtained, follow-up interviews could be used for this purpose. This provided a
method of triangulating the data obtained from the questionnaires and did so using a method consistent with realist research.

4.5 Participation in this study

4.5.1 Selection of the schools

Primary schools were chosen as the focus for this study due to the importance placed on early identification. In March 2007, the proposed research was outlined to both the Headteacher and SENCo of the 12 primary schools for whom I was the Educational Psychologist. Following this meeting six schools expressed an interest in participating in the research. Interestingly, all of those schools that responded positively were those with whom I had been working, in my capacity as an Educational Psychologist, for between 5-8 years. Consequently this meant that I had a good knowledge of the context within each school.

Purposive sampling was used to select schools for this research. Writing to all primary schools in the Local Authority outlining the project and asking for expressions of interest would have been more objective and resulted in the sample being more representative of the whole borough. However, given the importance placed on knowledge of the school context, the sampling procedure used was considered appropriate for the purposes of the study. This method of sampling also meant that research work in these schools could be managed alongside my general work in the school. Given that no additional time was allocated to this project this was an important factor.

4.5.2 Contexts within each school

The contexts within each participating school varied across a wide range of factors. Some schools were small, single form entry schools with a total of 137 pupils whilst others were large two form entry schools with a total of 419 pupils. One school was an outstanding school whilst two schools were struggling schools, one of which was receiving intensive support from the LA due to poor Y6 SATs results and the other being described by OfSTED as unsatisfactory. Schools also differed significantly in terms of the percentage of children from an ethnic minority background and the number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). Appendix 5 provides a
full summary of each school in relation to factors such as the number of children on role, the percentage of SEN children, the percentage of ethnic minority children, SATs results and the most recent OfSTED grading.

4.5.3 Teachers involved in this study

This research spanned two academic years, and therefore the teachers who completed the follow-up questionnaires in 2008 were not necessarily the same teachers as those involved in 2007. Table 4 summarises the numbers of teachers involved in 2007 and 2008, as well as key staff changes within the participating schools between the academic year 2006-2007 and 2007-2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teachers receiving training &amp; completing initial questionnaires in 2007</th>
<th>Key staff changes Summer 07 – Autumn 07</th>
<th>Teachers completing 2008 follow up questionnaire</th>
<th>Teachers receiving training and completing questionnaire in 2007 &amp; 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>New externally appointed Head</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Y6 teacher left &amp; Deputy Head on maternity leave</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Head &amp; Deputy retired. New externally appointed Head and internally appointed Deputy. SENCo now non-class based. Changes in year groups taught</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Member of staff on maternity leave</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>SENCo left and replaced internally. Y3 teacher left, replaced externally &amp; Y2 teacher now non-class based</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>New externally appointed Head &amp; internally appointed Deputy.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Table outlining numbers of staff participating in the research at different points in time and key staff changes between 2007-2008.

Closer analysis of Table 4 shows a very poor questionnaire return rate in 2008 by School F. Consequently data from school F was eliminated from any data analysis. A
total of 28 teachers comprised the matched sample and were involved in the study throughout.

Teachers involved in the second phase of the study, the interviews, were selected on the basis of questionnaire responses. Two sets of criteria were used to select teachers for interview. Equal importance was placed on trying to identify why changes in practice had or had not occurred. Table 5 summarises the criteria used for this purpose.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice</th>
<th>Criteria for teachers reporting not to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers who reported that they were not using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs in June/July 2007.</td>
<td>• Teachers who reported that they were not using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs in June/July 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers who did report that they were using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs in June/July 2008.</td>
<td>• Teachers who reported that they were not using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs in June/July 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers who made a specific reference to the use of SVOR in response to questions 14 and 17 on the 2008 questionnaire (Appendix 7).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers who had reported/been observed to be using the SVOR during their regular practice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Criteria used to select teachers for interview

The questionnaire data from the matched sample was considered in relation to the criteria outlined in Table 5. This resulted in the identification of 12 teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice and 16 teachers reporting not to have changed their practice. In order to ensure that sufficient time, both in terms of conducting the interviews and data analysis, was available, five teachers in each category were asked to participate in follow-up interviews. One teacher reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice and one reporting not to have
incorporated the SVOR into their practice were chosen in each school. This ensured a spread across schools, contexts, age groups taught and experience of teaching. All of the teachers who were asked, agreed to participate in the follow up interviews. However, two teachers were absent due to illness on the date of the interviews and time limitations meant that these interviews could not be rescheduled. As very few changes were made following the piloting of the interview process (detailed in section 6.1.2) this data was included in the final analysis, making a total of 9 interviews.

4.6 Questionnaires

4.6.1 Construction of the questionnaires
A self-completed questionnaire was chosen as the method of data collection during the first phase of this study. The questionnaire provided an efficient method of data collection from a relatively large sample of teachers. As those completing the questionnaires were all qualified teachers it was assumed that they had sufficient literacy skills to complete the questionnaires. These questionnaires were completed in both 2007 and 2008 so that any changes in teacher attitude towards the identification of literacy learning needs and the understanding/use of the SVOR could be identified. The 2007 questionnaire (Appendix 6) contained 15 questions. The questionnaire completed by teachers in 2008 (Appendix 7), was the same as that completed in 2007 with the addition of a further 2 open ended questions. The additional questions contained within the 2008 questionnaire asked teachers to reflect on those factors that has either contributed to them incorporating the SVOR into their practice or resulted in them continuing with the use of alternative methods.

During the construction of the questionnaire the qualities of ‘good questions’ as identified on Statpac.com (2008) were given due regard. These included:

- Evoking the truth through being non-threatening, ensuring that the respondent is not concerned by the consequence of their responses, ensuring that questionnaires are anonymous and that confidentiality is guaranteed.
The questionnaire had four primary aims. The first aim was to elicit teacher views regarding the identification of literacy learning needs. In order to achieve this, Likert scales were used (Likert, 1932). Questions were designed to elicit whether teachers viewed either the initial identification, or the clarification, of literacy learning needs as forming part of; their role, the role of the SENCo or the role of an outside agency. A response categorisation system (ranging from definitely to definitely not) was used.

The second aim of the questionnaire was to identify the methods used by teachers to identify the literacy learning needs of pupils in their class. This information was also elicited using a Likert scale, with teachers being given a choice of methods (standardised assessment, observations of class work, informal assessment/marking of class work) and asked to rate their use of these methods from frequent to infrequent. In order to ensure that teachers had the opportunity to personalise their response, and include all of the methods used, spaces were provided for them to add any additional methods.

The third aim of the questionnaire was to establish a baseline regarding teacher understanding and use of both the Searchlights model and the SVOR. Teacher understanding and use of each model was elicited in the same way to ensure that fair comparisons could be made. For each model teachers were asked to rate, using a Likert scale, both their understanding of the Searchlights/SVOR models and the frequency with which each model informed their practice. The inclusion of two open ended questions then provided teachers with the opportunity to expand on how they used either the Searchlights model/SVOR in the identification of literacy learning needs.
The final aim of the questionnaire was to distinguish between those teachers who had changed their practice to incorporate the SVOR into their practice and those who had not. In order to achieve this questionnaire responses provided in 2007 and 2008 were compared. The 2008 questionnaire also contained two additional questions asking teachers to reflect on those factors influencing their decision to either incorporate the SVOR into their practice or continue with the use of existing methods.

Throughout the design of the questionnaire potential problems associated with the use of questionnaires were addressed. Table 6 outlines some of the difficulties encountered and the way that these were addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCERN</th>
<th>CONSIDERATIONS GIVEN TO THIS CONCERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate use of language, too colloquial, too technical, too abstract etc, for the intended audience (Oppenheim, 1972).</td>
<td>Given that all of the respondents were teachers the inclusion of educational terms e.g. SENCo, and standardised assessment were considered appropriate for the audience. It was recognised that the use of terms such as Searchlights/ SVOR/Rose report may not be clear, however it was felt that these terms needed to be included given that this was the focus of the research and also the terminology used by the DCSF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of closed vs. open questions.</td>
<td>The final version of the questionnaire contained a combination of open and closed questions. The majority of the questions were closed in an attempt to reduce potential differences in interpretation, thus allowing clear comparisons to be made both between teachers and across time. Three open questions were included in the first questionnaire (Appendix 6) and five in the follow-up questionnaire (Appendix 7). This was necessary in order to capture answers that had not been anticipated and gather more detailed information regarding teacher practice, which is difficult to capture through the use of closed questions alone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCERN | CONSIDERATIONS GIVEN TO THIS CONCERN
---|---
Making presuppositions | This was taken into account when constructing the questions, although proved extremely difficult to remove. As such the questions do contain some presuppositions including the idea that the identification of literacy learning needs is someone’s role and that a teacher’s understanding of reading should be underpinned by a theoretical model. Clearly this needs to be taken into account during the analysis of the data obtained.

Question order. Previous research indicates that prior questions can influence answers given to subsequent questions. | Questions were structured in what was considered to be a natural and logical order. The more general, easy to answer questions appeared near the beginning of the questionnaire and the more difficult, narrow and detailed questions appeared at the end of the questionnaire as suggested by Gill and Johnson (1991).

Poor response rate | In order to ensure that all teachers completed the questionnaires they were given out in a staff meeting. The initial questionnaires were completed while I was present in order to clarify any misunderstandings and collect them in. The follow up questionnaires were given out by either the SENCo/Head in each school.

Table 6: Potential problems with the questionnaire that were identified and how these were addressed.

4.6.2 Terms used in the questionnaires

Table 7 clarifies the meanings of the terms used in the questionnaires that could have been potentially confusing.

| TERM USED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE | DEFINITION OF THE TERM |
---|---
Literacy learning needs | A child’s needs in the area of literacy. For the purposes of this study the term refers primarily to the area of reading. These needs may either refer to special educational needs or the next step in literacy for a child. |
Initial identification of literacy learning needs | Noticing, for the first time, that a child is experiencing difficulty in the acquisition of literacy, particularly reading. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM USED IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE</th>
<th>DEFINITION OF THE TERM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clarification of literacy learning needs</td>
<td>Any observations/assessments, either formal or informal, that take place following an initial concern. The aim of these assessments would be to identify more clearly the nature of the child’s difficulties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searchlights model</td>
<td>An approach to reading that underpinned the publication of the National Literacy Strategy in 1998. The searchlights model comprises 4 searchlights (phonics, grammatical knowledge, knowledge of context and graphic knowledge) any of which readers can use as a source of knowledge to aid in their processing of a piece of text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple View of Reading</td>
<td>A conceptual framework for understanding reading comprising word recognition and language comprehension.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: A definition of the terms used in the questionnaire

4.6.3 Piloting procedure

The questionnaire was piloted on teaching staff working in a school not participating in the research. The school was chosen primarily because they were kind enough to agree to participate in the piloting process. Staff working within this school varied in terms of age and teaching experience and therefore provided a good sample for the pilot study. The one potential difficulty with this school was that they did have quite a high proportion of children with Special Educational Needs. This may have resulted in the teachers in this school being more familiar with the identification of literacy learning needs than teachers working within schools with small numbers of children experiencing SEN. In this respect the pilot sample could be viewed as not being representative of some of the schools involved in the study.

In order to pilot the questionnaire I sat with the teachers individually whilst they completed the questionnaire, making notes of any problems encountered and any recommendations made. As a result of the piloting process the first three questions were changed to distinguish between the initial identification (recognition) of a
literacy learning difficulty and the subsequent clarification of such a difficulty. The pre and post pilot questionnaires can be found in Appendix 6. Feedback also indicated that, in the opinion of the teachers participating in the pilot study, it would be better if I were present during the completion of the questionnaires. This was so that teachers could ask about the Searchlights model of reading or the SVOR if they were unsure. This allowed teachers to be reassured that it was fine to record an answer of ‘do not know’ if this was the case. The opportunity to ask these questions was valued by the teachers during the piloting of the questionnaire.

4.6.4 Validity
When constructing this questionnaire attention was given to the level of face validity that the questionnaire had. It was considered important that, having been introduced to the research and its aims, the teachers felt the questionnaire was clearly related to this area and did not have an underlying or hidden agenda. There is a possibility that the inclusion of three open ended questions may have lowered levels of validity. Oppenhiem (1972) argues that the snap response given to a closed question is more likely to be a valid measure of a person’s attitude and views than a response to an open ended question. When faced with an open ended question Oppenhiem suggests that respondents have to think about their answer in more detail thus increasing the likelihood of the respondent employing face saving tactics or displaying defensive bias. It was hoped that, as the final version of the initial questionnaire consisted of 80% closed questions and the follow up questionnaire consisted of 70% closed questions, this would not significantly limit the validity of the data gathered.

The matter of predictive validity was not an issue during this piece of research as the study did not aim to predict what would happen in the future. Instead, this research was grounded in the idea of seeking specificity rather than generalisation and providing explanations for change/lack of change.

In the Rose report (2006) the SVOR is presented as a model to aid a teacher’s conceptual understanding of the reading process. The Rose report does not suggest the use of the SVOR as a framework to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs. For this reason it was not possible to determine whether questions were capable of discriminating between teachers who were using the SVOR to identify
literacy learning needs and those who were not, as no teachers were using the SVOR in this way at the time that the questionnaire was piloted. This may have affected the discriminant validity of the questionnaire (Campbell and Fiske, 1959).

4.6.5 Reliability
The notion of reliability, the extent with which the same results are obtained on more than one occasion, was addressed, to a limited degree during the construction of the questionnaire. One internal check for consistency (the same question asked in a different way) was built into the questionnaire with questions 8 and 15 focussing on the same issue. This did provide some mechanism for checking the reliability of each respondent’s answers. The reliability of the questionnaire was further improved by questions 2-7 comprising separate individual questions rather than a single item. Oppenheim (1972) suggests that, in doing this, the stable components of an attitude are maximised while any momentary determinants, such as mood changes and changes in emphasis are minimised.

The inclusion of further checks for reliability/consistency may have resulted in the questionnaire becoming too lengthy. This may have presented further problems including questions being left blank, in an attempt to complete the questionnaire in a reasonable amount of time.

4.7 Reflection Sheets
During the initial training session teachers were asked to use the SVOR as a framework to help them to consider the literacy learning needs of the children in their class, completing an activity similar to that outlined in Appendix 1. Following this activity teachers were presented with a short open ended questionnaire asking them to reflect, in practical terms, on the utility of the SVOR as a framework for identifying literacy learning needs. This short questionnaire is referred to as a ‘reflections sheet’ and can be found in Appendix 10. Teachers were simply asked to reflect on the activity that they had just completed in order to answer the questions presented. The need for honesty and openness was stressed and it was emphasised that feedback regarding thoughts that the SVOR was not useful for the purpose of identifying literacy learning needs was as useful as feedback regarding the perception that the SVOR was a useful framework. All of the reflection sheets completed were
anonymous in an attempt to encourage teachers to be as honest as possible. The reflections sheet was designed to supplement information gathered from the questionnaires. An additional reflections sheet was considered necessary as this information could not have been collected through either, the initial questionnaires as most teachers were not familiar with the SVOR, or the final questionnaires as only teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice could have answered such questions thus skewing the data gathered. The use of the reflections sheet therefore allowed information to be gathered from a range of teachers with differing perceptions and was clearly linked to an activity just completed thus making it relevant.

4.8 Interviews

Follow up interviews were carried out with a total of nine teachers, five of whom reported that they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice and four of whom had not. These interviews allowed further exploration of why these changes, and failures to change, had occurred. The purpose of these interviews was to develop CMO configurations for each teacher.

Interviews were the chosen methodology for the second phase of this study because it was considered that they would enable the collection of rich in-depth experiential accounts (Fontana and Frey, 2000). The interviews also provided a methodology through which responses to the questionnaires could be investigated further (Cline, 1994).

All interviews were, with the permission of the teachers being interviewed, recorded using a dictaphone. The interviews were not fully transcribed as summary notes were made during the interview and added to by listening to the recordings following the interview. Tapes of the interviews were referred back to during the analysis of the data when the summary notes were not sufficiently detailed.

4.8.1 Construction of the interviews

When designing the interview it was important to reflect on its purpose. The interview intended to recognise the unique experiences of each individual. In order to
achieve this a semi-structured interview was used. All teachers were asked the same questions with further questioning being tailored to suit the nature of individual responses. A semi-structured interview also allowed for the collection of rich information whilst making the teacher feel at ease and listened to. This type of interview is often criticised for its non-standardised procedure, however in this instance there was an overall structure that was adhered to, with individual variations occurring as and when necessary. These interviews consisted of three stages, each of which is now described in detail.

Stage 1
The interview commenced by outlining the aim of it; to find out in what circumstances and for whom the introduction of the SVOR as a framework for identifying literacy learning needs is most likely to result in a change in practice.

Teachers were then invited to reflect upon why the introduction of the SVOR had/had not resulted in this framework being incorporated into their practice. They were asked the question ‘What was it about the SVOR, training and/or the context within which you were working that resulted in you changing your practice?’ or ‘What was it about the SVOR, training and/or the context within which you were working that resulted in you not incorporating the SVOR into your practice?’ Following this discussion, my understanding of what the teacher had said was reflected back to them in the form of a very basic ‘theory.’ The teacher was then invited to correct or confirm this ‘theory’ and, if appropriate, add any further thoughts and reflections. Throughout this stage of the interview teachers were asked to provide examples of anything that they referred to.

Stage 2
The second stage of the interview process involved presenting teachers with 30 statements (Appendix 8). These statements were developed either as a direct result of the data gathered from the questionnaires, from research relating to stages of teacher development (Guskey, 1986 and Wideen, 1992) or from other factors identified as potentially important in the literature review. These statements related to the various
contexts and mechanisms that may be associated with teachers incorporating the use of the SVOR into their practice.

Teachers were initially asked to rate each statement according to whether it applied to them to a considerable extent, a moderate extent, a slight extent or not at all. In order to achieve this laminated pieces of card entitled ‘to a considerable extent,’ ‘to a moderate extent, ‘to a slight extent’ and ‘not at all’ were placed on the table to provide a visual reference for the teachers. The teachers were then presented with each statement individually and asked to place it under the heading that they perceived to be most appropriate. This resulted in four columns of statements, ranging from those that the teacher felt applied to them to a considerable extent to those that the teacher felt did not apply to them at all. The statements within each category were then considered together. Themes that connected the statements within each category were jointly identified between the teacher and researcher. For example the statements ‘The introduction of new methods results in me feeling deskillled,’ ‘I feel vulnerable in school and so feel that I am unable to change my practice’ and ‘I do not have either the time or energy to consider and then implement new practices into my teaching’ were grouped together under the theme of ‘negative emotions’ during one interview. Once these themes had been identified, teachers were asked to rank the themes (or any statements that did not fit into a theme), within each category. Themes/statements were ranked from those that were most consistent with a teacher’s own experience to those that were least consistent/inapplicable. This provided an insight into the relative importance of each statement/theme within each category.

Stage 3
The final stage of the interview comprised three open ended questions. Teachers were provided with a final opportunity to reflect on any additional factors that may have contributed to them either incorporating, or failing to incorporate, the SVOR into their practice. The interview was then concluded by asking the teachers to reflect on whether they had any further training needs in relation to the SVOR and what role they perceived the school EP to have in relation to supporting the introduction of any future initiatives.
4.8.2 Potential difficulties with the interview process.

Clearly the utilisation of interviews within this study had some potential difficulties. These were considered throughout the design of the interviews and during the interview process itself. Potential difficulties included ‘impression management,’ whereby the responses provided were given because they were either considered to be socially, or professionally, acceptable rather than accurate (Oppenheim, 1992). Coolican (1990) also identifies a range of factors that are likely to impact upon the interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer. These include gender, ethnicity, formal roles, personal qualities, social desirability and evaluative cues. Some of these factors could not be controlled for within the research. The gender, ethnicity and role of the researcher could not be changed and it is acknowledged that this may have impacted upon the responses given by some of the respondents. The use of an independent person to conduct the interviews may have eliminated some of the difficulties identified above, most notably the role of the interviewer, evaluative cues and, to a lesser extent, the social desirability/researcher bias that the researcher conducting the interviews inevitably brings. Although this was considered as an option, it was felt not to be practicable on several counts, including the need for the interviewer to have a sound grasp of realist research principles and a lack of financial resources.

Throughout the interviews attention was given to some more obvious, yet none the less important, elements. These included ensuring that good rapport was built up and maintained between the interviewee and the interviewer. This was achieved through the use of active listening, being sensitive to any non-verbal cues, showing interest and belief in the information given and valuing the time that the teacher had given up for the purposes of the interview. Teachers participating in the interviews were also assured of confidentiality.

There are differing opinions regarding how information from interviews should be collated. It was decided that all interviews would be recorded using a dictaphone as well as summary notes being made during the interview. Summary notes alone could not be relied upon as it was recognised that this may result in the teacher either perceiving that they were not being listened to or the researcher being unable the write sufficiently quickly to make reliable notes. Following the interviews the
recordings were listened to and further notes made. Interviews were not fully transcribed as this was not considered necessary. Salient points were extracted from the data collected and the recordings used to refer back to, as and when necessary, during the analysis of the data.

4.8.3 Issues relating to the validity and reliability of the interview data

As noted by LeCompte (2000) it is extremely difficult to eliminate subjectivity when analysing qualitative data because it is collected by humans and people are interested in certain things and not others. This results in people naturally recording and using data that makes sense to them and is perceived as intriguing by them. This, LeCompte suggests, cannot be avoided but rather needs to be acknowledged. During this research themes were developed jointly with the interviewees in an attempt to ensure that interpretations were valid. The validity of the information gathered during the interview stage could have been further improved by returning to the teachers following the analysis. This would have ensured that the analysis fairly reflected the views of the teacher. Unfortunately, as a consequence of limited time both on the part of teachers and the researcher, this was not possible.

The use of two data sources, interviews and questionnaires, could be viewed as improving the reliability of the data obtained, as analysis was not reliant on only one source. Reliability of the analysed interview data may have been further improved by asking a colleague to analyse elements of the same data in order to determine whether there was agreement. Agreement would have indicated that the data had been analysed in a way that was reliable. Again due to time constraints this process was not undertaken.

4.9 Ethical considerations

The Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants, published by the British Psychological Society (2006) and the University of Manchester Guidelines for conducting ethical research were consulted in the planning of this study. The following summarises the main considerations:
• The teachers involved in this study were given the option of opting out if for any reason they felt that they could not participate.

• All of the teachers participating in this study were informed of the purposes and objectives of the study and invited to ask questions about this. This process was designed to ensure that informed consent was given by all involved.

• Following any element of teachers’ participation in this research informal debriefing took place. This ensured that teachers had not found the experience stressful and provided them with the opportunity to express any concerns and ask any outstanding questions regarding the research.

• Teachers were asked to consider the literacy learning needs of the children in their class using the framework provided by the SVOR. During this process teachers were asked to use initials only so that the confidentiality of the children was maintained.

• Teachers were asked if they were happy for the information gathered to be used, anonymously, in the write up of the study.

4.10 Analysis of data

4.10.1 Questionnaires
In order to analyse the data collected from the questionnaires both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. All of those questions presented in the form of a Likert scale in 2007 and 2008 were analysed quantitatively. Initially each question was analysed using mean scores in order to identify any patterns in the data. Data obtained in response to each question was analysed on a range of levels. This included the level of the individual teacher, the school and the whole sample.

Consideration was also given to changes in responses between 2007 and 2008. Questionnaires could be matched as in 2007 teachers were asked to record the year
group taught on their questionnaire and in 2008 recorded not only the year group currently taught but also the year group taught the previous academic year. There were a total of 28 teachers in this matched sample. Unmatched questionnaires were eliminated from the data analysis at this stage. At the level of the individual, responses given in 2007 and 2008 were compared for each question. Differences between data collected from the matched sample in 2007 and 2008 were analysed in order to calculate whether any changes were statistically significant. In order to do this the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks test was used. This test was chosen because it is a non-parametric test and therefore does not assume a normally distributed population. This test can also be used with small sample sizes and looks at differences between two related sets of data (i.e. data collected from the same set of participants), making it appropriate for use in this study.

The open-ended questions in the questionnaire, and the data gathered from the reflection sheets (Appendix 10), were analysed qualitatively. This analysis used a version of grounded theory. Grounded theory is a research method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), in which the theory is developed from the data, rather than the other way round. As such, grounded theory is an inductive approach, moving from the specific to the more general. There are three distinct, yet overlapping processes of analysis involved in grounded theory. The first stage of data analysis is referred to as open coding. Open coding is the first level of abstraction and is concerned with identifying, naming, categorising and describing phenomena in the data collected. The second stage of data analysis is axial coding. Axial coding involves relating the codes identified during open coding to each other through a combination of inductive and deductive thinking. Grounded theory emphasises causal relationships and considers a range of elements including phenomenon, context, causal conditions and action strategies. Following axial coding, selective coding is the process through which one category is chosen to be the core category. All other categories are then related to this core category.

