Evaluating a primary school programme aimed at increasing awareness of domestic abuse

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities-2011
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Abstract

Lynne Higgins, The University of Manchester. Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology (2011). 'Evaluating a primary school programme aimed at increasing awareness of domestic abuse'

This research focuses on an awareness raising programme for primary school children in relation to domestic abuse. This area of research was considered to be of value due to the prevalence of DA and the impact that witnessing domestic abuse has been shown to have on children. Findings from the 2008/2009 British Crime Survey (Coleman, Osborne, Kaiza & Roe, 2010) show that more than one in four women (28%) and around one in six men (16%) have experienced domestic abuse since they were 16. Considerable research exists which suggests that witnessing domestic abuse can have a profound impact on a child’s life, development and psychological well being (Dodd, 2009).

This research evaluates a pilot of a six week programme aimed at increasing awareness of domestic abuse in primary schools. There currently exists a gap in knowledge about the effectiveness of small-scale classroom based domestic abuse awareness raising programmes delivered in primary schools. Previous research has focused on larger scale projects often involving external agencies (Home Office, 2005) and work in secondary schools (Bell and Stanley, 2006).

The programme was co-delivered by the TEP and school staff to Year Five pupils in three primary schools within a local authority. Staff and pupil views were obtained through focus groups with pupils and semi-structured interviews with teaching staff. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data in order to answer questions about the programmes strengths and weaknesses; views about the involvement of a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP); and pupils’ understanding of domestic abuse. The findings suggest that staff and pupils thought the programme was valuable and improved children's knowledge of aspects of domestic abuse. The findings are discussed with reference to best practice and issues to consider in relation to the wider implementation and evaluation of the programme.
Declaration

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I would like to thank all the participants who took part in this research. I would also like to acknowledge those who supported the implementation of the programme.

I would like to thank my tutor who has provided support and advice throughout.

Thanks also to my educational psychology colleagues, tutors and doctoral friends for their patience, support and advice.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family and friends for their emotional support and encouragement without which I would not have been able to complete this research.
## List of Acronyms

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>BCS</td>
<td>British Crime Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPS</td>
<td>British Psychological Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAMHS</td>
<td>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service</td>
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<td>DA</td>
<td>Domestic Abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCSF</td>
<td>Department for Children, Schools and Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>DfE</td>
<td>Department for Education</td>
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<td>DfEE</td>
<td>Department for Education and Employment</td>
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<td>DfES</td>
<td>Department for Education and Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECM</td>
<td>Every Child Matters</td>
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<td>EP</td>
<td>Educational Psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPS</td>
<td>Educational Psychology Service</td>
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<td>HPC</td>
<td>Health Professionals Council</td>
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<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
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<td>NSPCC</td>
<td>National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children</td>
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<td>PSHE</td>
<td>Personal, Social Health and Economic Education</td>
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<td>PTSD</td>
<td>Post traumatic Stress Disorder</td>
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<td>SEAL</td>
<td>Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning</td>
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<td>TA</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
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<td>TEP</td>
<td>Trainee Educational Psychologist</td>
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<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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Introduction

I have chosen to conduct my research on the topic of domestic abuse (DA). This choice was made due to a number of reasons. As part of my first year of training the topic of DA was covered and I was shocked by the incidence rate and potential consequences experienced by children living in this environment.

Estimating the prevalence of DA is a very difficult process due to a number of reasons. Historically DA is under-reported due to a reluctance for these problems to be seen as a public issue (Jaffe, Wolfe & Wilson, 1990). Furthermore, in many cases there is risk associated with making a disclosure (Herman, 1992). Despite these factors there exists similar reported rates of DA across developed countries (Bedi & Goddard, 2007).

In Britain one of the most recent estimates of the prevalence of DA can be provided by the 2008/2009 British Crime Survey (BCS) (Coleman, Osborne, Kaiza & Roe, 2010). Furthermore, this is perhaps the most accurate measurement due to the fact that respondents are able to self-report and remain anonymous. Findings from the 2008/2009 BCS (Coleman et al. 2010) show that more than one in four women (28%) and around one in six men (16%) have experienced DA since they were 16. This equates to roughly 4.5 million female victims and 2.6 million male victims of DA. Furthermore, DA commonly occurs on a repeat basis with 73% of reports of DA accounting for repeat victimisation (Kershaw, Nicholas & Walker, 2008). However, caution must be taken when interpreting these findings as it is possible to argue that victims may be less likely to report one-off incidents.

Although the most prevalent form of DA is, arguably, emotional and psychological abuse this type of abuse is the most difficult to evidence and measure (Devaney, 2010). In contrast physical abuse, with domestic homicide at the extreme end, is easier to evidence. Statistics suggest that in the UK on average two women a week are killed by a partner or former
partner (Department of Health, 2005) and that roughly one third of all
murders can be attributed to domestic homicide (Metropolitan Police, 2003).

There is also an increasing body of literature about the impact on those who
are exposed to DA; most frequently children. The term 'exposed' is used to
describe those who live in households where DA occurs and are thus
experiencing DA without being direct victims. Research suggests that half of
those who have been victims of DA in the last year were living with children
under 16 (Mirrlees-Black, 1999). It is estimated that up to 1,000,000 children
have been exposed to DA in the UK (UNICEF, 2006). Having children may
actually increase DA as Walby and Allen (2004) found that the risk of DA
nearly doubles if there are children present in the household. Furthermore,
there is a link between DA and being pregnant, figures suggest that 30% of
DA starts in pregnancy and that between four and nine women in every 100
will be abused during their pregnancy and/or after the birth (Department of
Health 2005: Para 2.4).

This, coupled with an increasing body of research to suggest that witnessing
such abuse can have a profound impact on a child’s life, development and
psychological well being (Dodd, 2009), leads to the belief that domestic DA
should be seen as a crucial issue for Educational Psychologists (EPs). This
argument is supported by the British Psychological Society (BPS). Within the
Child Protection Portfolio (2007) it is argued that due to psychologists
understanding of child development they are in a particularly relevant position
to identify interactions that affect the health and development of children.
Furthermore, they identify psychologists as providing a unique contribution to
child protection due to their understanding of family systems/caring
environments including DA.

Further support for the need for work with young people comes from
evidence that children are not only indirectly affected by DA through
exposure but also directly within their early relationships. In a survey of 16-21
year olds, conducted in 2006 by End Violence Against Women, they found
that 40% of young women know girls whose boyfriends have hit them and the
same number, 40%, know girls whose boyfriends have coerced them to have sex.

Preventative response to DA is considered to be a priority by the local authority (LA) I am currently working within with a high number of referrals involving DA. Figures from the year 2009/2010 show that there were 16,820 reports of DA to the city police of which over a quarter involved children (**City Council, Safeguarding Training Materials, 2010a). These figures are similar to Birmingham which has a population twice the size (Hargreaves, 2010). Furthermore, in a large percentage of critical incidents within the authority DA has been a factor. Specifically the authority wishes to ensure that every school is provided with the materials necessary to carry out awareness-raising education.

For this reason a team of professionals including the lead Educational Psychologist (EP) designed a DA package which was made available to all secondary schools in 2007. However, within primary schools a similar programme was not produced by the team due to time/financial constraints. The team, instead, made the decision to use a pre-existing programme which is published by Birmingham and Solihull Women’s Aid; ‘The Domestic Violence Awareness Manual for use with children and young people’.

This has provided a research opportunity. The EP Service did not plan to involve EPs in the delivery of the programme. However, as a Trainee EP (TEP) I was provided with an opportunity to co-deliver the programme alongside school staff. This ensured the programme was delivered within a number of schools as well as providing the authority with information about its effectiveness and possible recommendations about its implementation.
Chapter One - Literature review

1.1 Section Outline

This chapter aims to review and analyse the available literature covering the topic of domestic abuse (DA). The definition of DA and its impact on direct victims will be explored. Recent statistics on prevalence will also be provided. The chapter will then focus on the indirect victims of DA, children. Psychological theories linked to witnessing DA will be discussed. The role of schools in educating children about DA will also be covered within this chapter with a specific focus on the effectiveness of current interventions. To conclude, the chapter will outline the research questions posed and detail how this research will add to the current knowledge base.