Responses to the open questions contained within the questionnaire and the reflections sheets were coded into categories using the ‘open coding’ process described in grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). During this ‘open coding stage’ teacher responses to each question were considered separately. Each response
provided was considered and grouped with other similar responses. A label (code) was then applied to each group (Appendix 9). The groups/categories that emerged all arose from the data, no pre-determined categories were used. This process continued until the various groups/categories were saturated and therefore, as new responses were considered, no new categories were required as data slotted into an existing category. Due to the small sample size there was insufficient data for over-arching themes to be developed from these categories. As such these categories are subsequently referred to as themes and are outlined and discussed in detail in Chapters 5 and 7.

4.10.2 Interviews
The first and third phases of the interviews involved teachers answering open-ended questions. Half of these questions required teachers to reflect on how and why they had, or had not, incorporated the SVOR into their practice. This information was analysed in two ways. Firstly data was considered at the level of the individual. This involved trying to identify those factors influencing a teacher’s practice and using this information to develop the context-mechanism-outcome configurations outlined in section 6.4. Secondly the information gathered from those teachers comprising the ‘change’ sample was compared to the information gathered from the ‘no change’ sample. In order to make these comparisons the same process as that used during the analysis of the questionnaire data was used.

The second phase of the interviews involved teachers rating statements. Statements were initially rated according to whether the teacher felt that they applied to them to a considerable extent, a moderate extent, a slight extent or not at all. This data was then analysed alongside the teacher through a process of jointly identifying themes emerging from the statements within each category. Finally teachers were asked to rank the themes, or statements not in a theme, within each category.
Themes/statements were ranked from those that were most consistent with a teacher’s own experience to those that were least consistent/inapplicable. Comparing the rankings given by teachers who had changed their practice to incorporate the SVOR with those who had not, proved challenging. The small sample size meant that overall patterns were difficult to determine as one or two responses impacted significantly on the results. Secondly the themes identified by the teachers were slightly different,
which made comparison difficult. In order to try and make sense of this data it was necessary to superimpose a break in the ranking of the statements and themes. An example of this process can be found in section 6.3.2. It was subsequently inferred from this that the factors identified by teachers as being consistent with their experiences and, applying to them to a considerable/moderate extent, could have been influential in determining whether changes in practice were made. Consideration of those responses reported by teachers as not being consistent with their own experiences, i.e. applying to them only to a slight degree or not at all was more problematic. For the group of teachers reporting changes in their practice these themes/statements could either be perceived as factors that were irrelevant to them or factors that could have hindered change had they been more applicable. In contrast, for those teachers not reporting changes in practice these factors could be viewed as either being irrelevant or possibly helping these teachers to change their practice had they been more relevant.

4.11 Summary

This chapter has outlined the chronology of this research, the main methodologies used, the ethical considerations made and given details of how potential difficulties were overcome. It is important to note that, despite the safeguards put into place during the planning stages of this study, it was extremely difficult to minimise the impact of my role as the school EP. It is possible that this factor may have impacted upon the responses of the teachers regarding their use of the SVOR.

Table 8 summarises the research questions that provided the focus for this study and indicates the data source and type of data analysis used in relation to each research question.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the ways in which teachers identify literacy learning needs change following the introduction of the SVOR?</td>
<td>Initial and follow up questionnaire data. Interview data</td>
<td>Statistical analysis of questionnaire data. Qualitative analysis of questionnaire and interview data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways do primary teachers use the SVOR?</td>
<td>Follow up questionnaires</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways do teachers perceive the SVOR to be a useful tool in the identification of literacy learning needs?</td>
<td>Reflection sheets Follow up questionnaires</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis of data gathered from open-ended questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does the SVOR trigger (or fail to trigger) changes in teacher practice?</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what circumstances does the introduction of the SVOR effect a change in teacher practice?</td>
<td>Interviews Researcher knowledge of context</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis of teacher ratings of statements and information gathered during interview. Reflection on knowledge gained during school visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it possible to identify for whom the introduction of the SVOR results in changes in practice?</td>
<td>Questionnaires Interviews</td>
<td>Analysis of 2007 &amp; 2008 questionnaire data Qualitative analysis of interview data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways can any changes in teacher practice (or failures to change), in this study, be explained in terms of the context- mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations used in realist research?</td>
<td>Interviews Researcher knowledge of context</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis of interview data. Reflection on knowledge gained during school visits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Research questions informing this study alongside the data source and method of data analysis for each question.
CHAPTER 5: QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the questionnaires. A copy of the 2007 questionnaire can be found in Appendix 6, whilst a copy of the 2008 questionnaire is presented in Appendix 7. These questionnaires were completed by staff working in the five schools participating in this study both before the SVOR was introduced as a tool to aid the identification of literacy learning needs and again twelve months later. Initially, this chapter will consider key questions comprising the questionnaire, highlighting and discussing the main differences between responses provided in 2007 and 2008. This chapter will then go on to analyse the data gathered by school. Teacher reflections relating to factors that had either maintained current methods of identifying literacy learning needs, or prompted the use of SVOR, will then be considered briefly, although this area is explored in more detail in Chapter 6. Finally this chapter will outline, analyse and discuss the information gathered from the reflection sheets completed by teachers following an activity using the SVOR during the initial training session. How these findings relate to the Research Questions outlined in the methodology will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Further analysis of the data by Key Stage is available from the author on request.

5.2 Questionnaire data

This section will consider each question contained in the questionnaire in turn. Responses provided by teachers in 2007 and 2008 will be compared across all schools with patterns in the data being highlighted and discussed. Details of the statistical analysis of this data set are also included. As the responses from the questionnaires created a large data set, the findings reported and discussed in this section relate only to the matched data. This matched data is from the 28 teachers who completed the questionnaire in both 2007 and 2008 and was considered to be the most relevant data set given the focus on teacher change in this research.
5.2.1 Question 1: Teacher confidence in identifying literacy learning needs

Teachers were asked to rate (on a five point Likert Scale) how confident they felt in identifying the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. In this instance a rating of ‘1’ was associated with teachers feeling extremely confident whilst a rating of ‘5’ was associated with no confidence at all. Teachers answered this question on two occasions, in the summer term of 2007, before being introduced to the SVOR as a framework for identifying literacy learning needs, and again in the summer term of 2008. Responses to this question, provided by the matched sample, are outlined in Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teacher rating of confidence (N=28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Extremely confident) 2 3 4 5 (Not at all confident)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>7 12 8 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10 15 1 2 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Teacher ratings of their confidence in identifying literacy learning needs.

There was no difference in terms of the range of responses provided, with the range varying between 1 and 4 in both 2007 and 2008. However there were more teachers who, in 2008, rated their confidence as either 1 or 2 on the 5 point scale, than in 2007. The two teachers who rated their confidence as quite low (4 on the 5 point scale) in 2008 did not teach literacy, which may explain this apparent anomaly in the data. The average of the matched data in 2007 was 2.1 whilst in 2008 it was 1.8. Overall this indicates a perceived increase in teacher confidence in relation to the identification of the literacy learning needs. When this data is analysed statistically using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test the difference is statistically significant (T=30, p=0.01). It can therefore be concluded that following the introduction of a framework (SVOR) to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs, teachers reported increased confidence in their ability to fulfil this task for themselves.
5.2.2 Questions 2-7: Teacher perceptions relating to whose role it is to initially identify, and subsequently clarify, literacy learning needs.

The role of the class teacher

Responses provided by the matched sample in relation to whether the initial identification of literacy learning needs forms a central part of the role of the class teacher are outlined in Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teacher rating of whether the initial identification of literacy learning needs forms a central part of the role of the class teacher (N=28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Definitely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Teacher ratings of whether, in their opinion, the initial identification of literacy learning needs forms a central part of their role.

The data contained within Table 10 shows, reassuringly, that the majority of the respondents indicated that they did perceive the initial identification of literacy learning needs as forming a central part of the role of the teacher. As this was already the case in 2007 little change in teacher perception in this area was evident as ratings were high to start with. It is unsurprising therefore that when this data was analysed statistically using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test the difference was not statistically significant (T=18, p>0.01).

Teachers were also asked whether, in their opinion, the clarification of literacy learning needs formed a central part of the role of the teacher. The responses of the matched sample are summarised in Table 11.
Table 11: Teacher ratings of whether, in their opinion, the clarification of literacy learning needs forms a central part of their role.

Table 11 shows that in 2008, more teachers reported that the clarification of a child’s literacy needs did form part of their role, than in 2007. In 2008, 25 of teachers reported that they definitely believed that clarifying the nature of a child’s literacy needs was part of their role (i.e. provided a rating of 1 or 2 on the 5 point scale). This was compared to 20 in 2007. It is possible that this slight increase is related to the SVOR providing the teachers with a framework to guide further assessment. This difference is not however statistically significant (T=41, p>0.01).

The role of the Special Needs Co-ordinator

Teachers were asked whether they viewed the initial identification of literacy learning needs as forming part of the SENCo role. The responses of the matched sample are summarised in Table 12.

Table 12: Teacher ratings of whether, in their opinion, the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCo.
Overall the responses provided to this question in both 2007 and 2008 indicate that the majority of teachers report not to perceive the initial identification of literacy learning needs as forming part of the SENCo role. The number of teachers giving a rating of 4 or 5 on the Likert scale was, in general, very similar in both 2007 and 2008, although interestingly fewer teachers were definite about this in 2008. To further endorse this general trend, Table 12 shows a decrease in the number of teachers reporting that the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCo, with only one teacher giving a rating of 1 or 2 on the 5 point scale in 2008, compared to four in 2007. This correlates well with the finding that the majority of the teachers in this study did perceive the initial identification of literacy learning needs as being central to their own role. As would be expected, when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test, this difference was not statistically significant (T=79.5, p>0.01).

Teachers were also asked whether, in their opinion, the clarification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCo. Matched responses to this question are outlined in Table 13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teacher rating of whether the clarification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCo (N=28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Definitely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Teacher ratings of whether, in their opinion, the clarification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCo.

Table 13 indicates that in 2008 slightly more teachers were of the opinion that the clarification of literacy learning needs should not be carried out by the SENCo. This slight increase in teacher perception correlates with the reported increases in teacher confidence and teachers being provided with a tool (SVOR) to carry out this function for themselves. Interestingly, there was no change in the number of respondents reporting that, in their opinion, the clarification of literacy needs should definitely be
carried out by the SENCo. This finding may reflect these teachers not feeling confident enough in their own abilities to fulfil this role or having children in their classes with particularly complex literacy needs thus feeling that they require further support in order to clarify the nature of their needs. Alternatively these teachers may be utilising the experience and expertise of the SENCo, who in one school was a specialist teacher and in another school was non-class based, whilst others may simply be working in a way consistent with the Code of Practice.

Given the small differences in matched responses between 2007 and 2008 outlined above it is not surprising that the overall differences for this group were not statistically significant (T=76, p>0.01) when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Rank Test.

The role of Outside Agencies

Teachers were also asked to consider whether, in their opinion, the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by an outside agency. Table 14 outlines the responses of the matched sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teacher rating of whether the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by an Outside Agency (N=28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Definitely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Teacher ratings of whether, in their opinion, the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by an Outside Agency.

Table 14 shows little overall change in teacher perception relating to Outside Agencies being involved in the initial identification of literacy learning needs and therefore it is unsurprising that, when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test, this data fails to reach statistical significance (T=33, p>0.01). Reassuringly, no respondents in either 2007 or 2008 reported that, in their opinion, an outside agency
should definitely carry out the initial identification of literacy learning needs. The fact that the 2008 data indicates a decrease in the number of teachers giving a rating of 2 is also pleasing. This change could be the result of teachers feeling more confident in their own ability to fulfil this role and if so this would correlate with the findings outlined in section 5.2.1. Alternatively this change could be a consequence of Local Authority changes. For example funding for MLD/SpLD was delegated to schools in 2007, staffing problems within the EPS resulted in a reduced time allocation to schools and the specialist teaching service became buy-back, rather than centrally retained, service. These changes may have either encouraged, or necessitated, teachers to fulfil this role for themselves.

Finally, teacher views regarding whether outside agencies should be involved in the clarification of literacy learning needs were elicited. Responses from the matched sample are outlined in Table 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Teacher rating of whether the clarification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by an Outside Agency (N=28)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Definitely)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: Teacher ratings of whether, in their opinion, the clarification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by an Outside Agency.

Table 15 shows few significant changes in teacher perceptions between 2007 and 2008, and it is therefore unsurprising that this difference is not statistically significant (T=131, p>0.01). In 2008 fewer teachers perceived that an Outside Agency should definitely be involved in the clarification of literacy learning needs. This may again be reflective of the issues outlined above e.g. delegated funding and the short staffing of the EPS. When responses are analysed more closely, a small number of teachers (9) moved towards the view that outside agencies should be more involved in the clarification of literacy learning needs with 24 of this group moving 2 or more points on the scale. It is possible that these teachers may have tried to fulfil this role themselves between 2007 and 2008 and realised the complexity of this task. In
addition, the Code of Practice does encourage teachers and SENCo’s to access advice/assessment from Outside Agencies and therefore it is possible that these responses reflect this process.

5.2.3 Methods used, by teachers participating in this research, to identify literacy learning needs

It was initially envisaged that any changes in the methods used to identify literacy leaning needs would be considered through the analysis of responses to questions 8 and 15. However, due to problems with the construction of question 8 (discussed in section 7.10.2), this data was eliminated from the analysis. Question 15 was an open-ended question asking teachers to outline what steps they would take in order to explore any concerns that they had in relation to a child’s literacy learning. These responses were analysed by using an open coding process similar to that used in grounded theory. Table 16 outlines the themes identified during this analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>Number of teachers including theme in their response in 2007</th>
<th>Number of teachers including theme in their response in 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak to SENCo</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak to literacy co-ordinator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak to previous teacher or colleague</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek help from an outside agency</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher to carry out further assessment in school to clarify needs</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak to parents</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan an intervention</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop an IEP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speak to the child</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect evidence of previous progress</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrange for sight and hearing tests</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of SVOR</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: A summary of responses to questionnaire question 15 in 2007 and 2008.
The following provides a summary of the main differences in methods used by teachers to identify literacy learning needs between 2007 and 2008:

- There was an increase in the number of teachers stating that they would use the SVOR to help identify the nature of a child’s need. This was always mentioned alongside other methods and in general it was referred to as a framework that enabled teachers to clarify their thinking and/or bring together all of the information that they had about a child. Consequently other assessment methods e.g. standardised assessment, observation and informal assessments continued to be used.

- There was an increase in the number of teachers reporting that they would undertake further assessments themselves in order to clarify the literacy learning needs of the child. This finding correlates with the findings outlined in section 5.2.2, indicating that slightly more teachers reported that they perceived the clarification of literacy needs to form part of their role in 2008 as compared to 2007.

- There was a decrease in the number of teachers feeling that it was necessary to liaise with either the SENCo, the child’s previous teacher/colleagues or an outside agency. This finding could be the result of significantly increased levels of teacher confidence, having a framework within which to work or a consequence of teachers having been provided with a range of strategies to address any literacy needs identified.

5.2.4 Questions 9 and 12: Teacher understanding of the models underpinning literacy learning

In both 2007 and 2008 teachers were asked to rate, using a five point scale, their understanding of both the Searchlights model (as outlined in the National Literacy Strategy, 1998) and the Simple View of Reading (as outlined in the Primary Framework for Literacy, 2007). Responses provided by the matched sample in relation to their understanding of the Searchlights model indicated that reported changes in teacher understanding of this model were minimal (2007 average rating
3.4, 2008 average rating 3.1) and not statistically significant when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test (T=49.5, p>0.01).

In contrast, matched responses relating to teachers’ reported understanding of the SVOR did show marked improvements (2007 average 4.2, 2008 average 2.9), and were statistically significant when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test (T=5.5, p<0.002). Obviously this increase in understanding is not only the result of this research but reflects a change in Government policy and guidance relating to the teaching of literacy.

5.2.5 Questions 10, 11, 13 and 14: Teacher use and application of their knowledge of models of literacy learning in the identification of literacy learning needs.

In addition to understanding the models underpinning literacy teaching and learning (i.e. Searchlights or SVOR) it is essential that this knowledge is applied to classroom practice. Teachers participating in this research were asked to reflect on both whether, and how, models of literacy learning informed their identification of literacy learning needs.

In 2007 the average of the matched responses relating to whether the Searchlights model informed a teacher’s identification of literacy learning needs was 3.7. This suggests that this model tended not to inform practice. Responses were very similar in 2008 when the average rating was 3.3. Unsurprisingly, this difference failed to reach statistical significance when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test (T=72, p>0.01). When asked to reflect on the ways in which the Searchlights model helped them to identify literacy learning needs only 2 teachers in 2007 and 2008 were able to provide answers that directly related to the use of the Searchlights model. Other responses, in both years, were either vague, did not directly relate to the Searchlights model or were left blank. This finding indicates that, as expected, there was no notable increase in the number of teachers applying their knowledge of the Searchlights model to the identification of literacy learning needs between 2007 and 2008.
In 2007 the matched responses provided in relation to whether teachers perceived the SVOR to inform their practice of identifying literacy learning needs ranged from 2-5 with a mean of 4.1 (with a rating of 5 being associated with the SVOR not informing teacher practice at all). When asked to outline the ways in which the SVOR helped to identify children with literacy difficulties, 19 of the responses in 2007 were left blank, while another 6 clearly stated that they did not know what the SVOR was. This confirmed the rating scale judgements. In contrast, in 2008 the average rating of the 28 matched respondents was 2.9 and when analysed using the Wilcoxon (T) Signed Ranks Test, this difference was found to be statistically significant (T=19.5, p<0.02). This significant increase in the application of knowledge to the identification of literacy learning needs suggests that some teachers were using their improved knowledge of the SVOR to inform their practice.

5.3 Questionnaire data analysis by school

As well as analysing the data for each individual question, the data was also analysed for each of the five schools participating in the research. This made it possible to look for patterns both within individual schools and between schools.

Tables 17 to 21 summarise responses to all questions utilising a rating scale response. These tables show the mean responses for the matched participants. As the numbers of matched teachers working within each school was small, statistical analysis of this data was not appropriate. As such, point differences between responses given in 2007 and 2008 are listed as they provide a quick reference point as to the size and direction of any changes.
School A  
Matched: N=9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>PRE-MEAN 2007</th>
<th>POST-MEAN 2008</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>+0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>+0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>+1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>+0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>+1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: Table showing the mean rating scale scores for matched subjects in School A in 2007 and 2008 and the differences between these.

School B  
Matched: N=4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>PRE-MEAN 2007</th>
<th>POST-MEAN 2008</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-1.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18: Table showing the mean rating scale scores for matched subjects in School B in 2007 and 2008 and the differences between these.
## School C
**Matched: N=4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>PRE-MEAN 2007</th>
<th>POST-MEAN 2008</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>+0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19: Table showing the mean rating scale scores for matched subjects in School C in 2007 and 2008 and the differences between these.

## School D
**Matched: N=4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>PRE-MEAN 2007</th>
<th>POST-MEAN 2008</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>+0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>+0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>-1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20: Table showing the mean rating scale scores for matched subjects in School D in 2007 and 2008 and the differences between these.
School E
Matched: N=7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>PRE-MEAN 2007</th>
<th>POST-MEAN 2008</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>=</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>+0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21: Table showing the mean rating scale scores for matched subjects in School E in 2007 and 2008 and the differences between these.

When the data is presented by school, patterns within each school show very similar trends to those discussed in section 5.2 in relation to the individual questions. However, when this data is compared between, rather than within schools, some interesting findings emerge.

School C was the only school where teachers reported that they were less confident in identifying the literacy needs of children in 2008 than they were in 2007. Interestingly staff working in School C were also the only teachers to report a slight increase in the belief that the clarification of literacy learning needs should not form a central part of the role of the teacher. These two findings could be linked with reduced levels of confidence resulting in teachers beginning to construe that the clarification of literacy learning needs was not central to their role. In doing this teachers would reduce any levels of cognitive dissonance experienced. These findings could have emerged for a number of reasons, the most obvious reason being the appointment of a new Headteacher in September 2007. This resulted in many changes including different expectations of the staff, the introduction of new ways of working and significant changes to the year groups that teachers taught. It is possible that all of these factors impacted on teacher confidence. This data does not allow conclusions to be drawn about whether this lack of confidence is specific to the identification of literacy learning needs or more general in nature. However, informal
discussions with staff during my regular visits indicated a general decrease in teacher confidence across a range of areas. Despite School C having been introduced to the SVOR as a framework to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs in the same way as the other schools, the outcome in this school was different. As such it is likely that other, more significant, changes within the school itself could account for the reported decreases in confidence. Interestingly, another school participating in this study (School A) also had a change of Headteacher between 2007 and 2008. In this environment however such impacts on teacher confidence and perceptions relating to their role in the clarification of literacy learning needs were not evident. This could be a consequence of the Headteacher in School A not making significant changes to the way that staff worked or the year groups taught. Consequently it could be concluded, from this data, that on this occasion it was the extent of change introduced by the new leadership that impacted on teacher confidence and the definition of the role of the teacher in School C, rather than the introduction of new leadership per se.

Staff in schools B and C reported small increases in perceptions that the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCO or an outside agency. In the case of School C this could be linked to the reduced levels of teacher confidence reported in this area. This explanation does not however account for the changes reported by staff working in School B as these teachers reported increased levels of confidence in the area of identifying literacy learning needs. From the knowledge that I have about these schools, obtained through my role as the school EP, these schools appear to have two factors in common. These factors set them apart from the other schools participating in the study. The first factor is that teachers working within both schools felt under pressure, in school B from the Local Authority as a result of poor Y6 SATS results and in school C from the appointment of a new Headteacher. As such it does not seem unreasonable to infer that teachers working within these schools, at this difficult time, may feel a little more vulnerable and exposed and thus seek support and clarification of their thoughts from others, either in the form of the school SENCO or an outside agency. The second factor that sets these two schools apart is the role of the SENCO. In School B the SENCO is a specialist teacher employed by the school for 3 days per week purely to focus on SEN. In School C the role of the SENCO was changed in September 2007 meaning that she was no longer class based but released to perform SENCO duties including
identifying needs from data, assessment and the teaching of SEN withdrawal groups. In the other 3 schools the SENCO was based in class full time. Consequently it is possible that a teacher’s perception, of who should identify literacy learning needs in the initial stages, is altered by the presence of someone in the school with a large amount of time dedicated to working on SEN. This finding could therefore suggest that one disadvantage of having a SENCO with a lot of dedicated time is that the identification of need becomes less of a priority for the teachers themselves and is instead perceived as someone else’s responsibility.

Interestingly the matched sample within school C did report the biggest increase in their understanding of the SVOR. This is despite reported decreases in teacher confidence, increases in the view that the initial identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the school SENCO and/or outside agency and an increase in the view that the clarification of literacy learning needs should not form a central part of a teacher’s role. From this it could be concluded that on a purely factual and academic level the teachers felt that they had moved on in terms of their understanding. However, the reported decrease in confidence, coupled with changes within the school (new Headteacher/SMT, change of year groups taught, introduction of new ways of working etc) possibly resulted in teachers working within school C feeling unable/unwilling to apply their new knowledge to their classroom practice. Similarly it could also be argued that, given the circumstances, teachers had higher priorities than improving their identification of literacy learning needs. This may be especially true given the fact that this school does reasonably well in terms of teaching literacy. Indeed 76% of Y6 children attain Level 4 or above in their English SATS, thus placing them above the national average. As previously mentioned, the introduction of the SVOR also coincided with the SENCo role within this school changing. This may have further contributed to the teachers within school C reporting a good understanding of the SVOR alongside perceptions that the identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCO and/or an outside agency and that the clarification of literacy learning needs does not form a central part of the class teacher role.
The data discussed so far suggests a link between teacher confidence and a teacher’s perception of whose responsibility it is to identify, and later clarify, literacy learning needs. However, the matched sample in School A showed the lowest overall increase in teacher confidence but also reported the biggest increases across two areas; the perception that neither the initial identification nor subsequent clarification, of literacy learning needs should be carried out by either the SENCo or an outside agency. These findings are interesting as it seems that these views are not the result of increases in teacher confidence. School A did however report one of the biggest increases in the use of the SVOR to aid the identification of literacy learning needs. Therefore in the case of School A it could be argued that providing teachers with a framework within which to work (SVOR) encouraged them to reconsider their perceptions regarding who should undertake the identification and clarification of literacy learning needs. In this case the introduction of the SVOR would have enabled already confident teachers to undertake this task for themselves. An alternative explanation for this finding could reside in the fact that School A was the largest school participating in this study. It is therefore possible that within a large, two form entry, primary school more emphasis is placed on the teacher being responsible for both the identification and clarification of the literacy needs of children in their class. Further support for this hypothesis is found in school D. School D reported the smallest increases in the use of SVOR and was also the smallest school participating in this research. Prior to this research, School D already had very high standards with 94% of Y6 children attaining L4 in English. This school was also extremely good at collecting, and analysing, assessment data. It is therefore possible that, in this school, staff felt that they already had tools to help them identify and clarify literacy learning needs, as well as a framework within which to work, making the SVOR extraneous. Together these findings suggest that a teacher’s ability to take on board the SVOR could be linked to their perceived need to do so.