1.1.2 Literature Search Strategy

There are a variety of different categories of literature that have informed this study including official publications, research and evaluation reports, toolkits and theoretical overviews. Books, journals, government and local authority publications and the internet have all been utilised in the collation of information.

The specific literature search strategies employed are detailed within each section. The search strategy employed involved using key words to search the library catalogue at the University of Manchester, electronic databases and the internet for information relating to DA.

The identification of journal articles was conducted using the following databases; British Education Index (1975 to date), PsychInfo (1887 to date), Science Direct, EBSCO, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) and JSTOR (Journal Storage). Articles were considered if they were undertaken in the English language and were from peer-reviewed journals. Most recent literature, published within the last five years (2005-2010), was considered first. However, earlier studies were not disregarded and feature in the literature review.
The internet was used as a source of information. Consideration was made when evaluating websites as information provided on these sites is not peer-reviewed. The internet was used predominantly to search for information regarding statistics and research from government agencies. The internet provided access to official publications. The following sites were used within the literature review:

- The Department for Education- www.education.gov.uk
- The Department for Children, Schools and Families - www.dcsf.gov.uk (Decommissioned within the time period of this research)
- The office of National Statistic - www.statistics.gov.uk
- PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education ) Association website- www.pshe-association.org.uk
- Women's Aid- www.womensaid.org.uk

1.2 What is domestic abuse?
Within the literature there exist a large number of terms which are used to encapsulate what I will describe as 'domestic abuse', for example; interpersonal violence, wife abuse, wife battering, domestic violence and family violence. The perspective of the individual or the most current knowledge is often reflected within the chosen term.

The main difference in definition can be explained by one of two explanations. Firstly, there exists debate about what forms of abuse should be included within the definition. There are definitions that include all forms of abuse, for example, financial, emotional and sexual. In contrast other definitions omit these forms of abuse and make reference only to direct physical violence. The second debate is around the victims of abuse.

The phenomenon that I will describe as 'Domestic Abuse' was first brought to light by the 'battered women's' movement in the early seventies with the first publicised shelter established in England in 1971 (Tierney, 1982). Research then began to be conducted in the field predominantly be the social scientists Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz (Gelles, 1974; Straus, 1974; Straus,1979; Straus, Gelles & Steinmetz, 1980). At this stage the focus was on married
women as victims and the abuse as direct physical violence and thus the chosen term 'battered women' reflects this.

Kurz (1989) provides an overview of two of the key perspectives of DA during the early eighties; the feminist perspective and a family violence perspective.

From a family violence perspective the key component in explanations about DA is the family. Thus, they believe that all family members are capable of being both perpetrators and victims of violence (Kurz, 1989). Straus, Gelles and Steinmetz (1980) argue that there is a level of equality between husbands and wives but that when this does not exist violence is used by the most powerful of the two. Straus (1979, 1983) provides research which demonstrates a very similar level of violence with women as the perpetrators compared to men as perpetrators. Straus et al. (1980), Gelles (1985) and Gelles and Straus (1988) argue that there are three main causes. The first is the pressure placed on modern families. Secondly, violence is socially accepted as a means of resolving conflict, for example, media and fairytales. Thirdly, using physical force to punish children promotes violence thus they argue that individuals will be at an increased risk of becoming perpetrators of violence if they grow up within a violent family. This will be discussed in more detail within section 1.6.3.

In contrast, feminist literature places the importance of male-female relations as key. Feminist researchers criticised the methodology of research which suggested similar rates of DA towards men as women. Dobash and Dobash (1979) argued that the self-reporting scales used were so broad that they became meaningless; data such as whether the act was in self-defence, who was injured and who initiated the violence were not gathered. Furthermore, another criticism is that there may be gender differences in self-reporting. At the time of these publications the BCS (Hough & Mayhew, 1983) showed a much higher rate of violence towards women and this was cited by feminist researchers in their defence. Feminist literature stresses the importance of control stating that men use violence and other forms of abuse as a way of ensuring women comply with their wishes (Kurz, 1989). Feminist researchers argued that society has accepted this empowerment citing early laws such as
English common law which allowed the husband the right of "correction" of his wife. Furthermore, Dobash and Dobash (1979) claimed that women, and more specifically wives, were made 'appropriate victims' due to their lack of status and control.

Research which took place into the 1990's and later has tended to move away from such broad explanations of, and the reasons for, the existence of DA and has instead focused on distinctions between types and contexts of violence (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). Johnson and Ferraro (2000) distinguish between four types of DA; common couple violence (where violence occurs within the context of a specific argument), intimate terrorism (where violence is one tactic used within a general pattern of control), violent resistance (sometimes referred to as self-defence) and mutual violent control (where both partners are violent and controlling). These distinctions make reference to a range of forms of abuse, for example, emotional abuse is more likely to occur within intimate terrorism (Follingstad, Rutledge, Berg, Hause & Polek, 1990). Research has also moved away from the husband-wife relationship and has instead looked into dating and courtship (LLoyd & Emery, 2000), same-sex relationships (Renzetti & Miley, 1996) and co-habitation (Stet & Straus, 1990).

The issue of control is still considered key to our understanding of DA (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). However, whilst feminist researchers acknowledge that gender is a key factor the belief that DA can be explained by a patriarchal society is no longer held by all feminist researchers (Miller, 1996). Johnson and Ferraro (2000) state that whilst DA often occurs in order to gain some type of control there are again distinctions within the different types of DA. In common couple violence the control may relate to a very specific situation, for example, winning an argument. Whilst within intimate terrorism the control is likely to relate to a much broader context. Thus, in order to fully understand DA, we must assume that the dynamics and origins of the different types of control motives are also different.

This change in perspective about DA may also relate to the fact that DA was initially researched primarily by sociologists who sought to make conclusions
about society from their research into individual relationships. In contrast more recent research by psychologists such as Jacobson and Gottman (1998) sought to use the study of relationships to identify individual differences and their developmental roots.

Currently the most commonly used definition of DA and that used by the UK government is: ‘any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been in a relationship together, or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’ (Home Office 2005, p7). This definition reflects an understanding that DA can affect any individual regardless of their gender or relationship status. Furthermore, it highlights the many forms that abuse can take.

As demonstrated, the definition of DA is often dependent on the wider socio-political-economic context. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that the definition of DA has been discussed within the context of the current economic downturn. It is of concern that there has been discussion regarding narrowing the definition of DA to include only acts of physical violence (Hirsch, 2011). This is arguably closely linked to local authorities having reducing resources and a desire to protect them. The literature provided within this chapter illustrates that the consequences of DA are more far reaching than physical injury.

1.3 What is the impact of domestic abuse upon victims?

Whilst the physical signs of abuse are the easiest to evidence the literature suggests that there are other consequences of being a victim of DA. Caution again must be taken when making generalisations as the impact of different forms of DA will be very different. Furthermore, individual characteristics such as resiliency will impact on the extent to which the individual is affected.

Campbell (2002) provides a comprehensive overview of the impact DA can have on mental and physical health. At the most severe end of the physical spectrum is death. Research suggests that between 40% and 60% of murders in North America are committed by intimate partners (Brock &
Stenzel, 1999). Furthermore, the incidence of suicide is also higher when DA is occurring (Bergman & Brismar, 1991).

Other physical effects include chronic health problems such as headaches and back pain (Coker, Smith, Bethea, King & McKeown, 2000), fainting and seizures (McCaulley, Kern & Kolodner, 1995), gastrointestinal symptoms such as loss of appetite and diagnosed gastrointestinal disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome (Coker et al., 2000). Women who are the victims of DA are also at an increased risk of suffering gynaecological problems. It is hypothesised, though not directly measured, that this is as a result of forced sex (Campbell, 2002).

Golding (1999) provides a meta-analysis of studies which indicated that a consequence of being a victim of DA was mental health problems including depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Ratner (1993) found that women in abusive relationships had significantly more insomnia, anxiety and social dysfunction. Alcohol and drug abuse are also more common in women who are in abusive relationships (Ratner, 1993). Although, it is difficult to establish a causal link research does exist which suggests that alcohol and drug abuse were preceded by the DA (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996). Furthermore, it is arguable that women turn to drugs or alcohol to help them cope with the symptoms of PTSD (Campbell, 2002).