5.4: Factors that helped and hindered teachers in their ability to incorporate the SVOR into their practice.

The questionnaires completed by teachers in 2008 (Appendix 7) included two additional questions (questions 15 and 16). These questions asked teachers to reflect
on the factors that had either maintained their current methods of identifying literacy learning needs, or prompted them to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. The following discussion relates to data gathered from all teachers participating in the study, not just the matched sample. This allowed greater consideration of the possible factors affecting changes in teacher practice.

Some teachers in all of the schools reported that they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice and were able to reflect on possible reasons for this. Equally some teachers in all schools reported that they had maintained previous methods of working. This suggests that changes in practice were not consistent across whole schools or Key Stages but were instead related to individual teacher practice.

This data was analysed using a process similar to the open coding stage of grounded theory. When the responses of those teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice were analysed three main themes emerged. Receiving training in relation to the SVOR was frequently identified with 67% (n=12) of teachers referring specifically to the training provided by myself. The other 2 themes to emerge focussed on the SVOR being easy to manipulate/use and helping to target interventions through the use of the strategies and activities provided. In addition to these three themes, other reasons stated by teachers for incorporating the SVOR into their practice included:

- The SVOR providing a clear framework within which to work.
- The SVOR helping to focus the teacher onto the needs of the child.
- Pressure from outside agencies to use the SVOR.
- The fact that the SVOR could be used alongside other, existing, methods.

Teachers reporting no change in practice were also asked to reflect on the reasons for this. Analysis revealed that the most popular response to this question was to provide no response! This suggests that teachers either struggled to, or felt too uncomfortable to, record those factors that had contributed to their maintaining previous practice. However, one theme did recur on a number of occasions and this was a preference
for, and better understanding of, alternative methods of identifying literacy learning needs. Other responses provided by the teachers in this group included:

- A lack of confidence in the SVOR.
- The limited effectiveness of the SVOR.
- Whole school approaches maintaining previous methods of working.
- Teachers not having been prompted by their colleagues/literacy co-ordinator to adopt the use of SVOR.
- The high success rate of current methods.
- There being too much change in teaching already.
- Not having the opportunity to use the SVOR due to not teaching literacy.

In general, the responses to these questions seem to indicate that the factors that helped teachers to incorporate the SVOR into their practice included the provision of training, the perception that the SVOR was easy to use and the usefulness of the SVOR in terms of subsequently targeting interventions. In contrast, the main barrier identified was a better understanding of, and preference for, other previously used methods. Factors that help or hinder a teacher in changing their practice provided the focus of the follow up interviews and as such Chapter 6 contains a much more detailed discussion of this area.

5.5 Teacher reflections on the use of SVOR

This information was not collected as part of the questionnaire. Teacher reflections on their use of the SVOR were elicited following an exercise during the first training session (N=44). This exercise required teachers to consider the literacy needs of the children in their class by placing children in the appropriate quadrant of the SVOR grid (Appendix 1) Subsequently teachers were asked to record in writing (using the reflection sheet in Appendix 10) their views regarding the following:

- Whether the SVOR was easy to use/complete.
- Whether the SVOR provided useful information.
- Whether the SVOR provided any additional information.
- Whether or not they intended to incorporate the SVOR into their practice.
The remainder of this section summarises these responses.

5.5.1 Teacher views regarding the level of difficulty involved in using the SVOR as a framework to aid the identification of literacy learning needs.

The first question on the reflection sheet asked teachers to consider whether the SVOR was easy to use for the purpose of identifying the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. Thirty six of the teachers participating in initial training session reported that, once familiar with the SVOR, it was either very easy or relatively easy to use as a framework to aid the identification of literacy learning needs. A small number of teachers (4) felt that it was easy to place some children, e.g. those with either very good or very poor literacy skills, onto the SVOR grid but that for other children this was much more difficult. Some teachers reported that the use of the SVOR made them realise that their knowledge regarding some children’s literacy skills was not detailed enough to allow them to complete this exercise. This finding suggests that in addition to providing teachers with a framework to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs, the SVOR could also provide a tool capable of highlighting gaps in a teacher’s knowledge. The SVOR could therefore be viewed as providing teachers with a quick and easy way of self evaluating their knowledge of the literacy needs of children in their class and, in doing so, highlight the children with whom they need to invest more time in order to identify, more clearly, their literacy strengths and weaknesses.

There were only 4 teachers, all from different schools, who found the use of the SVOR to identify the literacy learning needs of children in their class difficult. One of these teachers did not teach any literacy and so did not have the knowledge required to complete this exercise. Another was a Year 6 teacher who felt that the SVOR may have been more useful in Key Stage 1/ lower Key Stage 2, whilst a Year 5 teacher had misunderstood the task and the intended use of the SVOR. A Year 1 teacher reported that she perceived the process of placing the children on the grid to be ‘hit and miss.’
It can be concluded, from this information, that the perception of the vast majority of the teachers involved in this study was, that the use of the SVOR as a framework to identify literacy learning needs is easy and straightforward. Some teachers required time to familiarise themselves with the model and its use before feeling both confident and competent enough to use it. This information also highlights another use of the SVOR. For some teachers the SVOR emphasised gaps in their knowledge regarding the literacy skills of some of the children in their class. Consequently teachers could also use the SVOR as a tool to highlight either children, or areas of literacy, requiring further attention and assessment.

5.5.2 Teacher views regarding whether the use of the SVOR, as a framework to identify literacy learning needs, provides useful information.

Teachers were asked whether using the framework provided by the SVOR to consider the children in their class, provided them with useful information. The vast majority of teachers felt that placing children on the SVOR grid did provide them with useful information. This information was considered to be useful for the following reasons:

- It helped teachers to separate the needs of children into those with language comprehension difficulties (with the needs of EAL children being specified as an example) and those with word reading difficulties.
- It allowed teachers to target support and/or interventions appropriately.
- It provided teachers with a sound method for grouping the children in their class for teaching purposes.
- It provided teachers with a visual representation of the whole class and the spread of literacy abilities and needs within the class.
- It was suggested that the SVOR could provide useful information if used at the end of a school year as it would help to inform the planning of the next class teacher, thus ensuring that knowledge accrued about a child during the course of a year was not lost.
- It could enable the progress of cohorts of children to be tracked.
If used frequently it could indicate how successful interventions to address specific literacy needs had been, thus linking in with a school’s provision map.

The exercise itself provided teachers with an opportunity to reflect on the needs of the children in their class, in some instances making them think very carefully about the strengths and weaknesses of pupils for whom this is not immediately apparent.

The final point listed suggests that in some instances it was the time taken to complete the activity using the SVOR that was particularly useful, as it provided teachers with space to reflect on the needs of the children in their class. This makes it difficult to ascertain whether in some cases it was the time, rather than the tool, that the teachers found particularly useful.

Only 3 teachers, interestingly all Key Stage 2 teachers, reported that, in their opinion, the SVOR did not provide them with useful information. One teacher stated that they already had this information, an issue discussed in more detail in Section 5.5.3. A newly qualified teacher reported that they required more information regarding the main characteristics of the type of child who should be placed in each quadrant, whilst an upper Key Stage 2 teacher reported that the SVOR would probably provide more useful information for Early Years/Key Stage 1 teachers. These points are valid and if the SVOR is to be used effectively by all teachers then maybe some adaptations are needed. The issue of newly qualified teachers, or teachers less experienced in the teaching of literacy, requiring more information about each quadrant comprising the SVOR could easily be addressed. An outline of the strengths and weaknesses associated with each quadrant of the grid could be built in as a guide, as depicted in Appendix 11. The SVOR could also be made more relevant for upper Key Stage 2 teachers through the development of a graduated model of the SVOR. This could reflect children’s needs at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, with the focus in Key Stage 2 being on more advanced skills and the application of skills to other areas. Please refer to Appendix 12 for an example of what such a graduated model may look like.
5.5.3 Teacher views regarding whether the SVOR provides additional information about a child’s literacy learning needs.

Following the activity, teachers were also asked to consider whether their use of the SVOR had provided them with any information that was additional to that already held. Only 13 of those providing responses to this question felt that the SVOR did not provide any additional information. The majority of this group did, however, emphasise the usefulness of the SVOR in terms of it confirming their thoughts and planned interventions.

Given that the SVOR does not actually provide additional information, but rather provides a framework that can be used to structure and clarify a teacher’s existing knowledge of a child, it is extremely surprising that 31 teachers did perceive the SVOR to provide them with additional information. Teachers generally stated that this was because the SVOR encouraged them to conceptualise reading as comprising two key skills; language comprehension and word decoding, thus enabling teachers to view information in a different way. Consequently, teachers felt that they gained additional information about the literacy learning needs of the class. Teachers also perceived the SVOR as providing additional information due to the fact that it could be used to give a visual, ‘at a glance’ check of progress, something that some teachers reported was a welcome addition.

5.5.4 A comparison of initial teacher views regarding their intention to incorporate the SVOR into their practice and subsequent reports of changes in practice.

The final question on the reflection sheet asked teachers to consider whether or not they intended to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. In order to analyse this information in a meaningful way, these responses were compared to those given to questions 15 and 16 on the 2008 questionnaire. These questions asked teachers to reflect on whether or not they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice. Analysing the data in this way allowed consideration to be given to whether or not those teachers who had planned to incorporate the SVOR into their teaching had indeed translated this intention into practice. These results are outlined in Table 22.
### Table 22: A table comparing teacher intentions regarding their use of the SVOR expressed in 2007 and their feedback regarding whether they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice in 2008 (N=28).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 responses</th>
<th>2008 responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers reporting that they would not incorporate SVOR into their practice.</td>
<td>Teachers reporting that they would possibly incorporate SVOR into their practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes I did incorporate SVOR into my practice</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No I did not incorporate SVOR into my practice</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data available</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data outlined in Table 22 indicates that those teachers who reported that they were not going to incorporate the SVOR into their practice in 2007 did not do so during the following academic year.

Of those teachers who reported that they would incorporate the SVOR into their practice in 2007, 14 reported that they had gone on to do so in 2008. In general, the reasons for this seemed to centre around the SVOR helping teachers to focus on the needs of the children. Data was unavailable for 8 teachers comprising this group because in 2008 they were either no longer at the same school or did not complete the questionnaire. Only 6 of those reporting that they intended to use the SVOR in 2007 reported that they had not incorporated it into their practice in 2008. Few reasons were provided for this although some teachers within this group reported that, on reflection, existing methods of identifying literacy learning needs were successful and therefore there was not a need to change their practice. Others documented a lack of prompting from significant people within their school e.g. literacy co-ordinator/SENCo resulting in them not incorporating the SVOR into their practice.
The group of teachers reporting that they were unsure in 2007 as to whether or not they would incorporate the SVOR into their practice possibly provide the most interesting set of data. Of these teachers, 11 went on to report that they had in fact incorporated the SVOR into their practice. This is a much larger proportion than originally expected. There are a number of reasons that may account for this finding. My consultations with teachers as part of my ongoing work within the school may have prompted some of these teachers, who initially reported no strong view as to whether or not they were going to use the SVOR, to incorporate it into their practice. It is also possible that discussions with teachers within the school who had already incorporated the SVOR into their practice encouraged this group of teachers. For others, the provision of strategies to address any literacy needs identified using the SVOR (Appendix 4) may have acted as a catalyst. The same number of teachers in this group (11) reported that they did not go on to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. Few provided reasons for this, although those reasons provided included teachers feeling that the SVOR did not provide anything additional to that which they already had and that they simply continued with the use of more familiar methods.

The data from this analysis indicates that those teachers who initially reported that they were not going to incorporate the SVOR into their practice did not. In the case of teachers who did report that they were going to use the SVOR, nearly twice as many did use it than did not. This suggests that an initial commitment to the use of the model seemed to help teachers succeed in changing their practice. Those teachers who were undecided following the introduction of the SVOR were as likely to incorporate the SVOR into their practice as not. This suggests that other factors eventually helped this group of ‘undecided’ teachers to determine whether or not they applied their knowledge of the SVOR to their practice.

### 5.6 Summary of the main findings from the questionnaire data.

This chapter has presented the data gathered from the completed questionnaires and reflection sheets. When considering these findings it is important to recognise that there are many factors, in addition to the training received, that may have accounted for the outcomes detailed in this chapter. These primarily include changes
in the context within which teachers were working. On a local/national level these changes included the delegation of funding for literacy difficulties to schools, a reduction in central support services and the publication of the Primary Framework for Literacy. At the level of the school these changes included the appointment of a new Headteacher, changes in roles, the practice/conversations of colleagues and feedback from others (colleagues, the Headteacher, parents or outside agencies). The findings from the analysis of the questionnaire data indicate that following the introduction of the SVOR as a framework to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs, the following changes were reported:

- A statistically significant increase in teacher confidence relating to the identification of literacy learning needs
- A slight, but not statistically significant, increase in the perception that the clarification of literacy learning needs does form a central part of the class teacher role.
- An increase in the perception that the initial identification of literacy learning needs should not be carried out by either the SENCo or an outside agency.
- Statistically significant increases in both teacher understanding of, and use of, the SVOR.

Analysis of the data by school indicated that:

- Levels of teacher confidence generally seemed to influence views regarding who should undertake both the initial identification and subsequent clarification of literacy learning needs.
- A teachers willingness/ability to incorporate the SVOR into their practice could be linked to their perceived need to do so.
- Teachers are more likely to hold the view that the identification of literacy learning needs should be carried out by the SENCo if the SENCo is non-class based and has a lot of time dedicated to fulfilling this role.

The data gathered from the questionnaires and reflection sheets completed by teachers during this research suggests that the majority perceive the SVOR to:

- Be easy to use in order to aid the identification of literacy learning needs.
• Provide useful information.
• Provide additional information as a consequence of changing the way that teachers conceptualise the process of literacy learning.
• Provide an easy visual reference that could be used to check progress.

There were a small minority of teachers who felt that SVOR was not useful. Reasons given for this included one teacher requiring more information in order to use it in her practice and the SVOR being more relevant to Key Stage 1 teachers. Appendices 9 and 10 contain suggestions as to how the SVOR could be modified in order to address these difficulties.

Initial teacher intentions regarding the application of the SVOR to their practice did seem an important factor in predicting changes in practice. None of the teachers, who in 2007, reported that they did not intend to use the SVOR in their practice did so, while those teachers who did intend to incorporate the SVOR into their practice were twice as likely to go on to use it as not. The ‘undecided’ group of teachers, were as likely to incorporate the SVOR into their practice as not.

This chapter has also briefly considered factors that helped teachers to use the SVOR and therefore change their practice. The main factors identified as being helpful included the training provided, the SVOR being easy to use and the SVOR being helpful in terms of targeting interventions. Brief consideration has also been given to those factors that hindered teachers incorporating the SVOR into their practice. The main barrier identified was teachers already having a better understanding of, and therefore preference for, alternative methods. Reasons underlying teachers either changing, or failing to change, their practice was the main focus of the follow up interviews and as such is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.
CHAPTER 6: INTERVIEW FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

Teachers were selected for interview based on the questionnaires completed in both 2007 and 2008 and all were from the matched sample. Half of the teachers were chosen because their questionnaire responses indicated that they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice. The other half were selected because their questionnaire responses indicated very little/no change in their practice. Two teachers from each school, one reporting to have changed their practice and one reporting no changes in their practice agreed to participate in the interview process during the summer term of 2009.

Table 23 outlines the interviews that were actually conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>‘CHANGE’ SAMPLE OF TEACHERS</th>
<th>‘NO CHANGE’ SAMPLE OF TEACHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>No*</td>
<td>YES (KS2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>YES (KS1)</td>
<td>No*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>YES (KS1 &amp; KS2)**</td>
<td>YES (KS2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>YES (KS2)</td>
<td>YES (KS2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>YES (KS1)</td>
<td>YES (KS1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23: Outline of the interviews conducted.

*Interviews were planned but teachers were absent due to illness on the day of the interview.

** KS1 data was initially a pilot but included in the final analysis for reasons discussed in detail in section 6.1.2

6.1.1 An outline of the interview process

The 3 phases comprising the interview are outlined in detail in section 4.7.1.

Teachers were initially asked to reflect on those factors that had either helped them to incorporate the SVOR into their practice or prevented this from occurring. During the second phase of the interview teachers considered a range of statements (Appendix 8), rating each statement according to whether it applied to them to a considerable
extent, a moderate extent, a slight extent or not at all. The teacher and the researcher then jointly identified themes connecting the statements in each category before teachers rated these themes from those that were most consistent with their own experiences to those that were least consistent. The third, and final, phase of the interview process consisted of three open-ended questions, allowing teachers to reflect on any additional factors that may have influenced their practice. Teachers were also asked to consider whether they had any further training needs relating to the SVOR, and what role they perceived the school EP to have in relation to supporting the introduction of any new initiatives in the future. Responses to these final two questions were not central to the study and as such are presented in Appendix 13.

6.1.2 Pilot interview

The pilot interview was eventually included in the final data analysis as very few changes were made to the interview questions/process. The teacher piloting the interview initially struggled to answer the first open ended question, being unable to identify any factors that contributed to her reported change in practice. However, later in the interview this teacher was able to outline the main reason for her change in practice with relative ease, suggesting that her initial response was more reflective of factors other than having nothing to say. These factors may have included this being the first question asked and therefore the teacher not feeling entirely comfortable, the interview being recorded thus heightening any levels of anxiety or the interviewee possibly having a heightened sense of answers being right or wrong at this early stage. Following this interview, careful attention was paid to ensuring that, before all subsequent interviews, time was invested in making the teacher feel at ease. It was also emphasised that there were no right or wrong answers but that their own personal opinions and reflections were of most interest. This new approach to the interviews proved effective as all of the other teachers participating in the interviews were able to provide insightful responses to this question.
6.1.3 Overview of the chapter

The remainder of this chapter presents the findings that emerged from these interviews and considers:

6.2 Teacher reports relating to why they did or did not change their practice to incorporate the SVOR.

6.3 Teacher consideration of various statements and the extent to which they were applicable to each individual.

6.4 A comparison of the responses of teachers working in the same school (including C-M-O configurations).

6.5 Factors that facilitated change for teachers in this study.

6.6 Factors identified as barriers to change by teachers in this study.

6.7 Summary

6.2 Teacher reports relating to why they did or did not incorporate the SVOR into their practice.

The first open-ended question asked teachers to reflect on the factors that had contributed to them either incorporating the SVOR into their practice or failing to do so. Those teachers reporting little/no change in their practice gave much more detailed responses to this question. This may indicate that the ‘no change’ sample of teachers anticipated that a change in practice was desirable and therefore felt under pressure to justify why they had not changed their practice. Towards the end of the interview the same question was asked again in an attempt to ensure that no relevant factors were overlooked.

A summary of the responses provided by teachers both at the start and end of the interview can be found in Appendix 14. The responses provided by each group were analysed using an approach similar to the open coding stage of grounded theory in order to identify both common and contrasting themes between the groups. The following points summarise the main differences between teachers in the ‘change’ and ‘no change’ samples.
1) Teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice viewed it as being both helpful and relevant to them and the issues facing them, at the time that it was introduced. This was in contrast to those who did not change their practice who perceived the SVOR as not being particularly helpful because of their confidence in current methods, their role within school (non-class based or management) or their view of the SVOR providing nothing new.

2) Teachers incorporating the SVOR into their practice seemed to make use of the follow up strategies provided whilst none of the teachers in the ‘no change’ sample referred positively to these. If considered alongside the previous finding, this could indicate that those who have a vested interest in using something because it will help them, use any resources made available to them. In contrast, those who perceive something as being unhelpful from the outset may disregard any supporting resources.

3) None of the teachers who did incorporate the SVOR into their practice made any reference to time. In contrast three of the four teachers in the ‘no change’ sample referred to time as a barrier to changing their practice. This finding could lead to the conclusion that time can be found if it is to address something of importance to an individual.

4) For some teachers, making links between the SVOR and their existing practice seemed to facilitate a change in practice. In contrast, teachers who perceived the SVOR and existing practice to be incompatible/unrelated did not incorporate the SVOR into their practice.

5) If the SVOR was introduced within the context of significant changes for the individual teacher e.g. a change of role/year group taught, then changes in practice seemed less likely to occur. The teachers reporting to have changed their practice appeared to have experienced few changes of role which possibly gave them more capacity to consider introducing new methods into a practice with which they felt comfortable.

Two factors seemed to be consistent between the groups. Although both groups mentioned whole school factors, the nature of these varied. Obviously those reporting changes in their practice focussed on, and described, whole school factors conducive to teacher development such as the SVOR complimenting other whole school initiatives and encouragement being provided by the literacy co-ordinator. In
contrast, those reporting no change in their practice focussed on, and described, whole school factors acting as barriers to change such as a new Headteacher with new priorities and team teaching resulting in some teachers not teaching literacy. Similarly both groups mentioned the influence of factors outside of the school. Those reporting changes in their practice highlighted how pressures such as an Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) inspection or intensive Local Authority support, could in fact facilitate changes in practice. In contrast, those reporting no changes in their practice focussed on the barriers that factors outside of the school may present including the number of changes introduced within education.

This data is from an extremely small sample and as such these results cannot be generalised to either the general population, or to the school in which the teachers participating in the interview were teaching. These findings do however give an insight into the factors that were relevant to these teachers, at this particular point in time. These can be summarised as:

- Teachers considering the changes as being helpful to them
- Making use of the strategies provided
- Establishing links to existing practice
- The amount of time available
- The extent of other changes occurring at the same time for the individual
- Whole school factors
- Factors outside of the school

6.3 Teacher consideration of various statements and the extent to which they were applicable to each individual

The second stage of the individual interview process involved teachers rating 30 statements. These statements were split into two themes, general factors and stages of teacher development, although this was not made apparent to the teachers participating in the interviews. Ratings for each of the 22 general statements were compared between the ‘change’ and ‘no change’ samples of teachers (Appendix 15).
When this data is considered several similarities emerge. These can be summarised as agreements regarding:

- the role of the teacher
- the perception that they all taught children with literacy learning needs
- a self reported ‘good’ understanding of the SVOR
- the introduction of new methods not resulting in teachers feeling de-skilled or vulnerable.
- the learning style of the teacher not influencing their decision to use/not use the SVOR.

6.3.1 Differences in ratings
Those teachers reporting to have changed their practice and those reporting little or no change in their practice rated a number of statements differently. This information is probably more useful in terms of trying to identify why changes in practice either did occur, or failed to occur, for the teachers participating in this study. The key findings to emerge from this analysis are summarised below:

Understanding of literacy learning needs
Interestingly the majority of the teachers reporting that they agreed to a considerable extent with the statement ‘I have a good understanding of the literacy learning needs of the children in my class and do not rely on standardised assessment data’ were from the sample reporting to have not incorporated the SVOR into their practice. The majority of the teachers who did report changes in practice felt that this statement applied to them slightly less i.e. to a moderate extent. This could imply that for those teachers who felt that they already had a very good understanding of the literacy needs of the children in their class the framework provided by the SVOR was extraneous. Those teachers who felt less strongly about their understanding of the literacy needs of the children in their class tended to be those who did go on to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. This suggests that for them, the SVOR may have provided a tool/framework to develop and extend their understanding of the literacy learning needs of the children in their class.
Whole school factors

A lack of agreement with regard to whole school factors was evident. Those teachers who either agreed with the statement ‘in my opinion there is good staff morale throughout the school’ to a considerable or moderate extent were also the teachers who reported changes in their practice. This finding suggests that good staff morale throughout the school is one of the factors that helped to facilitate change for the teachers interviewed. However, this alone seemed insufficient to prompt change as two of the teachers who did not change their practice also reported that this statement applied to them either to a considerable or moderate extent.

Most teachers reporting that they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice also felt encouraged and supported by the Headteacher. This is in contrast to the ‘no change’ sample of teachers, two of whom felt statements relating to Headteacher support and encouragement did not apply to them at all. The finding that one of the teachers who felt strongly that they did have the support of the Head, yet still did not go on to change their practice, indicates that support and encouragement from the Headteacher may help teachers to incorporate changes into their practice but again is not sufficient, on its own, to result in change.