Most research which looks at the effects of DA on the victim focuses on adult relationships (Wiklund, Malmgren-Olssen, Bengs & Ohman, 2010). However, many of the factors associated with DA in adults are also present in adolescents who are victims of DA, for example, depression, eating disorders, sleeping difficulties and PTSD (Ackard, Eisenberg & Neumark-Sztainer, 2007; Ackard & Neumark-Sztainer, 2002) Negative educational outcomes and poorer school attachment are also evident in adolescents who are the victims of DA (Banyard & Cross, 2008).

1.4. A note on domestic abuse and gender
Within the context of this research the abused parent or carer is generally referred to as being female. This should not negate the experiences of a
significant number of male victims of DA; as stated previously research suggests one in six (Coleman et.al, 2010) men have experienced DA since they were 16. However, women are more likely to experience repeated or sustained episodes of emotional, physical and psychological abuse (Poole & Sterne, 2009). Furthermore, when the severity and range of abuse is considered women are significantly more victimised (Walby & Allen, 2004). This has been acknowledged within the preventative programme which this research will evaluate; the definition of DA provided to the children states that 'DA is more commonly done by men to women'. It is, however, important to remember that DA against men does occur and should be dealt with in the same manner as DA against a woman. Furthermore, it is important that preventative programmes are not perceived as having a negative attitude towards males; this point will be discussed in more detail in section 1.8.

### 1.5 The impact of domestic abuse on children

Over the past decade there has been a wealth of research published that focuses on children's experiences of DA. Furthermore, there is a growing body of research indicating that there is a causal relationship between exposure to DA and adverse outcomes for children (Goddard & Beddi, 2010). Evidence based research suggesting that witnessing abuse can be as detrimental as direct abuse is now informing policy. This is demonstrated by the fact that the definition of harm in the 1989 Children's Act was amended to include 'impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another' (Adoption and Children Act, 2002, s120).

It is important to state that DA does not affect every child in the same way and that in some cases witnessing DA appears to have little or no impact on the child. However, factors such as the length of time the child has been exposed, the nature of the abuse, the effects on the mother's mental health and the relationship with the abuser all have an effect on the extent to which children are influenced (Poole & Sterne, 2010). None the less, there is a growing evidence base to suggest that children who witness DA are at risk of becoming negatively affected in one or more of the following areas of development; physical, behavioural, emotional, social and cognitive.
1.5.1 Physical or biological:

There now exists strong evidence that children who witness DA are at a greater risk of experiencing direct physical and/or sexual abuse and neglect (Devaney, 2010). It is thought that this may be for a number of reasons. Firstly, when individuals are angry or violent they may be unable to discriminate between family members; secondly, adult victims may be less able to meet the needs of their children due to physical injury and/or poor mental health (see section 1.6.1) and; lastly, children may get in the way of the perpetrator of the abuse either accidentally or on purpose in an attempt to intervene (Devaney, 2010).

There is an increasing body of research evidencing a link between witnessing DA and the development of neurobiology and physiology. Saltzman, Holden and Holahan (2005) found that children who had witnessed DA had a higher resting heart rate compared to clinical controls suggesting these individuals have a heightened autonomic arousal. This will discussed in more detail within section 1.6.2.

There is also increasing evidence to suggest that DA can impact on foetal development. Increased levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, in the mother’s blood can have a toxic effect on newly formed brain cells even before a child is born. Raised levels of cortisol can result in poor foetal growth and can affect brain development (Quinlivan, 2000).

Research with mothers of children exposed to DA (McGee, 2000) indicated a higher reporting of their children's health problems such as asthma, eczema, eating problems and headaches. However, as this research was qualitative it is difficult to establish a causal effect. Furthermore, the research may be biased as it was not based on self-reporting but instead relied on the views of the mothers. However, English, Marshall and Stewart (2003) in a large scale study involving 261 children, found that DA had an impact on the health of caregivers and their interactions with their children. This in turn negatively impacted on the health of the children. This impact of attachment will be discussed in more detail in section 1.6.1.
There also exists longitudinal research which suggests that individuals who have witnessed DA are more likely to die early due to choosing lifestyles that undermine their well-being and engaging in health damaging behaviours such as smoking and drug taking (Brown et al., 2009).

1.5.2 Emotional and social

Fear and confusion are emotional reactions cited in the literature. Mullender, Hague, Inman, Kelly, Malos and Regan (2002) and McGee (2000) both conducted qualitative studies with children and their mothers which evidenced a high level of fear and attempts to understand the abusive behaviours. Within McGee’s study some of the children indicated a generalised fear of men and what they might do to them or their mothers. This is in accordance with research with children who have experienced direct abuse. Margolin and Gordis (2000) provide a review of literature in this area which suggests that children who are abused often experience difficulties in social relationships including relationships with their peers, caregivers and romantic partners.

Another emotion, frequently mentioned within the literature, which links closely with behaviour, is anger. Within qualitative studies children who have been interviewed, perhaps unsurprisingly, discuss feelings of anger towards the perpetrator of the abuse (Mullender et al., 2002). However, another object of anger cited within the literature is the victim of the abuse; Lemmey et al., (2001) obtained mothers’ perspectives about the effects of DA on their children and found that whilst less common than anger towards the abuser some mothers did perceive that their children were angry at them. However, caution must be taken as the research relied on mothers’ interpretations of how the child was feeling and not the children’s views. Mullender et al., (2002), interviewed 45 children who had lived with DA and found that only one identified with the abuser over time. Within the same research the children often made reference to feelings of confusion. It is possible that whilst the abuse was occurring children experienced confusion and anger simultaneously and thus were more likely to direct their anger in multiple ways, however, once they had left the household the feelings of confusion
may have reduced and thus they were more likely to direct their anger at only one source. Furthermore, once children have left the abusive environment they may feel guilty about having experienced anger towards the victim and be less likely to discuss this emotion.

Research also exists which shows a relationship between witnessing DA and anxiety and the behaviours associated with this emotion such as bed-wetting (Edleson, 1999; Maxwell & Maxwell, 2003, Adams, 2006). There is a strong link between fear and anxiety, however, they are often differentiated by the existence of an object, person or event in fear. Thus, it is arguable in some cases an initial fear of the perpetrator of the violence has generalised to a less specific anxiety. Anxiety is commonly a symptom of trauma; the process of moving from an initial fear to generalised anxiety will be discussed in detail in section 1.7.2.

Witnessing DA has also been linked to internalizing behaviours such as depression (Adams, 2006, Fantuzzo & Mohr, 1999). Sternberg et al. (1993) found that there was no difference in depression levels between those who had experienced direct abuse and those who had witnessed DA but that both scored higher than did comparison children. However, Meltzer, Doos, Vostanis, Fords and Goodman (2009) found that whilst witnessing DA increased the likelihood of meeting criteria for conduct disorders it was not independently associated with emotional disorders. Furthermore, this study is rare in that data about childhood psychopathology was sought and triangulated from both parents, children (aged between 11 to 16) and teachers. Questions specifically about DA were embedded within the section on PTSD.

Meltzer et al. (2009) argue that the reason their findings are different can be attributed to the fact that many studies rely on data gathered from high risk or clinical samples. However, Evans, Davies and DiLillo (2008) demonstrate in their meta-analysis that the settings from which samples are taken has little impact. This is also supported by an earlier meta-analysis conducted by Kitzman, Gaylord, Holt and Kenney (2003). This is surprising as one may expect individuals within these settings to have experienced a more severe
level of DA, furthermore, the process of leaving home and living in unfamiliar surroundings could be hypothesised to be distressing. It is possible that the results from the study by Meltzer et al. (2009) were biased due to the fact that participants had to display criteria in line with a diagnosis within the International Classification of Diseases (World Health Organisation, 1993). Furthermore, arguably, participants may display externalising behaviours in line with a diagnosis of conduct disorder due to underlying internalising behaviours such as anxiety or low self-esteem.