The size of the school also appears to be a factor as differences between the two samples were evident in relation to the statement ‘In a small school it is fine to expect someone other than the class teacher to identify literacy learning needs.’ The vast majority of those teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice felt that this statement did not apply to them at all. However, with the exception of one teacher (who taught in a large school thus rendering this statement not applicable), those who had not changed their practice indicated that this statement did apply to them, albeit only to a slight degree. Teachers within this sample justified this by stating that it was fine to expect someone else to fulfil this role alongside, rather than instead of, the class-teacher. Therefore it could be inferred that those teachers who had not incorporated the SVOR into their practice, seemed to feel that they could share this responsibility with someone else, especially if they worked in a small school.
Feelings related to change

Three quarters of those teachers who had not changed their practice agreed to a considerable extent with the statement ‘I feel most comfortable using methods that I am already familiar with.’ This was compared to teachers comprising the change group who agreed with this statement only to a moderate or slight extent. There was also a slight difference in teacher ratings concerning a lack of time and energy to implement changes in practice. All of those teachers reporting a change in practice maintained that such statements did not apply to them, although did comment that this may be an initial thought but that the profession of teaching demands that time and energy are found. Interestingly, two of the teachers who had not changed their practice reported that this statement applied to them to either a moderate or slight extent. This suggests that in some instances a lack of time or energy does create a barrier to changing practice, however others seem to acknowledge that these factors may make change difficult but that they are a fact of life and therefore need to be worked with, rather than given in to.

Length of teaching experience

The responses from the less experienced teachers participating in the research seemed to indicate that, in their opinion, it was easier for more experienced teachers to change whilst the more experienced teachers held the opposite view! This finding indicates that for the teachers participating in these interviews, there was an assumption that it was easier for other groups of teachers, (classified by experience) to change their practice than it was for them.

6.3.2 Identified themes and the ranking of each theme.

After the teachers had grouped the statements according to how much they applied to them, themes were identified within each group. This process was carried out jointly with the researcher. The themes identified are outlined in Table 24. Themes identified in each category are colour coded for ease of reference. Red refers to the themes identified from the statements within the group applying to the teacher to a considerable extent, green to the themes within the ‘moderate extent’ category, black to the themes within the ‘slight extent’ category and blue to any themes identified within the statements not applying to that teacher at all. The numbers in brackets relate to the statement numbers in Appendix 8 and are included so that statements can
be easily identified. If no themes were identified in any particular category this category was omitted from the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHER</th>
<th>THEMES IDENTIFIED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1 (School C, change)</td>
<td><strong>Confidence in own practice (9/29)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Effect of SVOR on classroom practice (12/13)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Beliefs/understanding of SVOR (6/14/15)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>School ethos (22/24/26)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Targeting interventions (2/11/17)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Stage of teaching career (4/5)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Feelings associated with change (21/25)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Talking to people about change (16/18/19)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Time (10/28)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2 (School D, change)</td>
<td><strong>SMT support (23/24/26/29)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Role of teacher (1)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Tool that impacts on literacy provision (2/11/12/13)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Knowledge of class/practice (7/9/14)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Conversation with others (16/18)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Experience (4/5)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Negative emotions (21/25/28)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Job specification of teacher (13/27/30)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Opportunities for further development (17/19)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3 (School D, no change)</td>
<td><strong>Whole school factors (23/24/26)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Effect of teaching experience (9/20/29)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Role of the teacher (1)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Use of SVOR in consultation with SENCO (11/12/16)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Understanding of reading (6/14)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>School/class specific issues (3/22/30)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Use of SVOR in consultation with SENCo (13/18)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Personal/emotional thoughts about change (21/25/27/28)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Following up use of tool (2/19/17)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4 (School B, change)</td>
<td><strong>School ethos (23/26)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Knowing your role (1/29)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Targeting interventions (2/11/13)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Understanding SVOR as a framework (6/7/12/14/22)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Experience (4/5)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Speaking to colleagues about SVOR (16/18)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Confidence to change (21/25/28)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Accepting responsibility for your role (3/27/30)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5 (School E, change)</td>
<td><strong>Beliefs/understanding of SVOR (14/15)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Outcomes from using SVOR (7/11/16)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>School factors facilitating confidence &amp; change (24/29)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Targeting interventions (2/13)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Whole school ethos/support (23/26)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Impact of SVOR on practice (12/17)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Accepting responsibility for your role (22/27/30)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Emotional responses to change (21/25/28)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teacher 6  | Perception of job/class (1/6/9)  
|           | Factors affecting change (4/20/21)  
|           | Tool (7/11/14/16)  
|           | Importance of identifying literacy needs (22/27)  
|           | Speaking to colleagues (18/19)  
|           | Sources of stress (10/28)  
|           | Management/support (24/25/26)  
|           | Impact on classroom practice (2/12/13/17/19)  |
| Teacher 7  | Confidence in own teaching & knowledge of children in class (9/29)  
|           | Identification of literacy needs (1/22)  
|           | Tool to structure thinking and practice (7/12/13/14/15)  
|           | Supporting others (5/16)  
|           | Talking to others (18/19)  
|           | School ethos (23/24/25)  |
| Teacher 8  | Confidence/support (26/29)  
|           | Identification of need (1/9)  
|           | Tool that provides conceptual understanding and follow up resources (2/14)  
|           | Tool (6/7/12/15/16/17)  
|           | Targeting interventions (11/13)  
|           | Whole school factors (23/24)  
|           | Identification of literacy needs, who and when (22/30)  
|           | Personal responses to change (5/21)  
|           | Lack of motivation (3/27)  
|           | Response to pressure (25/28)  |
| Teacher 9  | Confidence – in own ability & that others will support you (26/29)  
|           | Understanding of SVOR (6/14/15)  
|           | Impact of SVOR on practice (7/11/12)  
|           | Whole school factors (23/24)  
|           | Time pressures (29/28)  
|           | Talking to others (16/18)  
|           | Follow up (2/13/17)  
|           | Passing the buck by perceiving something as not part of your role (3/22/27/30)  
|           | Emotional response to change (21/25)  
|           | Experience (4/5)  |

Table 24: Themes identified within the statements placed in each category.

The identified themes, or individual statements not incorporated into a theme, were then ranked by each teacher from those that were considered to be most consistent with the teacher’s own experiences to those that were least consistent. Each individual teacher’s rankings of the themes/statements are shown below. Those considered by each teacher to be most consistent with their own experiences are at the top of the list. The superimposed break demarcates the point where
statements/themes started to become less consistent with the teacher’s own experience i.e. those perceived to apply to each teacher to only a slight extent or not at all.

Teacher 1 (School C, change)

1. Recognising task as part of role
2. Confidence
3. Having a framework to work within
4. Effect on classroom practice to improve learning outcomes for children
5. Understanding of SVOR

6. School ethos (support of head and good morale)
7. Helps to target interventions
8. Stage of teaching career not important
9. Time (find time not use as an excuse)
10. Put benefits for others in front of own personal feelings associated with change
11. Talking to others

Teacher 2 (School D, change)

1. Perceive task as central to role
2. SMT support (to provide time to have a go, resources, confidence in self, trust)
3. Tool to use
4. Knowledge of your class/practice
5. Having conversations with others
6. Own learning style

7. Personal beliefs about the tool
8. Time available
9. Feeling comfortable
10. Opportunities for further development (adapting/ speaking to colleagues in other schools)
11. Experience
12. Negative emotions making change difficult
13. Part of my/teacher role and not someone else’s.
Teacher 3 (School D, no change)
1. Perceive task as central to role
2. Whole school factors resulting in feeling supported
3. Effect of teaching experience on confidence, feeling comfortable and understanding needs of children.
4. Understanding of model of reading before using it
5. Experience
6. Use SVOR with SENCO, not independently due to lack of experience

--------------------------------------------------------------
7. Lack of time
8. Belief that others will help to fulfil role because of size of school, and teaching few children with literacy needs.
9. Following up the use of the tool
10. Own learning Style
11. Personal/emotional thoughts about change

Teacher 4 (School B, change)
1. School ethos – knowing that someone will support you
2. Knowing your role
3. Understanding SVOR as a framework
4. Targeting interventions/improving outcomes

----------------------------------------------------------
5. Talking to colleagues about new method
6. Adapting SVOR to suit me
7. Own learning style
8. Lack of time
9. Experience
10. Having the confidence to make changes to overcome negative emotions
11. Accepting responsibility for your role

Teacher 5 (School E, change)
1. Knowing your role and the children in your class
2. Improved outcomes as a result of using SVOR
3. Understanding of the tool (SVOR)
4. Confidence
5. Whole school factors: SMT support
6. Impact of SVOR on practice
7. Adapting SVOR to suit me
8. Support of colleagues
9. Targeting intervention
10. Speaking to colleagues

-------------------------------------------------------------
11. Accepting responsibility for your role
12. Emotional/personal responses to change
13. Lack of time
Teacher 6 (School E, no change)

1. Perception of role/job
2. Factors affecting change: experience, being comfortable with methods used, not feeling de-skilled
3. Beliefs about the new method

4. Having a tool to use
5. Speaking to others
6. Size of school and impact on adopting a whole school, rather than individual approach,
7. Good staff morale so you don’t feel alone
8. Support from management
9. Relevance to your role
10. Impact on classroom practice
11. Stress

Teacher 7 (School A, no change)

1. Confidence to integrate new methods into practice
2. Identification of needs
3. Feeling comfortable with method used
4. Lack of time
5. Tool to structure thinking and practice

6. Supporting others
7. Talking to others
8. Relevance to role
9. School ethos resulting in feelings of vulnerability and therefore no desire to change

Teacher 8 (School C, change)

1. Feeling confident and supported
2. Need to identify literacy needs
3. Tool that provides conceptual understanding and follow up resources.
4. Supportive whole school ethos
5. Limited teaching experience
6. Tool to use
7. Targeting of interventions

8. Beliefs regarding who should carry out and when certain tasks should be undertaken
9. Personal responses to change (experience/feeling deskilled)
10. Speaking to others in school
11. Lack of time
12. Lack of motivation resulting from thinking there is no need to fulfil a particular function
13. Response to pressure/emotional response to change
14. Speaking to colleagues from other schools
Comparing the rankings given by teachers who had changed their practice to incorporate the SVOR to those who had not, proved challenging. The small sample size meant that overall patterns were difficult to determine as one or two responses impacted significantly upon the results. Secondly the themes identified by the teachers were slightly different, which again made comparisons difficult. In order to try and make sense of this data a break was superimposed. It was subsequently inferred that the factors above this break (i.e. those identified by teachers as both being consistent with their experiences and applying to them to a considerable/moderate extent) could have been influential in determining whether or not the SVOR was incorporated into a teacher’s practice. Consideration of those themes falling below the superimposed break (i.e. those not consistent with a teacher’s own experiences and applying to them only to a slight degree or not at all) was more problematic. For the group of teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice these themes/statements could either be perceived as factors that were irrelevant to them or factors that could have hindered change had they been applicable. In contrast, for the ‘no change’ sample these factors could be viewed as factors that were either irrelevant to them or factors that may have helped them to change their practice had they been made relevant.

This analysis involved considering the same statements as those used in section 6.3.1, but focussed on the identification and ranking of themes rather than individual statements. As such, there was some overlap between these results. Consequently
findings similar to those outlined previously e.g. differences between the change and no change samples in terms of their understanding of the literacy needs of the children in their class, their emotional responses to change, the length of teaching experience and whole school factors such as good staff morale, the support of the Headteacher and the size of the school, will not be repeated here. The remainder of this section only considers key findings from the analysis of the themes that are in addition to those identified through the analysis of the individual statements alone. Additional differences between the responses of each sample are now summarised.

Confidence
Confidence was the only new theme ranked by some teachers in each sample as being consistent with their own experiences. On the surface this finding could lead to the conclusion that teachers within both groups felt confident in their role. However, closer analysis suggests that for those teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice confidence was related to feeling supported by the Headteacher and therefore feeling confident enough to try new methods. In contrast, teachers in the ‘no change’ sample appeared to be reporting confidence with the methods already used and the year group taught, which may have subsequently acted as a barrier to change.

Meeting the needs of the child vs meeting the needs of the teacher
Those teachers reporting changes in their practice more frequently reported improved child outcomes, and the use of the SVOR to target interventions, as being consistent with their own experiences. In comparison, teachers reporting no changes in practice made more reference to their own needs e.g. feeling comfortable, having time and not feeling de-skilled as being most consistent with their own experiences. This suggests that, for teachers participating in these interviews, those who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice were more concerned about the needs of the children and the impact that changing their practice would have on them, than they were about the impact that it would have on themselves. For teachers in the ‘no change’ sample, the opposite appears to be true. These teachers were more concerned about ensuring that their own needs were met than focussing on the benefits that changing their practice would have for the children.
Understanding vs application

Teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice ranked their understanding of, and beliefs about, the SVOR, as being less consistent with their experiences than the application of the SVOR to classroom practice. In contrast, it is unsurprising that the ‘no change’ sample ranked themes/statements relating to their understanding of, and beliefs about, the SVOR as being more consistent with their experiences than those relating to the application of it. This finding is interesting and appears to indicate that some teachers, particularly those who can see that a new method/strategy will have benefits for children, may incorporate changes into their practice even when they report not having a very good understanding of them or not strongly believing in them. Not investing time in understanding models before using them may be a function of the pace at which change is introduced into teaching.

Teachers may feel that they do not have sufficient time to fully evaluate models before introducing them into their classroom practice. The issue of whether thoughts and beliefs drive changes in practice or changes in practice ultimately trigger changes in thoughts and beliefs is discussed in more detail in section 6.3.4.

Summary

This analysis was quite complicated and difficult to undertake in a sensitive and meaningful way. The following summarises the main patterns to emerge from this analysis:

- Teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice seemed most concerned with improving child outcomes. In contrast, teachers reporting no changes in practice seemed more concerned with ensuring that their own needs were met.

- Teachers reporting changes in practice seemed less concerned about fully understanding a model and believing in it before applying it to their practice than those teachers who did not change their practice.

- Teachers changing their practice, on the whole, reported that a positive and supportive school ethos was consistent with their experiences.

- All teachers rated feeling confident as being highly relevant to them. Confidence for teachers who had changed their practice seemed to stem from feeling supported by the Headteacher. However, for teachers who had not changed their
practice confidence seemed to result in them feeling so comfortable with current methods that they were unwilling to change their practice.

- Teachers who were not particularly confident in their own understanding of a child’s literacy needs were more likely to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice.

6.3.3 A comparison of teacher ratings for statements relating to stages of teacher development.

Eight of the statements presented to the teachers during the interviews outlined the stages of teacher development identified by Guskey (1986) and Wideen (1992) (Appendix 8, statements 12-13 and 15-19). Consideration of teacher responses to these statements enabled the stage at which teachers were at in terms of changing their practice to be determined. In addition, it allowed some triangulation with the questionnaire data.

Guskey’s (1986) model of teacher development

Guskey’s (1986) model of teacher development focuses very much on the outcomes of change. Findings from the analysis of statements relating to Guskey’s model are present graphically in Figures 6-8.
Guskey Stage 1: How much the statement 'The SVOR has changed/added to my classroom practice when identifying literacy learning needs' applies to teachers in each sample

Guskey Stage 2: How much the statement 'The SVOR has resulted in a change in child learning outcomes as a result of clearer identification of needs and the subsequent targeting of interventions' applied to teachers in each sample

Guskey Stage 3: How much the statement 'I believe that the SVOR is more useful than the Searchlights model' applies to teachers in each sample

Figures 6-8: Teacher responses to those statements outlining the stages of teacher change identified in Guskey's (1986) staff development model.
The general trends emerging from the analysis of these statements does, on the whole, support the questionnaire data. Those teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice did perceive statements relating to the use of the SVOR and the impact of the SVOR on child outcomes as applying to them to a greater extent than those not reporting changes in their practice. The findings also suggest that those teachers reporting no change in their practice generally perceived statements relating to their beliefs about the SVOR as applying to them to a roughly equal extent to those reporting to have changed their practice.

What is very interesting is that this analysis does indicate that some teachers in the ‘no change’ sample may have in fact started to change their practice by the time of the interviews in 2009. This change was not significant enough for teachers in this sample to perceive any of these statements as applying to them to a considerable extent. One teacher did however, report that the SVOR had, to a moderate extent, resulted in a change in learning outcomes. A further two teachers reported that the SVOR had, to a moderate extent, added to/changed their classroom practice when identifying literacy learning needs. Obviously these findings were unexpected and could indicate a degree of social desirability in the responses provided during the interview phase. An alternative explanation for these findings could lie in the fact that since these interviews took place 12 months after the completion of the questionnaires, the SVOR had, over the course of the intervening 12 months, started to influence the practice of some of the teachers in the ‘no change’ sample. Clarification as to which of these explanations holds true would have been a useful addition to this research and could have been obtained through observations of teacher practice or through further discussions with the teachers concerned. Given that there is a possibility that some of the teachers in the ‘no change’ sample had started slowly to incorporate the SVOR into their practice, it would be interesting to do a follow up study in 12-18 months time. This study could focus on trying to determine whether the reported changes in belief by teachers comprising the ‘no change’ sample were/continued to be, translated into practice and, if so, whether changes following such a period of contemplation subsequently resulted in longer term and more embedded changes.
These findings could be interpreted as suggesting that, for the teachers participating in this study, it was not simply a case of changes in belief informing changes in practice or changes in practice slowly being translated into changes in beliefs but a combination of the two. As such rather than following a linear pattern of development, as suggested by Guskey (1986), Clark and Peterson (1986) and Fang (1996), it could be that changes in teacher practice are better explained by a cyclical model as outlined in Figure 9. Teachers would start their journey of change at the point most applicable to them at the time that the change is introduced. This point would be dependent on a range of factors including some of those outlined in sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, such as the perceived supportiveness of the management team/colleagues, the amount of time available, emotional responses to change, the perceived relevance of the change and the confidence of the teacher to try new methods.

Figure 9: Cyclical model outlining possible teacher responses to the introduction of change, combining both Guskey’s (1986) model and the proposals of Clark and Peterson (1986) and Fang (1996).
Wideen’s (1992) model of teacher development

Wideen’s (1992) model outlines the various processes/stages involved in teacher development. Findings from the analysis of statements relating to Wideen’s model are present graphically in Figures 10-13.

Figure 10: Graph to show whether teachers had spoken to colleagues in their school about the SVOR.

Figure 11: A graph to show whether teachers had adopted the SVOR to suit them.
The findings presented in Figures 10-13 are as would be expected, based on the information provided in the 2008 questionnaires. Those teachers reporting no change in their practice rated the majority of the statements referring to Wideen’s stages of teacher development as either not being applicable to them or applying to them only to a slight extent. In comparison, those teachers reporting to have changed their practice to incorporate the SVOR did perceive these statements as being slightly more applicable to them, particularly in terms of speaking to colleagues in their own school.
school and adapting the SVOR to suit their own practice. The data shows a decreasing level of agreement with the statements as they represent the more advanced stages of teacher development. Indeed, the final stage of development identified by Wideen, communication and discussion with a wider community, was not perceived by any of the teachers in this sample as applying to them. It could be argued that these findings may be linked to the comparatively smaller changes in beliefs relating to the SVOR reported by teachers having changed their practice. This may subsequently have limited their desire to talk to others, particularly those outside their own schools, about their practice.

6.4 **Comparison of the responses of teachers working within the same school.**

The analysis to date has yielded some interesting information, however in order to achieve this generalisations have been made both amongst, and between, groups of teachers. Given the realist approach of this study, it was important to consider the data gathered at a more individual level. In order to do this teachers working within the same school were considered together. Detailed Context-Mechanism-Outcome (C-M-O) configurations were developed using the information obtained during the interviews coupled with my own knowledge of the school. These configurations were then used to try and make sense of the different outcomes for teachers working within the same school. As only one teacher was interviewed in Schools A and B the C-M-O configurations for these teachers are not presented here but are available in Appendix 16.

6.4.1: School D

Tables 25 and 26 outline the C-M-O configurations for the two teachers interviewed in School D. Differences between the two have been highlighted for ease of reference
**Teacher 2 (School D)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Small school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* High attaining school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively low numbers of children with SEN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Supportive Head teacher and SMT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Member of the SMT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Literacy co-ordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Experienced teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Taught same year group (Y6) for the last 3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- EP consultations regarding 2 children during which reference was made to SVOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Talking to members of staff about the SVOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Belief that the identification of literacy learning needs is the role of the class teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Keen to develop current methods of identifying literacy learning needs in light of DCSF guidelines</td>
<td>- Reported use of SVOR in practice due to its use in informing planning and interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reported improvements in child outcomes as a result of using the SVOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reduced reliance on Outside Agency Support as measured by number of EP referrals made by the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 2, School D.
Teacher 3 (School D)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| * Small school  
  * High attaining school  
  * Relatively low numbers of children with SEN  
  * Supportive Head teacher and SMT  
  * NQT at the time the SVOR was introduced  
  * Taught same year group (Y5) for the last 2 years.  
  * Taught a class perceived to be challenging in terms of their behaviour  
  * No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs | - Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs  
- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR  
- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF  
- Talking with the SENCo about the literacy learning needs of children in the class and the SVOR.  
- Belief that the identification of literacy learning needs is the role of the class teacher  
- Confident that current methods suffice to identify and address literacy learning needs | - Continued use of previous strategies e.g. provision mapping  
- Reported ongoing reliance on others (most notably the SENCo) to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs  
- Reported ongoing reliance on others (SENCo) to help devise appropriate interventions/strategies to address needs  
- Self reported reasonable understanding of the SVOR |

Table 26: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 3, School D.

Despite these teachers working in the same school, a number of differences are evident with regard to the particular contexts and mechanisms operating at the level of the individual teacher. These included:

- Differences in each teacher’s role within school. Teacher 2 was an experienced teacher, literacy co-ordinator and member of the senior management team. In contrast teacher 3 was an NQT at the time when the SVOR was introduced.
• Differences in length of teaching experience. Teacher 3 (an NQT at the time that the SVOR was introduced) reported that, in his opinion, teachers with more experience were able to spend less time focusing on the content of the curriculum, make links with previous experiences and generally shift the focus from their needs as a teacher to the needs of the children. In contrast teacher 2 (a more experienced teacher) reported that, in her opinion, experience was not an important factor and that change was more to do with confidence, subject knowledge and the presence of a supportive management team, rather than the number of years spent teaching.

• Individual priorities within school. For teacher 2 this priority included establishing methods for identifying and addressing literacy needs across the school in the role of literacy co-ordinator. In contrast, teacher 3 had more immediate concerns relating to the behaviour management of his class and familiarisation with the curriculum.

• Different perceptions of current methods. Teacher 3 was adamant that existing practices in relation to identifying and addressing literacy learning needs were sufficient and that as a result practice did not need to change. In contrast, teacher 2, although confident with current methods, was keen to improve on these if possible and relate these methods to new research and DCSF guidelines.

• Differing views regarding whose role it was to identify and address literacy learning needs. Teacher 2 reported that, in her opinion, all children had literacy learning needs and that even within a small school a teacher should be responsible for identifying these needs. In contrast, and despite reporting to believe that the identification of literacy learning needs was part of their role, teacher 3 held a different set of beliefs. Teacher 3 perceived that because of the small size of the school and because, in his opinion, he taught few children with literacy learning needs, it was acceptable to expect others to help fulfil this role. Teacher 3 reported that the SENCO had helped to do this and in doing so had referred to the SVOR. This did not however result in the SVOR being used independently by teacher 3 but rather maintained his reliance on SENCo support.

From this information, it could be concluded that the five factors outlined above, either singly or in combination, account for one teacher having changed their practice and another teacher not having changed their practice. It is difficult to determine
which factors were most important in influencing these outcomes. As a result of
knowing the teachers concerned and the school within which they worked, it would
appear that the different roles of the two teachers within the school and the differing
levels of experience were, in this case, the most relevant factors. These two factors
could be arguably be seen to underpin all of the other reported differences and could
therefore be used to explain why the introduction of the SVOR triggered a change in
practice for teacher 2 and not teacher 3.

5.4.2 School E
Tables 27 and 28 show the C-M-O configurations for the two teachers interviewed in
School E. Differences have been highlighted for ease of reference.

Teacher 5 (School E)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Fully inclusive school with places for children who meet criteria for the LA SLD school.</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td>• Reported use of SVOR in practice due to its use in informing planning and intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Poor catchment area</td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR</td>
<td>• Reported improvements in child outcomes as a result of using the SVOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively high numbers of children with SEN</td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td>• Believed the SVOR to be more useful than the Searchlights model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively high numbers of children with poor speech and language skills.</td>
<td>- Conversations with colleagues about the SVOR</td>
<td>• Reduced reliance on Outside Agency Support as measured by number of EP referrals made by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* SVOR considered relevant in helping to identify the needs of individuals in the class taught the term after the SVOR was introduced.</td>
<td>- Initial informal discussions regarding the follow up strategies provided both with colleagues and EP.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* New, externally appointed Deputy Head.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perception of a supportive management team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* SENCo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Experienced teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Taught same year group (R) for at least 6 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 5, School E.
Teacher 6 (School E)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Fully inclusive school with places for children who meet criteria for the LA SLD school.</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td>• Believed that the SVOR was more useful than the Searchlights model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Poor catchment area</td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively high numbers of children with SEN</td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td>• No reported use of the SVOR in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively high numbers of children with poor speech and language skills.</td>
<td>- EP consultations regarding a specific child during which reference was made to SVOR</td>
<td>• Continuation of previous methods used to identify and address literacy learning needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* New, externally appointed Deputy Head.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Negative ‘mind set’ in relation to changing practice in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perception of an unsupportive management team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Experienced teacher, due to retire in July 2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Lots of changes in year group taught, over the past 2 years, including being non-class based thus reducing the relevance of the SVOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 6, School E.

The following summarises the main differences with regard to the particular contexts and mechanisms operating at the level of the individual teacher for teachers 5 and 6.
Different perceptions of whole school factors. Teacher 6 reported feeling unsupported and not encouraged by the Headteacher whilst teacher 5 reported feeling supported and encouraged by the Headteacher. There was also a slight difference between perceptions of staff morale with teacher 5 rating this more favourably than teacher 6.

The number of changes experienced by each teacher during the two years of this study differed significantly. Teacher 5 had remained in the same year group throughout this research whilst teacher 6 had moved from teaching Year 2 to being non-class based to teaching Nursery over a two year period.

Relevance of the SVOR to the teacher’s role/practice. During the year following the introduction of the SVOR teacher 5 reported that there were some children in her class for whom this framework helped in the process of identifying literacy needs. The SVOR as a framework to guide the identification of literacy learning needs was also relevant to this teacher’s role as SENCo. In contrast, during the year following the introduction of the SVOR, teacher 6 was non-class based thus making the use of the SVOR less relevant to her.

Experience. Although both teachers agreed that changes in practice were easier for less experienced teachers to incorporate, there seemed to be qualitative differences in terms of the extent to which this view applied to themselves. Both teacher 5 and 6 are experienced teachers however teacher 6 seemed to have a slightly different mind set, possibly linked to her nearing retirement age. This mind set resulted in her feeling comfortable with the methods currently being used due to new methods either having been seen before or not being compatible with the teacher’s own views and practices. Consequently this teacher viewed new methods as resulting in her feeling de-skilled. This ‘mind set’ is in contrast to teacher 5 who despite thinking that it was easier for less experienced teachers to change their practice, did not seem to view changes as de-skilling on a personal level and did not seem to equate being experienced with being unable to change practice in the same way as teacher 6.

Teacher 5 reported to have spoken to colleagues within school about the SVOR whilst teacher 6 was unable to recall any such conversations.
Once again it could be concluded that the five factors outlined above, either singly or in combination, could be used to explain why the introduction of the SVOR triggered a change in practice for teacher 5 but not teacher 6. Identifying which factor(s) were most decisive in determining these different outcomes is difficult. My knowledge of the teachers and the school would suggest that the personal circumstances of the individual teachers were key in this case. Teacher 6 experienced two changes in relation to the year groups taught and was also due to retire at the end of the academic year during which the interviews were conducted. It seems that for teacher 6 these personal circumstances ultimately impacted upon all of the other factors outlined above and fed into an emerging negative mind set regarding both the school and her own practice. This may ultimately account for why teacher 6 did not incorporate the SVOR into her practice. In contrast teacher 5 appeared to have a much more settled two years with no changes in the year group taught and no big personal changes such as retirement approaching. This ultimately resulted in teacher 5 having a much more positive mind set and being more receptive to new ideas. It is likely that this made all the difference for teacher 5 and contributed to facilitating a change in their practice.

6.4.3 School C

Three teachers working in School C participated in the interview process. Two of these, teachers 1 and 8, reported to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice whilst one, teacher 9, reported no change in practice. The C-M-O configurations for these teachers are outlined in Tables 29-31.
Teacher 1 (School C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively low numbers of children with SEN</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>• Reported use of SVOR in practice due to its use in informing planning and intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Generally good standards of reading throughout the school, as measured by SATS results</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address any literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR that were perceived as being familiar.</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>• Reported improvement in outcomes for children as a result of using the SVOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Recent introduction of letters and sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* New, externally appointed Headteacher and internally appointed Deputy Head.</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Perception that the identification of literacy learning needs was part of their role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perceived SMT as not particularly supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Experienced teacher working in Year 2, reporting to feel confident in teaching this year group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 29: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 1 (School C)
**Teacher 8 (School C)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively low numbers of children with SEN * Generally good standards of reading throughout the school, as measured by SATS results * Recent introduction of letters and sounds * New, externally appointed Headteacher and internally appointed Deputy Head. * Perception of a supportive management team * Experienced teacher * Taught Year 3 for the last 2 years, Y4 before that but reports feeling confident in teaching this year group * No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs - Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address any literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR that were perceived as being familiar. - Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF - Established links between SVOR and current initiative of letters and sounds. - Perception that the identification of literacy learning needs was part of their role</td>
<td>• Reported use of SVOR in practice due to its use in informing planning and intervention • Reported improvement in outcomes for children as a result of using the SVOR • Reduced reliance on Outside Agency Support as measured by number of EP referrals made by the teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 30: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 8, School C.
Teacher 9 (School C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively low numbers of children with SEN</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td>• No reported use of the SVOR in practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Generally good standards of reading throughout the school, as measured by SATS results</td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR</td>
<td>• Self reported good understanding of the SVOR as a model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Recent introduction of letters and sounds</td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td>• Identification of literacy learning needs no longer perceived as being central to role as non-class based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* New, externally appointed Headteacher.</td>
<td>- EP consultation when class based, during which the SVOR was referred to.</td>
<td>• Addressing literacy learning needs no longer perceived as being central to role as non-class based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Recent promotion to Deputy Head after teaching in the school for 12 months.</td>
<td>- Perception that the identification of literacy learning needs was part of their role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Non class based for last 12 months to undertake Deputy Head duties – largely strategic work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Experienced teacher reporting to be confident in role of Deputy and class teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perceived lack of time available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 31: C-M-O configurations for Teacher 9, School C.
These C-M-O configurations do highlight some significant differences between the particular contexts and mechanisms operating at the level of the individual teacher. These are detailed below.

- Teacher 9 experienced a change in terms of his role during the 2 years of the study, becoming Deputy Head teacher. In contrast the roles of teachers 1 and 8 remained constant during this period. It is therefore possible that whilst learning this new role, teacher 9’s capacity to consider changing his practice in any other way was reduced. This change in role will have also impacted upon the relevance of the SVOR to teacher 9 as he was non-class based.

- Teacher 9, who did not change his practice, identified a lack of time as being particularly relevant to the context within which he worked, a factor possibly related to the previous point. Both teachers 1 and 8 however commented that lack of time was an excuse and that finding time was part of the daily life of a teacher.

- Only one of the teachers reporting to have changed their practice (teacher 8) went on to perceive the recent whole school introduction of letters and sounds as being complimentary to the introduction of the SVOR. Such links between the SVOR and existing practice were not made by teacher 9.

- Both teachers reporting to have changed in their practice also commented that the follow up strategies provided were familiar and so could be easily incorporated into their practice. Teacher 9 made very little reference to the follow up materials.

The 4 factors outlined above could, either singly or in combination, account for the introduction of the SVOR having triggered changes in the practice of teachers 1 and 8 but not teacher 9. Again it is difficult to determine which factors were most important in influencing these different outcomes. From my knowledge of the school and observations over the 2 years of the study, it would appear that the change in role for teacher 9, coupled with the links made between the SVOR, follow up materials and existing knowledge/practice by teachers 1 and 8 were the most influential. As such for these teachers, at this particular time and in this particular school, the combination of making links between the new materials (SVOR and follow up materials) and their existing knowledge/practice seemed to make the SVOR more relevant to the ongoing and unchanged roles of teachers 1 and 8. For teacher 9 the role change could be
perceived as making the SVOR less relevant to this teacher thus making it more
difficult for connections to be made between current practice and the SVOR.
Consequently the combination of a need to learn a new role, making no connections
between the SVOR and current practice and the perception of a limited amount of
time was not sufficient to trigger a change in practice for teacher 9.

6.4.4 Summary

The analysis of the C-M-O configurations for individual teachers highlights just how
different the experiences of teachers working within the same school can be. This
detailed analysis also provides an insight into why whole school change is very
challenging to achieve, as the differences between the individual staff, despite
working within the same context, can be quite significant.

6.5 Factors that facilitated change for teachers in this study

The preceding sections of this chapter have touched upon a whole range of factors
that, at a particular point in time, for a particular teacher, in a particular school, were
recognised as helping them to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. Figure 14
collates this information and provides an overview of the complex and wide ranging
nature of the factors that facilitated changes in practice for the teachers participating
in this study. Factors identified by teachers as being directly relevant to them
incorporating the SVOR into their practice are in boxes with a black border. Factors
identified by teachers as potentially helping them to change their practice, but not
being directly applicable to them during this study, are contained in boxes with a
green border.
The factors identified as facilitating change in this study fall into 5 main categories; whole school factors, within teacher factors, non-school/teacher based factors, the tool being introduced and the usefulness of the tool in addressing the teacher’s own need(s). It may be useful to consider these five factors prior to the introduction of any new methods of working. Particular attention could focus on those factors over which the trainer may have some control e.g. the tool being introduced, the extent to which the change addresses the needs of the teachers and the relevance of the change to the teacher in order to increase the effectiveness of any training.
6.6 Factors identified as barriers to change by teachers in this study

Sections 6.2-6.4 have touched upon a whole range of factors that, at a particular time, for a particular teacher, in a particular school, were recognised as barriers to incorporating the SVOR into their practice. Figure 15 assimilates this information into one diagram and highlights the range of factors that can act as barriers to teachers incorporating changes into their practice. Factors identified by teachers as being directly relevant to them not incorporating the SVOR into their practice are in boxes with a black border. Factors identified by teachers as potentially hindering them in changing their practice, but not being directly applicable to them during this study, are contained in boxes with a green border.

Figure 15: Factors identified as barriers to change by teachers in this study
Figure 15 suggests that the barriers preventing the SVOR being incorporated into the practice of the teachers participating in the interviews centred on four main factors. These four factors were; the individual teachers perception of the SVOR, whole school factors, factors that maintain current ways of working and personal factors. A number of these factors are very difficult to change, for example a teachers personal circumstances or staff turnover. As such it seems that ensuring changes are linked to whole school priorities, thereby enlisting the support of the Headteacher and highlighting the positives and benefits associated with the change so as to positively colour the teacher’s initial perceptions of new methods, would be positive steps towards overcoming some of the barriers faced by teachers when presented with change.

6.7 Summary

This chapter has outlined the main findings to emerge from the interviews. Individual C-M-O configurations have clearly highlighted the differences between the particular contexts and mechanisms operating at the level of the individual teacher. These differences, even though often slight and not obvious, did clearly impact on outcomes.

In terms of the more general findings several themes have emerged that seem to distinguish between those teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice and those who had not. These included:

- Teacher’s perceptions regarding whether the SVOR was both useful and helpful to them on personal level.
- Whether teachers made links between the SVOR and their existing practice
- Whole school factors such as the school ethos and perceived supportiveness of the Headteacher/SMT
- The teachers’ own emotional responses to change and whether changes resulted in them feeling de-skilled and vulnerable.
- Whether teachers were more concerned about meeting their own personal needs or improving outcomes for children.

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Chapter 7 considers these findings in relation to the research questions posed in Chapter 2.
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

7.1 Outline of chapter
This Chapter considers the results analysed in chapters 5 and 6 in relation to the research questions presented in the methodology chapter. In addition, this chapter also presents:

- A summary of the key findings. It is important to note that reported changes are likely to have been the result of both the training received and changes in context occurring during the time of the study. Key contextual changes include the delegation of funding for literacy difficulties to schools, a reduction in central support services and the introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy.
- A reflection on the questionnaire used in this study
- A reflection on the interview procedure used in this study
- A reflection on the training element of the study and how the findings of this study relate to theories in the area of staff development.
- How the findings of this study relate to current theories and practice in the area of identifying literacy learning needs
- Summary

7.2 Research Question 1: Do the ways in which teachers identify literacy learning needs change following the introduction of the Simple View Of Reading?

Analysis of the 2007 data indicates that, at this time, teachers tended to speak to others regarding the needs of children struggling with literacy learning. Only half reported to carry out further assessment to clarify the child’s needs themselves and less than a quarter of those completing the questionnaire reported to follow up the identified need with an intervention or an IEP. Comparison of teacher responses in 2007 and 2008 indicated that teacher practice regarding the identification of literacy learning needs did change in a number of ways following the introduction of the SVOR.
• There was a statistically significant increase in the number of teachers stating that they used the SVOR to help them identify literacy learning needs. The use of the SVOR was always mentioned alongside other methods and generally referred to as a framework that enabled teachers to clarify their thinking and/or bring together the information that they had about a child.

• There was a slight increase in the number of teachers reporting that they would undertake further assessments themselves in order to clarify a child’s literacy needs. This finding correlates well with the finding that in 2008 slightly more teachers reported to perceive the clarification of literacy needs as forming part of their role.

• There was also a relatively large decrease in the number of teachers feeling that it was necessary to liaise with either the SENCo, the child’s previous teacher/colleagues or an outside agency. This finding could be the result of significantly increased levels of teacher confidence, the SVOR providing a framework within which to work or a consequence of teachers having been provided with a range of strategies to address literacy needs once identified.

7.3 Research Question 2: In what ways did teachers use the Simple View of Reading between 2007-2009?

Analysis of the data gathered during this research indicates that teachers used the SVOR in a number of different ways, including to identify literacy learning needs, to inform their understanding of literacy learning, to target literacy interventions and to group children.

7.3.1 To identify literacy learning needs
The majority of the teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice used it in the way that it was introduced to them during the initial training session, i.e. they placed each child in their class at the appropriate point on the framework. Some teachers reported to have used standardised assessment data in order to achieve this whilst others relied on their own knowledge of the children.
Teachers also reported that they used the SVOR to separate the needs of children with language difficulties from those with decoding difficulties. This use was referred to as being particularly useful by staff working in school A, a school attended by large numbers of children learning English as a second language.

As discussed in section 6.3.2 teachers in the ‘no change’ sample reported a better understanding of the literacy learning needs of the children in their class at the start of this study than those teachers who did report changes their practice. As such it could be concluded that for the ‘no change’ sample of teachers the framework provided by the SVOR was perceived as extraneous. In contrast, those teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice could have used it as a tool/framework to develop and extend their understanding of the literacy learning needs of the children in their class. This may explain the statistically significant increase in teacher confidence relating to the identification of literacy learning needs following the introduction of the SVOR.

7.3.2 To inform their understanding of literacy learning

Results, from both the questionnaires and the interviews, indicated that even teachers who had not incorporated the SVOR into their practice reported that it had informed their understanding of literacy learning. The difference between reported understanding of the SVOR as a model in 2007 and 2008 was statistically significant. This finding was reinforced during the interviews as all 9 teachers rated the statement ‘I have a good understanding of the SVOR and its two components of word recognition and language comprehension’ as applying to them either to a considerable or moderate extent. In conclusion all teachers, regardless of whether or not they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice, perceived that they had a relatively good understanding of the SVOR.

7.3.3 To target interventions.

Those teachers who reported to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice also reported that they used the SVOR, and the follow up strategies, in order to target interventions. These interventions addressed the specific areas of difficulty highlighted by the SVOR. Some teachers reported that they had used the SVOR framework to make links between differing literacy needs and the interventions
already offered in school. This suggests, that for some teachers/schools, the SVOR was used as a basic provision map for literacy, enabling the school to outline the literacy interventions offered.

7.3.4 To group children
Teachers, both when completing the questionnaire and during the follow up interviews, reported that they used the SVOR in order to group children. Comments made by teachers referred to the SVOR as providing a visual representation of the class which then enabled the teacher to group children with similar needs. Teachers reported that this allowed interventions to be targeted more effectively and also provided a focus for work in class.

7.4 Research Question 3: In what ways do teachers perceive the Simple View Of Reading to be a useful tool in the identification of literacy learning needs?

Teachers provided a range of insights as to why they considered the SVOR to be useful. The reason referred to most frequently by teachers using the SVOR in their practice was that it was easy and simple to use. Teachers also noted that using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs also made them aware of children whose literacy needs they did not fully understand. Therefore for some teachers, the SVOR was useful because it highlighted gaps in their knowledge, thus providing a self-evaluation tool indicating areas requiring further assessment.

The SVOR was also perceived as useful because it provided a visual representation that was easy to refer to and which allowed children to be easily grouped. In addition, teachers reported that the SVOR provided a way of conceptually understanding literacy/reading. Consequently, by considering information that they already had in terms of the two essential components of reading; language comprehension and word decoding, teachers reported that useful, and often additional, information could be gained. Similarly, teachers also perceived the SVOR as useful because it enabled them to discriminate between children with language comprehension difficulties and those with word recognition difficulties. This was noted as being particularly useful by teachers working within a school attended by a high number of children learning English as a second language.
Other teachers reported that the SVOR was useful because it either confirmed, or challenged, teacher views regarding literacy needs. Some teachers also referred to the SVOR as being useful because the actual process of considering the literacy learning needs of individual children, within the context of the SVOR, provided them with time to reflect on, and consider, each child’s needs.

7.5 Research Question 4: In what ways does the Simple View of Reading trigger (or fail to trigger) changes in teacher practice?

The findings of this research suggest several ways in which the SVOR either triggered, or failed to trigger, changes in teacher practice. For ease of reference these are outlined in Table 32.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WAYS IN WHICH THE SVOR TRIGGERED CHANGES IN TEACHER PRACTICE</th>
<th>WAYS IN WHICH THE SVOR FAILED TO TRIGGER CHANGES IN TEACHER PRACTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provision of follow up strategies</td>
<td>• Perception that it was ‘nothing new’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perceived benefits in terms of improving child outcomes</td>
<td>• Lack of confidence in the SVOR as a model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provision of a framework/tool to structure thinking and practice</td>
<td>• Perceived lack of time to consider the SVOR and apply it to practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provided a topic of conversation for teachers</td>
<td>• Being unable to see the potential benefits of using the SVOR in terms of child outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• By complimenting current ways of working and enabling teachers to make sense of information that they already had</td>
<td>• Teachers being extremely confident and comfortable with the existing methods used, thus seeing no point in changing their practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Being consistent with teacher views regarding their job</td>
<td>• The presence of competing priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perceived as helpful in enabling teachers to achieve what they wanted to achieve/addressing current issues</td>
<td>• The introduction of the SVOR being one more change in the context of many other changes for an individual teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32: How the SVOR either triggered, or failed to trigger, changes in teacher practice for teachers in this study
7.6  Research Question 5: In what circumstances does the introduction of the Simple View of Reading effect a change in teacher practice?

The information gathered during the follow up interviews identified several circumstances that, for the small group of teachers participating in the interviews, helped to facilitate a change in practice. The circumstances that led to these teachers going on to incorporate the SVOR into their practice are outlined below.

- Teachers perceiving the SVOR as being relevant to them and meeting their current needs. These teachers had children in their class whose literacy needs were unclear and the SVOR helped these teachers to better understand the needs of these children. Alternatively, some teachers perceived the SVOR to be relevant to them in terms of fulfilling other roles that they had within the school, for example literacy co-ordinator, assessment co-ordinator or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

- Teachers perceiving a supportive whole school ethos and/or a supportive management team. Teachers reported that this gave them the confidence to incorporate new methods into their teaching.

- Pressure from the Local Authority to raise standards in literacy. In this case the introduction of the SVOR as a framework to help identify and address literacy learning needs linked well with an existing school priority.

- Teachers making links between the new strategy (SVOR) and existing methods thus perceiving the SVOR as complimenting strategies already used.

- Teachers experiencing a period of sustained continuity with regard to both their role (i.e. class or non-class based, management or no management function) and the year group taught.

- Teachers perceiving that there is sufficient time to think about, and introduce, changes into their practice.

- Teachers working within a Local Authority who do not provide additional funding to address literacy needs either in the form of Statements or any other centrally held funding. This places the emphasis on schools needing to both identify and address the literacy needs of children in their school.
7.7  Research Question 6: Is it possible to identify for whom the introduction of the Simple View of Reading results in changes in practice?

Information gathered during the follow up interviews indicates that, for the small sample of teachers participating in this study, the introduction of the SVOR generally resulted in changes in practice for the following groups of people:

- Teachers who are able to make links between the SVOR and existing methods used within their own practice/whole school practices.
- Teachers who are not particularly confident in understanding the literacy learning needs of the children in their class without a framework to guide their thinking/practice.
- Teachers who have experienced a minimum number of changes within their teaching over the past 12-24 months.
- Teachers who are not overly confident with the current methods used to identify and address literacy learning needs.
- Class based teachers.
- Teachers who have some experience but are not near retirement age.

7.8  Research Question 7: In what ways can any changes in teacher practice (or failures to change), in this study, be explained in terms of the context-mechanism-outcome (CMO) configurations used in realist research?

C-M-O configurations provide a useful framework, allowing the information gathered during this study to be amalgamated. Figures 16 and 17 outline the C-M-O configurations that could be used to explain changes/lack of change in teacher practice for those interviewed.
Figure 16: C-M-O configurations explaining how and why changes in teacher practice occurred for those teachers interviewed.

The C-M-O configuration detailed above was derived from the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data. Figure 16 combines the contexts and mechanisms identified as being central to teachers participating in this study incorporating the SVOR into their practice. This C-M-O configuration indicates that in this study teachers incorporating the SVOR into their practice worked within the context of a Local Authority where funding to address literacy learning needs had been delegated to schools. In terms of context, teachers changing their practice also tended to; be
class based, work within schools with a supportive management team, have experienced few changes in role over the previous 12-24 months, have a perceived need (as a consequence of the class taught) to better identify the literacy needs of the children in their class and be experienced but not nearing retirement. The mechanisms identified by teachers in this study as triggering changes in their practice included the perception that the SVOR provided a useful framework, was relevant to their own personal needs, provided a topic of conversation and impacted positively on child outcomes. This group of teachers also referred to the mechanisms of making links between the SVOR and their existing practice, the SVOR increasing their confidence in the identification of literacy learning needs (through the provision of a framework to guide their thinking and practice) and the provision of follow up resources and as being particularly relevant to them. This C-M-O configuration supports the view that complex interacting contexts and mechanisms combine in order to result in teachers incorporating the SVOR into their practice.

Figure 17 outlines the C-M-O configurations that could be used to explain instances where changes in teacher practice failed to occur for the teachers involved in the interviews.
Figure 17: C-M-O configurations explaining how and why changes in teacher practice did not occur for those teachers interviewed.

The C-M-O configuration detailed above was derived from the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data. Figure 17 combines the contexts and mechanisms identified as being central to teachers participating in this study not incorporating the SVOR into their practice. This C-M-O configuration indicates that, in this study, teachers not incorporating the SVOR into their practice worked within a context where the management team were perceived as being unsupportive, had experienced changes in role during the previous 12-24 months and felt that they had no time to consider alternative practice(s). This group of teachers also perceived the SVOR as
providing nothing new, had no belief in the SVOR as a model, failed to make links between the SVOR and existing practices and felt that the SVOR was not relevant to their role or present circumstances (either because they were already very confident with current methods used and therefore their ability to identify literacy learning needs or because they were non class based or because they did not teach literacy). Together these factors are viewed as the mechanisms that prevented teachers from incorporating the SVOR into their practice. This C-M-O configuration supports the view that during this study complex interacting contexts and mechanisms combined in order to result in teachers not incorporating the SVOR into their practice.

7.9 Summary of the key findings

This piece of research attempted to address a wide range of research questions and resulted in a lot of data being generated. On reflection it may have been better to have reduced both the number, and breadth, of the research questions considered. In hindsight maybe the focus on both the identification of literacy learning needs and staff development was too broad. Focussing only on the identification of literacy needs, and possibly incorporating the use of the SVOR to inform intervention, would have provided a more confined focus for this research. As a result of the breadth focus of this study, there are a number of key findings both in relation to the identification of literacy needs and staff development.

The findings of this study indicate that the SVOR is viewed by some teachers as being a useful tool to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs. Results indicate that following the introduction of the SVOR there is a significant increase in teacher understanding and use of this model, alongside a significant increase in teacher confidence relating to the identification of literacy learning needs. This is coupled with a slight increase in the perception that the clarification of literacy learning needs does form a central part of the class teacher role. In general the majority of the teachers participating in this study reported that the SVOR was easy to use and provided an easy visual reference that could be used to check pupil progress. Teachers also reported that the SVOR provided additional information as a consequence of changing the way that they conceptualised the process of literacy learning. A small minority of teachers felt that SVOR was not useful. Reasons for
this included some teachers feeling that they required more information in order to apply the SVOR framework to their practice, the SVOR being perceived as more relevant to Key Stage 1 teachers and the SVOR failing to provide additional information. Appendices 9 and 10 contain suggestions as to how some of these difficulties could be overcome.

In terms of the changes that occurred in teacher practice, several themes emerged to distinguish between teachers reporting to have changed their practice and those who had not. Teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice seemed to recognise its impact in terms of improving child outcomes but did not appear overly concerned with fully understanding the model or truly believing in it before applying it to their practice. Interestingly, those teachers reporting no changes in their practice reported good levels of understanding of, and belief in, the SVOR as a model. This finding led to the proposal of a cyclical, rather than linear, model of teacher development which is outlined in Figure 9. The group of teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice were class based and, on the whole, reported that a positive and supportive school ethos/management team was consistent with their own experiences. Those teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice also tended to make links between the SVOR and their existing practice and had experienced few changes in their teaching over the past 12-24 months. The full range of factors facilitating the incorporation of the SVOR into teacher practice elicited during the interviews is outlined in Figure 16. A similar number of factors were identified during the interviews as acting as barriers to change. These are outlined in detail in Figure 17.

7.10 Reflections on questionnaire phase of the study

7.10.1 General Difficulties
In general the questionnaire phase of this study did serve its purpose. It enabled the collection of the thoughts of a larger number of teachers than would have been possible in any other way. The questionnaire also enabled those teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice to be separated from those who had not. The completion rate for the initial questionnaires was very high. All teachers
completed the first questionnaire as a result of time being allocated for them to do this during a staff meeting. Completion rates for the follow up questionnaires were slightly lower (82%) but still sufficient to allow analysis of the results. The exception was school F, whose response rate was so poor they were subsequently dropped from the study.

The major difficulty with using a questionnaire was that it only asked for self reports and therefore if teachers reported that they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice this was accepted as being true. The questionnaires did however fulfil the function of providing baseline measures and follow up measures of teacher understanding and practice relating to the identification of literacy learning needs. The questionnaire was successful in distinguishing between teachers in preparation for the interview phase. Following the interviews it was evident that those teachers who reported that they had incorporated the SVOR into their practice, on the questionnaire, had in fact done so. This suggests that the information provided on the questionnaires was reflective of actual teacher practice.

7.10.2 Questionnaire Composition
Despite having piloted the questionnaire and amended the wording in light of this, closer analysis of both the questions and the data collected raised concerns. These concerns related to the wording of some questions and the way that the questionnaire was presented. On reflection, there were a number of terms within the questionnaire that could have either been misunderstood or not understood by the teachers participating in this study. These primarily included the terms ‘clarification’ and ‘literacy learning needs.’ Rather than using the term literacy learning needs, it may have been better to have been more specific and just used the word ‘reading,’ a term with which all teachers are familiar. Similarly, the term ‘clarification’ is potentially confusing. The term was intended to refer to those steps taken after a teacher has noticed that a child has a difficulty. However it is now recognised that this term could refer to a whole range of steps including anything from checking a child’s sight vocabulary to an in depth assessment as may be carried out by an Educational Psychologist or specialist teacher. Some teachers may have perceived the term ‘clarification’ as referring to a detailed assessment of a child’s strengths and
weaknesses. This may have been viewed as comprising assessments relating to areas such as working memory, speech and language and perceptual skills. This view of the term ‘clarification’ may have affected the responses given by the teachers. The inclusion of a question(s) relating to the impact of using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs on the planning of subsequent interventions would have been a useful addition. This was not included as the primary focus of this study was the identification of literacy learning needs. This area could however provide a focus for future research.

The labelling of the rating scales could also have been improved in an attempt to standardise the interpretation of the terms used. Definitions of each point on the rating scale could have been provided in order to achieve this. For example, in relation to question 9 ‘very good understanding’ could have been defined as, ‘My understanding of the searchlights model enables me to recall the four searchlights and understand how each one influences the development of reading. My understanding is secure enough to explain the Searchlights model to someone else.’ This would have provided teachers with a clear reference point of ‘very good understanding’ as some teachers may never rate their understanding as ‘very good’ even if their understanding is extremely sound. Other teachers however, may perceive their understanding as being very good even if, when compared to others, it is not. Labelling each point of the rating scale, rather than just the extreme points, may have improved the questionnaire further still.

Finally, on reflection, the provision of three suggestions in relation to question 8, was ultimately problematic. The three suggestions provided probably resulted in teachers feeling that they did not have to think about any ‘other’ category responses. This is likely to have led them into certain ways of thinking about this question. Question 8 would have been much improved if it had been presented as either an open question or a closed question containing a much more comprehensive list of possible methods for identifying literacy learning needs. As a result of these concerns, the data from this question was subsequently eliminated from the analysis.
7.10.3 Analysis of the data

One difficulty that emerged during the analysis of the questionnaire data was the number of open-ended questions left blank by teachers. This made it difficult to determine whether teachers had not completed the open ended question because of a lack of time or energy or whether they had not answered it because they had nothing to say. For the purposes of analysis blank responses were interpreted as the teacher having no comment to make. Despite this difficulty, the inclusion of the open questions did allow some unanticipated answers to be taken into account. In addition, the open-ended questions also provided some detailed information regarding the complex process of teacher practice, something that would have been difficult to capture through the use of closed questions alone.

During analysis there were also difficulties associated with the use of a Likert Scale. It was initially anticipated that comparing teacher ratings in 2007 and 2008 would be quite straightforward. In practice however, many ratings were just one point different to the previous year, making the interpretation of the data difficult. For example, if a teacher provided a rating of 1 in 2007 and a rating of 2 in 2008 it was difficult to determine whether this actually represented a shift in perception, understanding or practice or whether it simply reflected the teacher’s mood or the amount of thought given to the response on that particular occasion. Larger changes in ratings were easier to understand and interpret. It is possible that the use of a three point rating scale would have provided data that was easier to compare over a 12 month period although clearly this would not have been as sensitive to change as the 5 point scale.

7.11 Reflections on the procedure used during the interviews

The follow up interviews did provide more in depth information regarding teacher perceptions of the SVOR as well as gathering further information regarding the stage at which teachers were at in terms of their own development. Despite this, and following a period of reflection, numerous ways in which the interviews could have been improved emerged.
7.11.1 Number and timing of the interviews

The two major problems, with regard to the interviews, related to the small number of interviews that were carried out and the timing of these interviews. As a result of not wanting to simultaneously overload teachers with interviews and questionnaires there was a time lapse between the completion of the questionnaires in 2008 and the follow up interviews in 2009. Ideally these interviews would have been carried out soon after the completion of the questionnaires, however, in practice this was not feasible. Severe staff shortages within the EPS meant that priority had to be given to case work in schools thus reducing the time available to carry out research. The first available time to carry out the follow up interviews was June 2009, nearly 12 months after the completion of the questionnaires. Obviously this gave rise to the possibility of teachers having changed their practice again, with those reporting to be using the SVOR in 2008 having stopped using it or those not using the SVOR having started to use it. Having carried out the interviews this was found not to be a major issue, at least in the case of those interviewed. It could however have been a potential problem.

The number of teachers interviewed was also smaller than ideal. I had planned to interview one teacher from each school reporting to have changed their practice and one teacher from each school reporting no change in their practice. This was possible in three of the schools, however one teacher in each of the two remaining schools was absent due to illness on the scheduled interview date. Time, both in terms of re-arranging the interviews and analysing the data, resulted in these interviews not being rescheduled. As such, only nine interviews were carried out. If time and resources were not an issue, the interviews would have been carried out differently. Twenty interviews involving 4 teachers in each school (2 reporting to have changed their practice and 2 reporting no changes in practice) would have enabled more information, regarding the contexts and mechanisms operating for individuals, to have been gathered. Alternatively all of the teachers working within either one or two of the schools could have been interviewed and data analysed. This may have possibly provided more interesting results, but did not fit in quite as well with the research questions set out prior to the study.
7.11.2 Influence/role of the interviewer

As a result of the training being delivered by the researcher, the follow-up interviews would, ideally, have been carried out by someone else. This would have reduced the potential difficulty of ‘impression management,’ whereby the responses provided were given because they were either considered to be socially or professionally acceptable, rather than accurate (Oppenheim, 1992). Additionally, it is possible that evaluative cues were present during interactions throughout the interview and may have also impacted upon the responses given. An independent person conducting the interviews may have eliminated some/all of these difficulties, however, financially this was not a realistic option.

Similarly, as part of the interview process involved the joint identification of themes, there was a possibility of the views and constructs of the researcher influencing the themes identified. Throughout the interview process the researcher was highly aware of this fact and tried hard not to influence the teacher’s decisions however, it was almost impossible to completely eliminate this from the study. It was also difficult to ensure that the data collected during previous interviews did not impact upon the way in which subsequent data was viewed and interpreted. In order to eliminate this it would have been necessary for different people to interview each teacher. Clearly this was not practical and would have resulted in a lack of consistency between interviews, which could have accounted for any differences found.

7.11.3 Structure of the interviews

The interview was structured in such a way that teachers were asked to sort statements in terms of the extent to which they were applicable to them before identifying themes and ranking these themes (or statements that did not fit into a theme). On reflection, asking teachers to rank each statement before asking them to identify themes would have made the analysis of the data more straightforward. This would have also allowed consideration to be given to finer elements than those identified by broad themes.
There were also issues with the statements themselves. A smaller number of statements would have allowed for more discussion regarding each statement with a laddering technique (Hinkle, 1965) similar to that used in Personal Construct Psychology being used to encourage teachers to reflect on why they had placed each statement into a particular category. This would possibly have enabled more valid, and certainly more in-depth, information to have been collected. The wording of some statements was also an issue. Some of the statements used were quite detailed in order to try and provide the teacher with enough information to make an informed decision. On reflection however, a small number of the statements were too broad, meaning that the analysis of them was quite difficult. For example one statement refers to a teacher having a good understanding of the SVOR and its two components of word recognition and language comprehension. Some teachers may have had a good understanding of the word recognition component but not the language comprehension component. The way that the statements were written did not allow for this. Given the fact that the teachers were considering these statements within the context of an interview any instances where the statements may have been confusing could be discussed. As such this was not a major issue although more specific statements would have been useful when analysing the data.

7.12 Reflections on the training element of this study and how the findings of this study relate to theories in the area of staff development.

The training element of this study could be criticised for appearing rather minimal and could have been significantly improved. The purpose of the training delivered by myself was twofold. I aimed to use this initial session as a catalyst to stimulate teacher consideration and conversation as well as suggesting another use for the SVOR i.e. the identification of literacy learning needs. Despite the minimalist, and far from ideal, nature of the initial training, 67% of those teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice during the completion of the 2008 questionnaires, attributed this change to the training delivered by myself. This finding was established by considering teacher responses to question 15 on the 2008 questionnaire, which asked teachers to reflect on those factors that had prompted them to change their practice. It can therefore be concluded that in some cases, the training delivered was successful in achieving the goal of changing teacher practice.
This study therefore indicates that traditional outside agency led change can result in changes in practice. This research implies that the model of training used to facilitate staff development i.e. outside agency led change or teacher led change may not be the crucial factor in determining subsequent changes in teacher practice. The use of a realist approach has uncovered a whole range of individual circumstances that could be viewed as more powerful in influencing subsequent changes in practice. This study, even though comprising very simple, outside agency led change, does provide some support for this approach as it did result in some teachers changing their practice despite the well publicised criticisms of it (Fullan and Stiegelbauer, 1991; Wright 1993; Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002; Burbank and Kauchak, 2003). This research poses the question of whether the debates regarding the most appropriate models of staff development are in fact, to some extent, misguided. A more detailed analysis of why changes in practice occur, or fail to occur, for individuals may be more useful that considering the advantages and disadvantages of overarching approaches.

This model of training did allow sufficient data to be gathered to address the research questions as it did result in some teachers incorporating the SVOR into their practice and others failing to do so. What is unclear is whether there would have been more changes in practice had an alternative/improved model of training been used. There are numerous ways in which the training element of this study could have been improved, given more time and resources, both on the part of the researcher and the teachers. The training provided did not incorporate the 5 fundamental components of staff development (theory presentation, demonstration, feedback, practice and coaching) identified by Joyce and Showers (1980) as being required for skills to be transferred into regular practice. All teachers participating in this study received the presentation of the theory, a demonstration of how the SVOR could be used to identify and subsequently address literacy learning needs and an opportunity to practice using the SVOR in order to identify the literacy learning needs of the children in their class during the first training session. Opportunities for feedback, both from the teachers to me and from me to the teachers, were provided during the initial training session, the follow up session and regular school visits. The crucial element of coaching, highlighted by Joyce and Showers, was not in place for teachers participating in this study. Clearly, it was not possible for the researcher to provide
coaching support for all 46 teachers who completed the initial questionnaire as time did not permit for this. Instead, an attempt was made to provide some, limited level of support for a small number of teachers. The only way to achieve this was for those teachers requesting consultations regarding the literacy needs of a child in their class to receive ‘support’ in the form of ongoing consultations with regard to specific children. During these consultations, the SVOR was used as a framework to guide the process. Clearly, this was not ideal and the support offered did not constitute ‘coaching.’ If coaching support could have been provided for the teachers participating in this study then maybe a higher proportion of teachers would have gone on to incorporate the SVOR into their practice.

Another improvement to the training would have been to establish professional learning communities either within or across schools. The establishment of such groups, and the facilitation of half termly meetings would have provided opportunities for teachers to critically share and interrogate their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented and growth-promoting way (McREL, 2003, Seashore et al. 2003). Establishing this type of forum may have helped to sustain any momentum, helped teachers through any challenges and would have been feasible to organise. This would have been a significant improvement to the training element of this study.

This research has also highlighted the very specific nature of the context of individual teachers, even those working within the same school. As a result it is suggested that, individual teachers view information presented, and changes suggested, differently. These differences in perception may not be a result of the actual strategy/approach being introduced influencing a teacher’s view, as suggested by Driscoll and Stevens (1985), but rather their personal circumstances at the time. This would fit well with the findings of Calabrese, 2002, Duke 2004 and Zimmerman 2006 who all suggest that rather than a teacher’s attitude to the approach being introduced, it is a teacher’s attitude to the process of change that determines whether or not that change will be acted upon. The findings of this research could be viewed as improving our understanding of those underlying factors that are likely to influence an individual’s attitude towards the process of change.
Teachers reporting to have incorporated the SVOR into their practice seemed to recognise its impact in terms of improving child outcomes but did not appear overly concerned about fully understanding the model or truly believing in it before applying it to their practice. Therefore this finding supports the model of staff development proposed by Guskey (1986). Interestingly those teachers reporting no changes in their practice also reported good levels of understanding of, and belief in, the SVOR as a model. This is in contrast to the views of Clark and Peterson (1986); Fang (1996); Greenberg and Baron (2000) and Calabrese (2002) who suggest that this would have gone on to influence a change in practice. These findings have resulted in the proposal of a cyclical, rather than linear, model of teacher development, outlined in Figure 9.

Despite the significant weaknesses of the training element of this study, there were a small number of positives in relation to the training model used. The training was linked to a new Government initiative and extended the use of a current the Government strategy, it was not therefore presented as addressing a current deficit in teacher practice. As such this training was not open to the criticisms associated with deficit models of teacher development (Howey and Joyce, 1978; Wood and Thompson, 1980; Guskey, 1986; Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002; Arikan, 2006). Similarly this research used the dynamics of the LA to frame the development activity thus making it relevant to the teacher and grounded in context, as suggested by Griffin (1987) and Duncombe and Armour (2004). Other positives of the training model used were that it did not foster dependency on external expertise and rather than being prescriptive, gave teachers flexibility in terms of developing a way of using the framework that suited them, as advocated by Denny (2005). This flexibility was clearly evident in the data gathered as some teachers used the SVOR as a way of making sense of the knowledge that they already had about children, others used it as a framework within which to view standardised scores obtained from formal assessments, while others used it as a way of grouping children.
7.13 Consideration of how the SVOR, as used by teachers in this study, fits with existing guidelines, theories and practice.

The use of the SVOR fits with some of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The SVOR provides teachers with the skills that Ehri (1999) and Riley (2006) suggest that they need in order to assess the literacy needs of children. The SVOR framework, coupled with the follow up strategies, can be perceived as providing teachers with the following:

- knowledge of the reading process (in particular an understanding of the psychological processes involved)
- knowledge about teaching methods and how these facilitate certain aspects of the reading process
- a framework to guide their observations of the child when reading
- a framework that allows teachers to identify the processes that readers are using and those that they have difficulty with.

Although the SVOR can be seen as providing teachers with a framework to guide their thinking, it does fail to take into account the more socio-cultural perspective of literacy development. Consequently the SVOR fails to address the issues highlighted by Luke (1993) and Lankshear and Knobel (2002). The SVOR could, however be viewed as providing a much more culturally sensitive tool than many standardised assessments, as it allows daily observations of the child in a range of contexts to inform decisions regarding their literacy learning needs. The framework provided by the SVOR also allows schools to use any materials that they consider to be more culturally sensitive, and therefore appropriate, to either the population of the school, or specific children. These materials can then be used as the basis for information gathering about the child’s literacy needs and subsequently understood within the SVOR framework. This use of the SVOR is also in keeping with Johnston and Costello’s (2006) view of literacy being a social process as it allows teachers to use their daily observations of children in different contexts, as well as information gathered through discussions with others, in order to understand a child’s literacy development.
The SVOR is also compatible with both summative and formative assessments. The SVOR enables teachers to engage in formative assessment practices such as noticing, representing and responding to children’s literate behaviours and rendering them meaningful for particular purposes and audiences (Johnston and Rogers, 2001). In addition, the framework provided by the SVOR can also be used to provide contextualised diagnostic information, in order to develop appropriate teaching programmes and interventions (Dockrell and McShane, 1993). As noted previously, the SVOR also allows teachers to make use of summative, standardised, assessment data when considering the 2 essential skills of listening comprehension and word recognition. Through combining summative and formative assessments in this way, the SVOR could also provide the basis for a comprehensive school wide early literacy assessment system. The SVOR can be used as a framework that enables teachers to screen, monitor and measure student outcomes in the area of literacy learning, whilst acting as a catalyst for further, more detailed assessments when necessary. These components are all consistent with those identified by Kame'enui (2002).

The link between the identification of needs and subsequent intervention is crucial in meeting any need. It was hoped that if teachers used the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs then they may go on to use this information to inform interventions. Unfortunately the data gathered in relation to this area was minimal as it was not the primary focus for this study. An additional question on the questionnaire, or the inclusion of some statements in the interviews, referring specifically to the SVOR informing interventions, would have been a useful addition.

When answering an open-ended question on the questionnaire, asking what teachers would do if they were concerned about a child’s literacy development, few teachers spontaneously referred to their use of the SVOR to inform interventions. More teachers did however refer to the use of the SVOR to target interventions when responding to a closed question asking specifically about their use of the SVOR. Those teachers who did report using the SVOR to identify literacy learning needs did comment on this process enabling them to target interventions more precisely in order to ensure that a child’s specific needs were met. Given that teachers were provided with a range of strategies to address any needs identified using the SVOR
framework, it is slightly disappointing that more teachers either did not make use of this, or that the questions within the questionnaire/interview process, did not explicitly refer to this. One possible application of the SVOR within schools is its use as the basis for a whole school provision map focusing specifically on literacy. This would firmly place the SVOR within the intervention, rather than identification, arena and clearly make a link between these two key areas. This link would also ensure that information gathered using the SVOR is not simply used for reporting and/or accountability purposes but that it is used to improve outcomes for children.

7.14 Summary

This chapter has outlined the main findings of this study in relation to the research questions and reflected upon each separate element of this research. All aspects of this study could have been improved, particularly the training element. If I were to repeat this study, the training component would be much more comprehensive, encouraging more active participation from the teachers themselves and providing more follow up support, possibly in the form of establishing a ‘professional learning community.’

Despite its weaknesses, this study has provided an insight into the perceived ‘usefulness’ of the SVOR as a framework to aid in the identification of literacy learning needs. In addition, it has also been possible to identify for whom, and in what circumstances, the SVOR resulted in changes in practice. More generally, factors that facilitated teachers incorporating the SVOR into their practice, as well as those acting as barriers, have been identified (Figures 14 and 15).

The final chapter of this thesis summarises the key findings of this study before considering the implications of these findings.
CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter will summarise the key findings in relation to the research questions. The main conclusions drawn from this study will also be outlined. Following a reflection on the use of a realist approach, this thesis will conclude by considering the implications of this study, focusing on the following areas:

- Implications for the identification of literacy learning needs and the utility of the SVOR
- Implications for future training/staff development
- Implications for further research
- Implication for Educational Psychologists

8.2 Key findings in relation to the research questions and main conclusions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH QUESTION</th>
<th>KEY FINDING(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the ways in which teachers identify literacy learning needs change following the introduction of the SVOR?</td>
<td>There was a statistically significant increase in the number of teachers reporting to use the SVOR. The SVOR was used alongside other methods thus should be perceived as providing a framework that allows teachers to collate information already held and/or structure their thinking. There was also a slight increase in the number of teachers reporting that they would undertake further assessment themselves in order to clarify the nature of a child’s literacy needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways did teachers use the SVOR between 2007-2009?</td>
<td>Teachers used the SVOR to identify literacy needs, to inform their understanding of literacy learning, to target interventions and to group children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH QUESTION</td>
<td>KEY FINDING(S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>In what ways do teachers perceive the SVOR to be a useful tool in the identification of literacy leaning needs?</td>
<td>Teachers primarily perceived the SVOR to be useful because it was simple, easy to use and gave a quick visual reference. Other reasons included the SVOR providing a framework to help teachers conceptualise literacy as well as the SVOR giving a framework to distinguish between children with differing needs (i.e. word recognition or language comprehension). Some teachers also perceived the SVOR to provide a self evaluation tool, thus ensuring an understanding of the literacy needs of all the children in their class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways does the SVOR trigger (or fail to trigger) changes in teacher practice?</td>
<td>The SVOR triggered changes in practice due to it providing a framework/tool to structure thinking and practice as well as providing a topic of conversation. Other triggers resulting in a change in practice included teachers perceiving benefits in terms of improved child outcomes, viewing the SVOR as complimenting existing practice and perceiving the SVOR as helping them to address their own current issues. The SVOR failed to trigger changes in practice when it was perceived as ‘nothing new,’ when teachers lacked confidence in the model or when teachers were particularly confident/comfortable with existing methods. The SVOR also failed to trigger changes in practice when teachers perceived a lack of time or when the introduction of the SVOR was one of many other changes for an individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what circumstances does the introduction of the SVOR effect a change in teacher practice?</td>
<td>The circumstances that resulted in the SVOR effecting a change in practice included; teachers perceiving the SVOR to be relevant to them thus meeting their current needs, a perceived supportive school ethos/management team, pressure from the LA and the perception of sufficient time to consider the SVOR. A period of sustained continuity for teachers, i.e. very few/no changes in role, including changes in year group taught and/or changes from class based to non class based roles and vice versa, were</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
also an important circumstance in effecting changes in practice for teachers in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is it possible to identify for whom the introduction of the SVOR results in changes in practice?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In this study teachers who were class based, had some experience but were not nearing retirement age and were able to link the SVOR to existing practice incorporated the SVOR into their practice. In addition, those who were not particularly confident in their understanding of, and/or ability to, identify literacy needs and those experiencing few changes in their career over the previous 12-24 months also tended to incorporate the SVOR into their practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In what ways can any changes in teacher practice (or failures to change) in this study be explained in terms of the context-mechanism-outcome configurations used realist research?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See Figures 16 and 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33: Key findings in relation to the Research Questions.

In conclusion this study indicates that, for a range of reasons, the SVOR is perceived by primary teachers as providing a useful framework to aid the identification of literacy learning needs. The impact of key contextual changes during this study such as the delegation of funding for literacy difficulties to schools, a reduction in central support services, the introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy and school based changes such as a new Headteacher, differing roles and responsibilities and the changing practice of colleagues can not be underestimated. However, given the findings of this study it would seem appropriate to extend this application of the SVOR to a wider range of schools.

This study has also identified for whom and in what circumstances the SVOR, when introduced via INSET, is incorporated into practice. These findings highlight the very personal nature of change and the individual factors that contribute to the eventual use of, or failure to use, the SVOR. More generally, the main factors found to
contribute to teachers, in this study, incorporating changes into their practice are outlined in Figure 14. These can be summarised as; whole school factors (resources, supportive leadership etc), within teacher factors (experience, links to strengths etc), non-school/teacher based factors (an external event, an Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED), LA influence etc), the tool being introduced (perceived impact on practice, degree of familiarity etc) and the usefulness of the tool in addressing the teacher’s own need(s). Factors acting as barriers to change were also identified and are outlined in Figure 15. These can be summarised as; the individual teacher’s perception of the SVOR (nothing new, lack of guidance, no links to existing practice etc), whole school factors (staff turnover, new Headteacher, not an existing school priority etc), factors that maintain current ways of working (confidence in current methods, lack of time etc) and personal factors (experience, emotional response to change etc).

8.3 Reflection on the use of a realist approach

A realist approach seems to provide a good overarching framework for research within the complex system of a school. A realist research approach is flexible, allowing for the use of various methodologies; interviews, questionnaires, focus groups etc. This flexibility increases the utility of the realist approach, both within and beyond education. Realist research reframes the questions traditionally asked during research. The questions asked through realist approaches could be perceived as being more valuable as they ask ‘why’ changes occur, rather than simply ‘if’ changes occur. Re-framing research questions in this way seems to result in a deeper understanding of situations than is obtained through the use of other, more traditional, methodologies.

Reframing the focus of research in this way has associated difficulties. Attempts to evaluate the impact of one change in a system as complex as a school is difficult. Realist research however does allow a more detailed picture of the varying contexts, mechanisms and outcomes to be developed than traditional research methodologies. It is questionable whether all of the mechanisms and contexts operating within a school system would ever be recognised during a study, a problem noted by Crabbe
and Leroy (2008). The fact that schools are constantly changing and adapting makes this goal even more unlikely still. Even when/if these factors are recognised it was found that identifying generative causal relationships between contexts, mechanisms and outcomes, and distinguishing those factors that were the most important, was extremely difficult. Others using a realist approach have encountered similar difficulties (Marchal, Dedzo and Kegals, 2010). On some occasions, it was also difficult to distinguish the effect of context and intervention. For example, in the case of this study it was difficult to distinguish between whether it was the intervention (the introduction of the SVOR as a tool to aid the identification of literacy learning needs) or the context (working within a large primary school with a class based SENCO) that resulted in some teachers in one school going on to incorporate the SVOR into their practice.

The main difficulty that I can envisage, having used a realist approach, is the undertaking of this type of research without having any insider knowledge relating to the contexts within which people are working. This may limit the applicability of a realist approach. This conclusion is similar to that of Blamey and Mackenzie (2007) who noted that it is difficult to determine the impact of something if you have no knowledge of the context in which it has been introduced. Interestingly Blamey and Mackenzie extend this argument further still suggesting that the distance between evaluators and ‘implementers’ has resulted in a lack of knowledge regarding intervention theories. They go on to argue that the preoccupation in traditional models of research/evaluation regarding objectivity may have ultimately contributed to the limitations of such approaches. In this respect the approach offered by realist research may provide a refreshing new perspective on an area such as staff development that, despite a lot of research, seems to have progressed little over the past 20 years.

It is clear that the use of a realist approach can generate rich and detailed information. However, as suggested by Marchal, Dedzo and Kegals (2010), more research using realist approaches, particularly within the field of education, will be necessary in order to determine whether potential difficulties can be overcome.
8.4 Implications for the identification of literacy learning needs and the utility of the SVOR

The ways in which the SVOR were used in this study are discussed in relation to current theories regarding literacy in section 7.13. Although these findings only relate to a small sample and so are not generalisable, they do clearly show that the SVOR is regarded as useful by some teachers. This has implications for promoting the SVOR as a framework to help teachers identify literacy learning needs. This use of the SVOR would seem particularly relevant within the current climate of delegated budgets and reductions in central support services. The SVOR does provide a framework to help teachers/schools fulfil the function of assessment and identification for themselves.

If the SVOR is to be promoted across the borough it is important that it is consistent with existing guidelines, theories and practice. The SVOR is compatible with current research and Government guidelines as it is the model contained within the Primary Framework for Literacy (2007). This study has shown that rather than simply underpinning a teacher’s understanding of reading, the use of the SVOR can be applied to the identification of literacy learning so that the model directly informs teacher practice as well as understanding.

The findings of this study suggest that the SVOR is a tool that would benefit a wider range of teachers than just those involved in this research. Based on this, it is suggested that the SVOR should be used by Educational Psychologists as a tool to help guide teachers’ thinking in relation to literacy learning needs and the identification of these needs. The SVOR could be used during individual consultation with teachers as well as for training purposes. In addition to being useful to EPs it is also likely that the SVOR, as a framework to guide the identification of literacy needs, may also be useful for other services, such as the specialist teaching service and school improvement service. Therefore another implication is that the findings of this research are disseminated to the relevant services so that they can use it to inform their practice. As the SVOR is perceived as useful by primary teachers it is possible that the SVOR would also provide a useful framework for staff in other settings,
notably special schools (both primary and secondary) and some secondary schools for use with Year 7 and 8 pupils struggling to read.

The utility of the SVOR in terms of formulating interventions requires further consideration, although comments made by teachers during this study indicate that this is a natural progression, which some teachers have made independent of support.

8.5 Implications for future training/staff development

The findings of this research are explored in relation to theories of staff development in section 7.12. These findings do have implications in terms of the future delivery of training, although it is recognised that these findings are only based on a small sample of teachers. When members of the Educational Psychology Service, or indeed other LA colleagues, are delivering training for teachers with the aim of effecting a change in practice, this study suggests that the following factors need to be considered in order to try and maximise the effectiveness of the training.

The subject matter of the training and/or the change being introduced is made relevant to the needs of the teacher.

In order to achieve this the personal benefits of the change need be highlighted to, and/or reflected on, by the teacher. In addition, teachers need to be encouraged to make links between the new strategies/approaches, their current practice and the benefits that any subsequent change would have for them personally. The findings of this study suggest that, in general, if a teacher perceives something as being useful to them and their current role/situation, they will find the time to incorporate it into their practice.

Encouraging teachers to commit to the use of the new strategy.

Asking teachers, in writing, whether they intended to incorporate the SVOR into their practice seemed to act as a catalyst for change, thus confirming the findings of Stallings (1989). Teachers reporting that they were going to incorporate the SVOR into their practice at the end of the first training session were much more likely to go on to achieve this than those who did not (refer to section 5.5.3 for details). This type of question could easily be added to evaluation forms completed following training.
Highlighting the effect on outcomes for children

No hard data on pupil progress was gathered during this study due to the large number of extraneous variables that could have accounted for any changes in literacy attainments. Despite this, the majority of those teachers who had incorporated the SVOR into their practice had done so because of their perceptions/beliefs that it would ultimately improve outcomes for the children. Highlighting the benefits of any changes in terms of child outcomes seemed to be key to promoting changes in practice. Therefore this should explicitly form part of any future training delivered. This is also in line with the recommendations of the Lamb Inquiry (2010).

The context within which training is delivered

Consideration needs to be given to the context within which training is delivered. For example if the training is being delivered in a school with low levels of staff morale and/or the leadership within the school is generally viewed as unsupportive then, according to the findings of this study, the likelihood of change is low. This may indicate that prior work targeting these issues needs to take place before training aimed at changing teacher practice can be received positively by staff.

Pressure from Outside Agencies

Pressure placed on schools/teachers by external agencies, for example the Local Authority or OFSTED, seems to help, rather than hinder, teachers in changing their practice. As such, this places Educational Psychologists in an ideal position to facilitate change.

The specificity of individual contexts

This research has highlighted the very specific nature of the context of individual teachers, including those working within the same school. This makes the planning of training for groups of teachers, even within the same school, extremely challenging. These factors need to be taken into account and support built in where appropriate to address individual teacher need.
8.6 Implications for further research

This study has several implications for future research. It would be interesting to follow up the teachers in the ‘no change’ group who reported that they had a good understanding of the SVOR, and believed in it as a model, in 12-18 months time. This would establish whether changes in understanding and belief did, in the longer term, result in changes in practice. Follow up could also be carried out with those teachers who did change their practice but reported little change in their beliefs relating to models of reading, in order to determine whether their beliefs ultimately resulted in them returning to previously used methods.

The role of confidence, in terms of facilitating or hindering teacher change, would provide another interesting area for future research. This study indicates that high levels of teacher confidence can either encourage teachers to continue with the methods giving them confidence or result in teachers having the confidence to change their practice. It would be interesting to try and unpick this further to establish, more precisely, the role of confidence in changing teacher practice.

Having developed a graduated version of the SVOR, in response to some Key Stage 2 teachers reporting that the SVOR was more relevant to beginner readers, it would be interesting to evaluate this. This would provide more detailed information in relation to whether or not the SVOR is helpful in the identification of literacy learning needs in Key Stage 2 or, whether a different model is necessary.

8.7 Implications for Educational Psychologists

This research has a number of implications for the practice of Educational Psychologists. The first set of implications centre on EP work carried out in relation to literacy difficulties. The SVOR provides a model that bridges the gap between research, theory and practice. As a result of the SVOR being outlined in both the Rose report and the Primary Framework for Literacy, it provides a common language that can be used by both teachers and EP’s. As such the SVOR can be used to discuss
the literary needs of either children or groups of children as well as the identification of literacy needs at the level of the individual, group or whole school. In addition, the SVOR could also be used by EPs when explaining literacy difficulties to parents. The SVOR, both as a model and a framework for identifying literacy needs, should be used by EPs as a reference point to guide practice during consultations and training.

This research also has implications for EP practice in relation to teacher development/training. This study does provide some evidence for traditional INSET approaches, suggesting that such approaches are capable of effecting change in practice for some teachers. This research has also identified a list of factors that need to be incorporated into any training delivered. These include ensuring that the training is made relevant, highlighting the effect of any new approach/method in terms of improving child outcomes and encouraging teachers to commit to trying any new approaches in writing before the end of the training session. In addition, this research also suggests that in order to maximise the effectiveness of any training the whole school context and the individual contexts of teachers within the school, need to be considered prior to the delivery of training. This would enable any factors that may present as barriers to change to be addressed prior to the delivery of training thus hopefully making it more effective.

The final implications for EP practice centre around the use of realist approaches. Realist research provides a useful methodology for EPs and has the potential to be applied to a range of work. Clearly the use of a realist approach fits very well with certain aspects of the EP role, including the evaluation of small projects and interventions and the planning/evaluation of training. There are also other, more wide ranging, implications for the use of realist research within Educational Psychology. Matthews (2010) has already reflected on the potential of realist research to inform consultation. Matthew’s suggests that through ‘realist consultation’ a consultees interpretations of a problem can be reformulated in terms of the mechanisms that affect the problem situation and how they act in particular contexts for the young person in question. This approach then goes on to involve teachers either focusing on maintaining the mechanisms and contexts that are proving helpful, developing new
mechanisms that may prove helpful, blocking the mechanisms that are proving unhelpful and/or developing the consultees understanding of these mechanisms, their properties and the contexts in which they operate. As a result of conducting this research it has become clear that developing C-M-O configurations with teachers during consultations would provide a useful framework within which to work. Developing the consultation record sheets used by Educational Psychologists to reflect a realist approach may help teachers to better understand the situations/problems that they face. This type of approach would be particularly useful for difficult casework involving young people with complex needs.

The overall approach of realist research also has implications for work with parents, particularly when considering behavioural difficulties. By jointly discussing and developing various context, mechanism, outcome configurations, patterns may become apparent. These may enable the parent to recognise the particular contexts and mechanisms that result in the most significant difficulties. This process may then lead to the parent feeling empowered to develop, or identify, mechanisms to improve the situation. A review process could then allow the parent to refine any C-M-O configurations developed. Once the parents are familiar with this way of viewing a situation/difficulty they are equipped with a strategy that they can then apply to other difficulties as they arise. This will reduce reliance professionals and in some cases boost the confidence of parents.

Realist research could also provide a framework for the evaluation and development of Educational Psychology Services as well as the professional development and supervision of individual EPs. In times of Educational Psychology Services needing to prove that they provide ‘value for money,’ developing a more specific understanding of which EP practices have the most impact in which contexts may prove vital to the future of the profession. This process would enable services to be more targeted. Similarly, individual EPs could use a realist approach to guide their own personal practice. Reflection of daily work through the C-M-O framework would allow EPs to begin to test and refine theories of which interventions work for which children and in which circumstances. This process could potentially provide a structure for supervision sessions, focussing on issues such as when consultation, assessment, direct therapeutic work or training is effective and why.
This study has confirmed the views of many in the profession of Educational Psychology; that EPs have a lot to contribute to education, not only in the area of SEN, but also in terms of research and systemic school improvement initiatives. In a time of uncertainty for the profession this thesis also highlights that realist research may provide a useful framework to progress the profession.
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APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1: Pilot studies

Two pilot studies were carried out prior to this research. The first pilot study took place in October 2006 and involved two Year 3 teachers in separate schools. These teachers were briefly introduced to the simple view of reading and asked to place the names of the children in their class (by initial only) into the appropriate quadrant. Both teachers completed this exercise, reporting that they had found it both easy to complete and a useful process to undertake. Findings from this brief pilot study indicated that the two teachers had completed the task slightly differently (please refer to sheets entitled pilot 1a and pilot 1b). One teacher had simply placed each child in a quadrant (pilot 1a) whilst the other had placed the children along a scale ranging from severe difficulties to above average ability (pilot 1b). This way of recording provided much more information and therefore it was decided that teachers would be asked to complete the identification exercise in this way during the second pilot.

During the second pilot study a small group discussion was simulated. This took place in a school in December 2006 and involved the Year 2 teacher, Year 3 teacher (who was also the school’s assessment and literacy co-ordinator) and the Special Needs Co-ordinator. We met as a small group and I initially outlined the simple view of reading. Following this the Year 2 and Year 3 teachers were asked to place the children in their class into the quadrants using a scale ranging from the most severe difficulties to the above average. Once again staff completed this activity in approximately 10 minutes and reported finding it very useful. (please refer to the sheets entitled pilot 2a and pilot 2b). Indeed one of the teachers (pilot 2b) found it so interesting that she extended this activity by grouping (achieved by drawing a circle around) those children in the same literacy groups together. This teacher was extremely interested to see how her selection of literacy groups compared to her consideration of the children in light of the simple view of reading. This resulted in her questioning whether or not she could group the children in a different, perhaps more appropriate, way. Following this we moved on to the second part of the group exercise and made a note of the strategies currently used in school to address the needs of children in the various quadrants (please refer to pilot 2c). Staff found this relatively easy to do as it simply required them to reflect on their own practice. As a consequence of this finding I thought that it would make more sense to ask teachers to consider not only strategies that they are currently using, but also those that they are aware of but not currently using. Follow up discussion with the teachers indicated that they felt very strongly that the development of a resource pack outlining the strategies used by a range of schools would provide a useful, quick and easy to use reference resource that could provide suggestions as to how the needs of children, identified using the simple view of reading, could be addressed. See Appendix 4.
PILOT 2b
APPENDIX 2: A full chronology of the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2007</td>
<td>This research was outlined to both the Headteachers and SENCo’s in all of the primary schools for whom I was the Educational Psychologist. Schools were asked if they were interested in participating in the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2007</td>
<td>Six schools responded positively stating that they would like to be involved in the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May – July 2007</td>
<td>I led a whole school training session (approximately 2 hours) during a regular staff meeting slot at each school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A: 2.07.07</td>
<td>The outline of this staff meeting was as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B: 10.05.07</td>
<td>• Background information, introduction to the research and the aims of the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C: 27.06.07</td>
<td>• Staff completed a questionnaire designed to gather information regarding their views of the identification of literacy learning needs as well as their understanding / use of the Searchlights model and SVOR model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D: 08.05.07</td>
<td>• I introduced the teaching staff to the simple view of reading, the terms used within it, the evidence base for it and how it could be used to identify literacy learning needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E: 15.05.07</td>
<td>• Following a discussion of ‘the simple view of reading’ staff were asked to locate all of the children in their class on this model as demonstrated (Appendix 1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F: 11.06.07</td>
<td>• Teachers were asked to reflect, in writing, on the process and the usefulness of the SVOR in the identification of literacy learning needs. Teachers were asked to record their thoughts in writing to ensure that their analysis of data was accurate and not reliant on my minuting a group discussion. This methodology also meant that dominant teachers were not able to take over in a group discussion as everyone was given equal opportunity to express their views.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Small groups of teachers worked collaboratively in order to identify how they currently/might address the needs of children in each quadrant of ‘the simple view of reading.’ This information was recorded on one large blank outline of the ‘simple view of reading.’ (Example in Appendix 1, Pilot 2c).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outline of the next stage of the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2007</td>
<td>The information provided by the teachers during the collaborative group activity was used to develop a resource package. This outlined a range of strategies that could be used to address literacy difficulties identified using the simple view of reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – November 2007</td>
<td>I attended another regular staff meeting in each school at the start of the new academic year when each teacher had a new cohort of children. The outline of this staff meeting was as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A:</td>
<td>08.10.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B:</td>
<td>24.09.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C:</td>
<td>14.11.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D:</td>
<td>18.09.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E:</td>
<td>24.09.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F:</td>
<td>27.11.07 (cancelled by school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2007-June 2008</td>
<td>During my regular visits to participating schools, and during consultations concerning individual children, any opportunities to reinforce/promote the use of the SVOR were taken. More specifically these included:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>19.09.07 - consultation re Y2 child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.10.07, 06.11.07, 01.02.08 - consultations re Y3 child (teacher 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>06.11.07, 22.11.07 – consultation re Y4 child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07.03.09 – consultation re Y4 child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24.06.08 – consultation re Y1 child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>01.11.07 and 11.03.08 – consultation re Y2 child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| School C          | 02.10.07, 20.11.07 – consultations re Y1 child  
|                  | 02.10.07, 03.03.08, 09.06.08 – consultations re Y1 child  
|                  | 08.07.07, 11.06.08 – consultations re Y3 child  
|                  | (teacher 9)  
|                  | 30.01.08 – consultation re Y2 child  
|                  | 14.05.08 – consultation re Y4 child  
| School D          | 24.09.07, 08.11.07, 30.06.08, 08.01.09 – consultations re Y4-6 child (teacher 2)  
|                  | 24.11.08 consultation re Y6 child  
|                  | 23.11.08 consultation re Y3 child  
| School E          | 05.10.07, 01.05.08 – consultations re Y3 child  
|                  | 01.07.08 – consultation re Y2 child (teacher 6)  
|                  | 01.07.08 – consultation re Y2 child (teacher 6)  
|                  | 01.04.08 – consultation re Y6 child  
| June 2008         | SENCo’s in each of the 6 schools were provided with questionnaires for all staff to complete. This was the same questionnaire as that completed in June 2007 with some added questions relating to the use of the SVOR over the past 12 months as well as individual reflections considering why changes in practice had, or had not, occurred.  
| July 2008         | Completed questionnaires returned  
| August – December 2008 | Questionnaire results analysed and teachers who had changed their practice as well as those who had not changed their practice were identified. Results from School F eliminated from the study due to a poor return rate.  
| June – July 2009  | In depth follow up interviews with a total of 11 teachers planned (1 pilot and 2 teachers in each school, one who had reported changes in their practice and one who had not). These interviews were based on realist research principles and were therefore focussed on trying to understand and explain in what circumstances, and for whom, the introduction of the simple view of reading facilitates changes in teacher practice.  

Teacher 1 (School C): 23.06.09  
Teacher 2 (School D): 03.07.09  
Teacher 3 (School D): 03.07.09  
Teacher 4 (School B): 03.07.09  
Teacher 5 (School E): 07.07.09
| Teacher 6  |  |  |
| (School E): |  |  |
| 08.07.09    |  |  |

**Teacher 7**  
(School A):  
09.07.09

**Teacher 8**  
(School C):  
16.07.09

**Teacher 9**  
(School C):  
21.07.09

Planned but cancelled by teachers:  
School A:  
17.07.09  
School B:  
15.07.09

August 2009  
Analysis of interview data
Identifying children who have literacy difficulties

Sue Cornwell
Educational Psychologist

Outline of the session

• Why are we doing this?
• Reflection on current practice
• Introduction of the Simple View of Reading
• Activity using the Simple View of Reading
• Reflection on this activity
• Group discussion re: how we address the needs of children with literacy difficulties
• What next?
Why???

• Part of a research project for Doctorate

• No intention to ‘sell’ the Simple View of reading suggested by the Government but simply elicit teacher views of the usefulness of this model in the identification of children with literacy difficulties.

• Information will be used in writing up thesis but will remain anonymous

ACTIVITY

Please complete the questionnaire asking about your current views and practice in relation to identifying the needs of pupils who have literacy difficulties

The Simple View of Reading

• Recommended in the ‘Rose Report’ (Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading) DfES, 2006

• Incorporates up to date research that was not available when NLS was written

• Despite reading being a complex activity it has 2 essential components; decoding and comprehension
Simple View of Reading
Word Recognition

• ‘Word Recognition’ – the ability to recognise words presented singly out of context and the process of using phonics to recognise words.

Three essential components:

– Ability to segment spoken words into their constituent phonemes
– Knowledge of grapheme to phoneme correspondence
– Ability to lend phonemes into words

Language Comprehension

• ‘Language Comprehension’ – the process by which word information, sentences and discourse are interpreted: a common process underlying the comprehension of both oral and written language

• Reading comprehension is dependent upon oral language comprehension and therefore this needs to be fostered in schools
Evidence for the Simple View of Reading

• Different factors predict word reading and comprehension ability
• There are children that have word recognition difficulties in the absence of language comprehension difficulties
• There are children who have language comprehension difficulties in the absence of word recognition difficulties

How can the Simple View of Reading be useful for teachers?

• Encourages us expect that not all children will show equal performance/progress in each area
• Provides the possibility of separately assessing performance/progress in each area
• Makes it explicit that different kinds of teaching are needed to develop word recognition and language comprehension skills

Why has it replaced the Searchlights Model?

• More helpful for beginner readers
• Searchlights was based on what constitutes a ‘skilled reader’ and fails to address how a beginner reader progresses to become a skilled reader
• Not effective at illustrating where the intensity of the ‘searchlights’ should fall at the different stages of learning to read
ACTIVITY

Use the framework of the ‘Simple View of reading’ to identify the literacy learning needs of the children in your class

Complete the written questions that ask you to reflect on this process

How do you currently address the literacy needs of children?

• For each quadrant of the ‘Simple View of Reading’ note down all of the strategies / programmes that you currently use or those that you are aware of but don’t use

WHAT NEXT??

• Collate information about strategies used and disseminate in September along with a reminder of the use of the Simple View of Reading to identify literacy difficulties

• Elicit view of identifying and addressing literacy difficulties in Summer 2008

THANKYOU
APPENDIX 4: The resource poster given to teachers to help them address any literacy difficulties identified using the SVOR
**APPENDIX 5: An outline of each school participating in the project.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number on roll</th>
<th>%SEN children</th>
<th>Description of ethnic minority numbers in the school (based on OFSTED report)</th>
<th>OfSted Grading</th>
<th>Y6 SATS results – % attaining L4+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>SAP/ST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>99% of children from ethnic minority heritage</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>17% of children learning English as a second language. In younger classes 50% of pupils from ethnic minority heritage</td>
<td>Good - 2005 (but in receipt of intensive support from the LA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>Most pupils are of White British heritage, no pupils from an ethnic minority.</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>Great majority White British heritage with a small number of children from other ethnic backgrounds</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>1/5 from ethnic minority heritage with 38 children at the early stages of learning English</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>Very small number from ethnic minority groups.</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 6: Questionnaire pre and post piloting procedure

Questionnaire before it was piloted

1. How confident are you in identifying the literacy learning needs of the children in your class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. In your opinion does the identification of literacy learning needs form a central part of the role of the class-teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. In your opinion should the identification of literacy learning needs be carried out by the school SENCo?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. In your opinion should the identification of literacy learning needs be carried out by an outside agency?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely Confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. How do you currently identify the literacy learning needs of the pupils in your class? Do you use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standardised assessments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal assessment of classwork</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. How would you rate your understanding of the Searchlights Model (as described in the National Literacy Strategy)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No idea</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Does the Searchlights model, as outlined in the National Literacy Strategy, inform your practice with regard to identifying the literacy needs of children in your class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, all of time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, never</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. In what ways does the Searchlights model help you to identify children with literacy learning needs?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
9. How would you rate your understanding of the Simple View of reading (as described in the Rose report?)

Very good

No idea

1 2 3 4 5

10. Does the Simple View of Reading, as outlined in the Rose Report, inform your practice with regard to identifying the literacy needs of children in your class?

Yes, all of time

No never

1 2 3 4 5

11. In what ways does the Simple View of Reading help you to identify children with literacy learning needs?

12. You have a child in your class and you are concerned about their progress in reading. They are not moving through the reading scheme at the same rate as their peers but seem to be fine in other areas of the curriculum. What steps would you take in order to explore your concerns further?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire
Revised questionnaire following the piloting procedure (changes highlighted in red)

Questionnaire

1. How confident are you in identifying the literacy learning needs of the children in your class?

Extremely Confident

Not at all confident

1  2  3  4  5

2. In your opinion does the initial identification of literacy learning needs form a central part of the role of the class-teacher?

Definitely

Definitely not

1  2  3  4  5

3. In your opinion does the clarification of literacy learning needs form a central part of the role of the class-teacher?

Definitely

Definitely not

1  2  3  4  5

4. In your opinion should the initial identification of literacy learning needs be carried out by the school SENCo?

Definitely

Definitely not

1  2  3  4  5

5. In your opinion should the clarification of literacy learning needs be carried out by the school SENCo?

Definitely

Definitely not

1  2  3  4  5
6. In your opinion should the initial identification of literacy learning needs be carried out by an outside agency?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Definitely not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1          | 2             | 3 | 4 | 5

7. In your opinion should the clarification of literacy learning needs be carried out by an outside agency?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Definitely not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1          | 2             | 3 | 4 | 5

8. How do you currently identify the literacy learning needs of the pupils in your class? Do you use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Infrequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standardised assessments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal assessment of classwork</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>____________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. How would you rate your understanding of the Searchlights Model (as described in the National Literacy Strategy)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>No idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

244
10. Does the Searchlights model, as outlined in the National Literacy Strategy, inform your practice with regard to identifying the literacy needs of children in your class?

Yes, all of time

No never

1 2 3 4 5

11. In what ways does the Searchlights model help you to identify children with literacy learning needs?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

12. How would you rate your understanding of the Simple View of reading (as described in the Rose report?)

Very good

No idea

1 2 3 4 5

13. Does the Simple View of Reading, as outlined in the Rose Report, inform your practice with regard to identifying the literacy needs of children in your class?

Yes, all of time

No never

1 2 3 4 5

14. In what ways does the Simple View of Reading help you to identify children with literacy learning needs?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
12. You have a child in your class and you are concerned about their progress in reading. They are not moving through the reading scheme at the same rate as their peers but seem to be fine in other areas of the curriculum. What steps would you take in order to explore your concerns further?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire
APPENDIX 7: 2008 QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Year group taught 08-09 (this year)</th>
<th>Year group taught 07-08 (last year)</th>
<th>Your initials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This information is only required so that your responses can be compared to your responses from last year.

1. How confident are you in identifying the literacy learning needs of the children in your class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extremely confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. In your opinion does the initial identification of literacy learning needs form a central part of the role of the class-teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Definitely not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. In your opinion does the clarification of literacy learning needs form a central part of the role of the class-teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Definitely not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. In your opinion should the initial identification of literacy learning needs be carried out by the school SENCo?

Definitely

1 2 3 4

Definitely not

5

5. In your opinion should the clarification of literacy learning needs be carried out by the school SENCo?

Definitely

1 2 3 4

Definitely not

5

6. In your opinion should the initial identification of literacy learning needs by carried out by an outside agency?

Definitely

1 2 3 4

Definitely not

5

7. In your opinion should the clarification of literacy learning needs by carried out by an outside agency?

Definitely

1 2 3 4

Definitely not

5

8. How do you currently identify the literacy learning needs of the pupils in your class? Do you use:

Standardised assessments

Frequently

Infrequently

1 2 3 4 5

Observations

1 2 3 4 5

Informal assessment of classwork

1 2 3 4 5
Other (please specify)

________________________________________________________________________

1  2  3  4  5

________________________________________________________________________

1  2  3  4  5

________________________________________________________________________

1  2  3  4  5

9. How would you rate your understanding of the Searchlights Model (as described in the National Literacy Strategy, 1998)?

Very good

No idea

1  2  3  4  5

10. Does the Searchlights model, as outlined in the National Literacy Strategy (1998) inform your practice with regard to identifying the literacy needs of children in your class?

Yes, all of time

No never

1  2  3  4  5

11. In what ways does the Searchlights model help you to identify children with literacy learning needs?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
12. How would you rate your understanding of the Simple View of Reading (as described in the Rose report/Primary Framework for Literacy)?

Very good

No idea

1 2 3 4 5

13. Does the Simple View of Reading, as outlined in the Rose Report/Primary Framework for Literacy, inform your practice with regard to identifying the literacy needs of children in your class?

Yes, all of time

No never

1 2 3 4 5

14. In what ways does the Simple View of Reading help you to identify children with literacy learning needs?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

15. If you have incorporated the Simple View of Reading into your practice to help identify literacy learning needs what prompted you to do this?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

16. If you have not incorporated the Simple View of Reading into your practice to help identify literacy learning needs, what prompted you to continue with alternative methods?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
17. You have a child in your class and you are concerned about their progress in reading. They are not moving through the reading scheme at the same rate as their peers but seem to be fine in other areas of the curriculum. What steps would you take in order to explore your concerns further?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
APPENDIX 8: Statements used during the interviews

1. It is part of my job to identify literacy learning needs
2. Having follow up resources to use alongside the SVOR was helpful and encouraged me to incorporate this into my practice
3. I teach few children with literacy learning needs
4. It is easier for less experienced teachers to incorporate new methods into their practice
5. It is easier for experienced teachers to incorporate new methods into their practice
6. I have a good understanding of the SVOR and its two components of language comprehension and word recognition
7. The SVOR provides a framework that gives me an overview of the literacy needs of the children in my class
8. I have a preference for a visual learning style
9. I have a very good understanding of the literacy needs of the children in my class and do not rely on standardised assessment data
10. There are too many, statutory/Government recommended/whole school, changes in education for me to consider changing my practice in any other way
11. The SVOR helps me to target interventions
12. The SVOR has changed/added to my classroom practice when identifying literacy learning needs
13. The SVOR has resulted in a change in child learning outcomes as a result of the clearer identification of needs and the subsequent targeting of interventions
14. The SVOR has changed the way that I conceptualise the process of reading and/or added to my knowledge of the skills that children need to learn in order to read.
15. I believe that the SVOR is more useful than the Searchlights model
16. Over the past 12 months I have spoken to colleagues in my school about the SVOR
17. I have adapted the SVOR so that it better suits me and my practice.

18. Over the past 12 months I have spoken to colleagues in my school about the usefulness and advantages of using the SVOR and encouraged others to try using it.

19. Over the past 12 months I have spoken to colleagues from other schools about the SVOR.

20. I feel most comfortable using methods that I am already familiar with.

21. The introduction of new methods results in me feeling deskilled.

22. The identification of literacy learning needs is more important in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2.

23. In my opinion there is good staff morale throughout the school.

24. The Headteacher encourages me to change and therefore develop my teaching through the use of methods that I believe in rather than those that are imposed on me by others.

25. I feel vulnerable in school and so feel that I am unable to change my practice.

26. I feel that I have the support of the Headteacher which gives me the confidence to try new methods and strategies/take risks and learn from any mistakes that I make.

27. It does not matter if I do not identify literacy learning needs as someone else will do it for me.

28. I do not have either the time or energy to consider and then implement new practices into my teaching.

29. I feel confident enough in teaching the year group that I am teaching to consider implementing new methods into my practice.

30. Within a small school it is fine to expect a person other than the class teacher to identify literacy learning needs.
APPENDIX 9: An example of the open coding process used to analyse data gathered from the open ended questions contained within the questionnaires and interview

Detail regarding the themes identified during the open coding process and the statements comprising each theme.

**Theme: Direct reference to SVOR**
'It helps me to identify whether children need to develop their word recognition or listening comprehension skills and then consider how to help' (School B)
'It makes it easier to group children according to word reading and listening comprehension skills' (School C)
‘It helps me to identify children with poor understanding and poor reading ability’ (School E)
‘It made me realise that some children were 2b readers and were in the same reading group and perhaps should be in different groups because their reading needs are different. Plotting children in the graph helped me to see this’ (School D).
‘It is easy to identify comprehension difficulties but some children may have weaknesses in decoding skills. Children may also have good decoding and poor comprehension skills’ (School C).

Theme: Reference to the SVOR helping with the identification of difficulties and/or informing next steps.
‘It breaks reading down further, making it easier to identify what specifically a child’s needs are, leading to more specific interventions’ (School D)
‘It identifies skills already possessed and those that need developing’ (School B)
‘Identifies specific needs and strategies for support’ (School E)
‘Helps to identify learning needs’ (School A)
‘Helps to identify areas of learning that need intervention and the specific intervention that is needed’ (School B)
‘Rather than helping to identify children it helps to determine the next steps in order to address needs’ (School D)
‘When used alongside other methods the bullet pointed features (the activities listed in resource poster, Appendix 4) provide further aid to identification and points you in the right direction for remedial work (School C)
‘Identifies a clear understanding of phonics and steps not known’ (School A)

Theme: The SVOR providing a clear, simple and visual reference.
‘It highlights children more visually and more easily than other methods’ (School B)
‘It is clear and simple to use’ (School C)
‘It allows clearer identification’ (School C)
‘It is simple and easy to read’ (School C)

Theme: Helps to group children
‘It helps to group children according to what they need to improve’ (School C)
‘It helps with initial assessments and the subsequent grouping/re-grouping of children’ (School B)
‘It helps to group children’ (School D)

Theme: No idea/left blank
‘Not really familiar with this view’ (School E)
‘I have not really used it, I use standardised assessments instead’ (School E)
4 ‘do not know’ responses
4 ‘do not use it’ responses
8 blank responses
APPENDIX 10: Reflections sheet

Please take a moment to think about the use of the Simple View of Reading to identify literacy difficulties.

Was it easy to complete?

Does it provide you with useful information?

Do you think that it provides additional information to that already collected? If so what?

Do you think that you will incorporate this, along with the methods to address literacy difficulties, into your practice?

Any other comments?
APPENDIX 11: Adapted SVOR model

**Good Language Comprehension Processes**

This child is likely to struggle to decode words in text. This may be the result of difficulties with retaining sight vocabulary, phonological difficulties, a limited knowledge of grapheme to phoneme correspondence or a difficulty applying phonic knowledge because of blending or segmenting difficulties. This child is likely to experience difficulties understanding both spoken and written language at the level of recall and inference.

**Poor Word Recognition Processes**

This child is likely to struggle to decode words in text. This may be the result of difficulties with retaining sight vocabulary, phonological difficulties, a limited knowledge of grapheme to phoneme correspondence or a difficulty applying phonic knowledge because of blending or segmenting difficulties. This child will demonstrate a good understanding of both spoken and written language.

**Good Word Recognition Processes**

This child is likely to be a fluent and accurate reader and demonstrate a good understanding of both spoken and written language.

**Poor Language Comprehension Processes**

This child is likely to have good word recognition skills including a good sight vocabulary including a good sight vocabulary and the ability to successfully apply phonic knowledge. This child is likely to experience difficulties understanding both spoken and written language at the level of recall and inference.
APPENDIX 12: An adapted SVOR framework showing a graduated response for KS1 and KS2.
APPENDIX 13: Teacher responses to the two open ended questions asked at the end of the interview.

Do you have any further training needs in relation to the SVOR?

I have no individual needs but there may be a need for further whole school training (Teacher 2)

I have no further training needs, I simply need more time to apply the knowledge that I have (Teacher 3).

It may be useful to revisit the SVOR in the light of our current push on intervention (Teacher 5)

I would value some support to help link strategies that I am currently using e.g. letters and sounds to the SVOR (Teacher 6)

I think that it would be useful to emphasise the usefulness of the SVOR in terms of tracking the progress of children (Teacher 6)

It is self explanatory and so I do not need any more training, however I do think that it would be useful to revisit the model regularly, especially with the intake of new staff. (Teacher 8)

What role do you perceive the school EP to have in relation to supporting the introduction of any future initiatives?

I think that it is helpful for someone outside of the school to help introduce changes because it is easier to ask questions, it provides a new voice/outlook, changes can be introduced by specialists in that particular area and they don’t just tell you what to do but involve you in the process (Teacher 1)

It would be useful to help put systems into place (Teacher 2)

On a needs driven basis, it would be useful for you (the EP) to help support initiatives designed to address the needs/issues of groups of children (Teacher 7)

The EP would be useful in terms of helping with the introduction of whole school intervention strategies that could be carried out by support staff or in a training role for support staff (Teacher 5).
**APPENDIX 14: Summary of teacher responses to an open question requiring them to reflect on the factors contributing to them either incorporating the SVOR into their practice or failing to do so.**

This open-ended question was asked both at the start and end of the interview process. Summaries of the responses given to both questions are outlined below.

The initial responses given by the 5 teachers comprising those selected for interview on the basis of questionnaire responses reporting changes in practice between 2007 and 2008 are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Factors identified as contributing to the incorporation of the SVOR into practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1 (School C)</td>
<td>No response elicited in direct response to this question. <em>(However later in the interview a change in practice was reported to have occurred due to the impact that it had on child outcomes).</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teacher 2 (School D)    | • Useful for informing planning, especially in terms of the strategies provided.  
                          | • In my role of literacy co-ordinator I already had a good overview of interventions to use for different groups of children however the SVOR provided a good framework to guide the thinking of other, may be less experienced, staff. |
| Teacher 4 (School B)    | • The needs of the class at the time that the SVOR was introduced made it particularly relevant and helpful in teasing apart the literacy needs of the children, especially EA children.  
                          | • Being encouraged by the literacy co-ordinator to use the SVOR as a framework to inform practice. |
| Teacher 5 (School E)    | • It related well to the needs of the children that I was teaching and helped me to understand the needs of those children who were not ‘run of the mill.’  
                          | • The provision of ideas and interventions to address literacy needs once identified. |
| Teacher 8 (School C)    | • The provision of follow up resources that were familiar and therefore did not alienate me. |
Enabled me to utilise the my knowledge of the children’s literacy skills that I have rather than relying on levels/standardised assessment data.

Being a more experienced teacher and therefore needing to pay less attention to everyday tasks which freed up time to focus on the SVOR and introducing it to my practice.

Other whole school initiatives (e.g. letters and sounds) complimenting the use of the SVOR and allowing needs identified using the SVOR to be addressed.

Provided me with a framework to ‘channel my vision’ and be more specific when directing support to individual children.

The initial responses given by the 4 teachers comprising those selected for interview on the basis of questionnaire responses reporting no change in practice between 2007 and 2008 are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Factors identified as contributing to teachers not incorporating the SVOR into practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3 (School D)</td>
<td>Already very confident that literacy needs are identified and that provision mapping ensures that these needs are met as well as highlighting those children accessing too many literacy interventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It was difficult to take the SVOR forward with interventions as it was not clear what steps should be taken.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Generally teachers have too much to do and therefore although the SVOR seemed useful initially useful, other things took over and the SVOR just became yet another thing.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At the time when the SVOR was introduced I had a challenging class and therefore I had other priorities such as behaviour management.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>As a result of being a fairly inexperienced teacher it was difficult to incorporate changes into my practice because I was still learning the curriculum and how the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher 6 (School E)

- Limited amounts of time resulting in it being difficult to develop and adapt the SVOR to suit my practice, implement changes into my practice.
- My role in school has changed over the past 2 years, moving from Year 2, to being non-class based to Nursery. When the SVOR was introduced I was non-class based and therefore had few opportunities to incorporate the SVOR into my practice as I needed to follow what the class teacher was doing.
- Other imposed changed seemed to take priority including the new Deputy Headteacher focussing on reading and changing the way that literacy was taught and introducing letters and sounds and teaching children that were grouped on the basis of their literacy skills.

Teacher 7 (School A)

- The SVOR provided nothing new. Work focussing on language comprehension is already embedded in practice due to the school comprising a high number of EAL children, as I have been interested in reading for a number of years I am already familiar with the content of the SVOR it is simply presented in a slightly different way and having developed my own frameworks relating to literacy over the years that work for me.
- Changes in individual circumstances, having taught 2 different year groups as well as being non-class based over the last 2 years.
- Whole school factors, including a new Headteacher with different priorities (science, ICT, maths) and a large amount of team teaching/swapping classes making it difficult to identify literacy needs and introduce strategies to facilitate this process due to not spending a large amount of time with the same cohort of children.
Teacher 9 (School C)  • Change in role from class based to more of a management role resulting in no involvement in planning for individuals or the opportunity to follow thing through  • The job of the teacher does not lend itself to reflection. Thinking about how children learn is more of a luxury than an everyday occurrence.  • Changes in practice require the investment of both time and effort resulting in them often being relegated to the bottom of the ‘to do’ list.  • It was not taken up as a whole school issue and therefore reflected individual personal interest. If it had been taken up as a whole school issue there may have been increased levels of motivation and time could have been provided for staff during staff meetings to reflect on and develop the use of the SVOR throughout the school.

At the end of the interview, teachers were given another opportunity to reflect on any other factors, not already discussed during the interview, that may have prompted them to incorporate the SVOR into their practice. These responses are outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Final factors identified as prompting changes in teacher practice/considered important for facilitating changes in practice in general</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1 (School C)</td>
<td>• If it would benefit the children then I would incorporate the change into my practice regardless of anything else that was going on</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Teacher 2 (School D) | • Subject knowledge, teachers need some background subject knowledge in order to be able to identify their own weaknesses and understand new methods.  
  • Helping to understand and address the needs of the one-off child (relevance). |
| Teacher 4 (School B) | • Changes are best made when they are forced in order to respond to a need e.g. a change in intake  
  • Having one person enthusiastic about the change within a school to drive the |
Pressure from an outside agency or Local Authority helps to improve and change practice in targeted areas. Changes are hindered by high levels of staff turnover.

Teacher 5 (School E)
- Receiving support when beginning to use a new strategy helps (clarified as referring to both the provision of resources and time for conversations relating to successes and difficulties encountered.

Teacher 8 (School C)
- Arranging networking opportunities both within school and between schools would help to embed changes into practice by allowing the sharing of ideas and helping teacher to see the bigger picture.
- The importance allocated to the change by the teacher is a crucial factor
- Changes are often driven by what OFSTED are looking for rather than the needs of the children, therefore if the new strategy is consistent with OFSTED inspections then it is more likely to be incorporated into practice.

At the end of the interview, teachers were given another opportunity to reflect on any other factors, not already discussed during the interview, that may have contributed to them not having incorporated the SVOR into their practice. These responses are outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Final factors identified as contributing to teachers not changing their practice/considered as barriers to change in general</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teacher 3 (School D) | • Too many changes and therefore ‘good’ ideas get lost.  
• Lack of time to think about new methods and consider how to use them in your own practice. |
| Teacher 6 (School E) | • The structure of the curriculum and the lack of flexibility within it  
• A lack of resources: money/ materials/ people.  
• How the method fits with training |
| Teacher 7 (School A) | • Change is hindered by most methods and strategies being developed by non-educationalists.  
|                      | • Too many changes  
|                      | • Lack of resources |
| Teacher 9 (School C) | • The personality of the teacher results in them either resisting change or embracing it  
|                      | • Lack of time (it is an excuse but a good excuse in teaching!) |
APPENDIX 15: Teacher ratings for each of the statements presented

The following tables outline the extent to which each teacher agreed with each statement presented during the interview phase. Teachers in the ‘change’ sample are in red whilst teachers in the ‘no change’ sample are in black.

**STATEMENT 1: It is part of my job to identify literacy learning needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
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**STATEMENT 2: Having follow up resources to use alongside the SVOR was helpful and encouraged me to incorporate this into my practice**

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
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**STATEMENT 3: I teach few children with literacy learning needs**

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
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STATEMENT 4: It is easier for less experienced teachers to incorporate new methods into their practice

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
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<td>Teacher 5</td>
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STATEMENT 5: It is easier for experienced teachers to incorporate new methods into their practice

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STATEMENT 6: I have a good understanding of the SVOR and its two components of language comprehension and word recognition

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
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<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
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STATEMENT 7: The SVOR provides a framework that gives me an overview of the literacy needs of the children in my class

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STATEMENT 8: I have a preference for a visual learning style

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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<td>Teacher 7</td>
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</table>

Teacher 8 was unsure as to their preferred learning style and is therefore omitted from this table.

STATEMENT 9: I have a very good understanding of the literacy needs of the children in my class and do not rely on standardised assessment data

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<thead>
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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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STATEMENT 10: There are too many, statutory/Government recommended/whole school, changes in education for me to consider changing my practice in any other way

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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STATEMENT 11: The SVOR helps me to target interventions

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<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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<td>Teacher 5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT 12: The SVOR has changed/added to my classroom practice when identifying literacy learning needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 2</th>
<th>Teacher 1</th>
<th>Teacher 3</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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<td>Do not agree at all</td>
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STATEMENT 13: The SVOR has resulted in a change in child learning outcomes as a result of the clearer identification of needs and the subsequent targeting of interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 2</th>
<th>Teacher 1</th>
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<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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<td>Do not agree at all</td>
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STATEMENT 14: The SVOR has changed the way that I conceptualise the process of reading and/or added to my knowledge of the skills that children need to learn in order to read.

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<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 5</th>
<th>Teacher 1</th>
<th>Teacher 6</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 8</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Teacher 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT 15: I believe that the SVOR is more useful than the Searchlights model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Teacher 4 reported that the models complimented each other.

STATEMENT 16: Over the past 12 months I have spoken to colleagues in my school about the SVOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 17: I have adapted the SVOR so that it better suits me and my practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT 18: Over the past 12 months I have spoken to colleagues in my school about the usefulness and advantages of using the SVOR and encouraged other to try using it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 19: Over the past 12 months I have spoken to colleagues from other schools about the SVOR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 20: I feel most comfortable using methods that I am already familiar with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Agreement with Statement</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT 21: The introduction of new methods results in me feeling deskilled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 22: The identification of literacy learning needs is more important in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 23: In my opinion there is good staff morale throughout the school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 24: The Headteacher encourages me to change and therefore develop my teaching through the use of methods that I believe in rather than those that are imposed on me by others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
<th>Agree to a considerable extent</th>
<th>Agree to a moderate extent</th>
<th>Agree to a slight extent</th>
<th>Do not agree at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
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<td>Teacher 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT 25: I feel vulnerable in school and so feel that I am unable to change my practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
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<td>Teacher 5</td>
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<td>Teacher 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 26: I feel that I have the support of the Headteacher which gives me the confidence to try new methods and strategies/take risks and learn from any mistakes that I make.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 27: It does not matter if I do not identify literacy learning needs as someone else will do it for me.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a moderate extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a slight extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
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<td>Teacher 5</td>
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<td>Teacher 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STATEMENT 28: I do not have either the time or energy to consider and then implement new practices into my teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 29: I feel confident enough in teaching the year group that I am teaching to consider implementing new methods into my practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATEMENT 30: Within a small school it is fine to expect a person other than the class teacher to identify literacy learning needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree to a considerable extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teacher 7 felt that this statement was not applicable to them as they taught in a big school.*
APPENDIX 16: C-M-O configurations for Teachers 4 and 7.

Teacher 4 (School B)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>+</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>=</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Small school</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reported use of SVOR in practice due to its use in informing planning and interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* School receiving intensive support from the LA due to poor SATS results.</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reported improvement s in child outcomes as a result of using the SVOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively high numbers of children with SEN, including a number of international new arrivals and asylum seekers/refugees</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduced reliance on Outside Agency Support as measured by number of EP referrals made by the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perceived supportive Head teacher and SMT</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Belief that the identification of literacy learning needs is the role of the class teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Improved literacy attainments throughout the school resulting in the school no longer receiving support from the LA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* 2-3 years teaching experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Keen to use the SVOR to better understand some of the children in the teachers class at the time the SVOR was introduced.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Taught similar year groups whilst teaching (Y2/3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Pressure from the LA to improve literacy attainments throughout the school in order to ultimately improve Y6 SATS results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Number of children in class when SVOR introduced for whom it was difficult to determine their exact literacy needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* School SENCO who is also a specialist teacher and non-class based</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Teacher 7 (School A)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT</th>
<th>MECHANISM</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Large 2 form entry school.</td>
<td>- Introduction of SVOR as a tool to help identify children with literacy learning needs</td>
<td><strong>Some belief that the SVOR was more useful than the Searchlights model.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Poor catchment area</td>
<td>- Provision of follow-up materials consisting of strategies that could be used to address literacy learning needs identified using the SVOR</td>
<td><strong>Self reported good understanding of the SVOR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Relatively low numbers of children with SEN</td>
<td>- Introduction of the Primary Framework for Literacy by the DCSF</td>
<td><strong>No reported use of the SVOR in practice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* High numbers of children from ethnic minorities and for whom English is an additional language.</td>
<td>- EP consultations regarding a specific child during which reference was made to SVOR</td>
<td><strong>Continuation of previous methods used to identify and address literacy learning needs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* New, externally appointed Head.</td>
<td>- Whole school focus on other curriculum areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perception of an unsupportive management team who do not encourage changes in practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Perception of poor staff morale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Experienced teacher, close to retirement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Teaching in a school that uses a team teaching approach and therefore some teachers do not teach literacy at all.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Many changes in year group taught, over the past 2-3 years, including being non-class and teaching Y2 and 3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* No additional funding available for addressing literacy learning needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* School focus on improving ICT, science and maths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>