It has been argued that gender differences exist in internalising behaviours. Silvern et al. (1995) conducted research with 550 men and women college students. They found that women who had been exposed to DA had higher rates of depression, low self-esteem and trauma related symptoms. In contrast in men exposure to DA was only related to trauma-related symptoms. However, Evans et al. (2008) conducted a literature review of 60 studies which showed significant gender differences for externalising behaviours but not for internalising behaviours. It is possible that Silvern et al. (1995) found this difference due to the longitudinal nature of their study. At present little research exists which provides longitudinal data on the effects of witnessing DA and hence did not feature within the meta-analysis conducted by Evans et al. (2008).

Social adjustment may also be affected as many of the above factors make developing relationships difficult. Research by Abrahams (1994) showed that children also found it difficult to establish trust. Adams (2006) reports that children may have difficulty making friends because they are frightened of inviting friends to their home and as they get older frightened to become involved in romantic relationships because of a fear of abuse.

1.6.3 Externalising Behaviours
Externalising behaviours such as anger, hyper-vigilance and conduct problems have also been linked to witnessing DA (Fantuzzo & Mohr, 1999; Adams, 2006; Abrahams, 1994 and Ofosky, 1999). Within the meta-analysis conducted by Evans et al. (2008) 53 of the 61 samples provided data relating to externalising problems with a medium effect size. This supports the
findings of many narrative reviews, for example, that conducted by Carlson (2000).

Similar results were found by Kitzman et al. (2003). Their review also provides further information as it distinguishes research which looked at; non witnesses; those who live in verbally aggressive homes; those who witness physical abuse; those who both experience and witness abuse and those who only experience direct abuse. Their findings indicate that children who witness physical abuse are more likely to display externalising behaviours compared with either non-witnesses or those who live in verbally aggressive homes. In contrast there were no significant differences between witnesses and physically abused children or physically abused witnesses.

Initially social learning theory was used to attempt to explain increased levels of externalising behaviour. It was proposed that children who live in a household where violence occurs are more likely to observe and thus learn similar patterns of behaviour. However, social learning theory is unable to explain why children also display internalising behaviours. Furthermore, it does not explain why some children do not develop externalising behaviours. Mullender et al. (2002) in their qualitative study involving 45 children from 25 families of mixed age, gender and ethnic grouping found that whilst a number of boys and young men expressed concern about ‘repeating the violence’ they actually acted in a very sensitive and thoughtful way towards their siblings and mothers.

It has been hypothesised that gender differences exist with boys being more likely to display externalising behaviour than girls (Devaney, 2010). Evans et al. (2008) found that whilst there was not a significant difference between effect size for gender and internalising behaviour a significant difference did exist for externalising behaviour with boys being more likely to display externalising behaviour. However, in their meta-analysis Wolfe, Crooks, Lee, McIntyre-Smith and Jaffe (2003) and Evans et al. (2008) both included three studies conducted with only boys in their original analysis. When these were removed no significant differences were found. Thus, it is plausible that the
results of these studies were linked to sample characteristics other than gender.

Furthermore, it is arguable that there exists a much more complicated relationship with factors such as age also playing a role. Becker and McCloskey (2002) found that during their adolescence the daughters of abused women are at an increased risk of displaying externalising behaviours.

1.5.4 Cognitive development and school

There is little comparative research which focuses on the cognitive development of children who witness DA rather targeting those who have experienced direct abuse. Margolin and Gordis (2000) found that a large body of research exists linking direct abuse to delayed cognitive development and academic performance.

Westra and Martin (1981) found, using standardised instruments, individuals who had witnessed DA scored significantly lower than established norms for their age on verbal, cognitive and motor ability. This finding is particularly significant because unlike many studies the data was gathered from the children themselves as opposed to information given by the primary caregiver. It is possible, however, that additional factors may have contributed, for example all of the participants were living within a shelter. Furthermore, the sample size was small consisting of only 20 individuals and thus caution must be taken before making conclusions.

There exists research which supports this finding with relation to verbal ability even when direct abuse is controlled for (Huth-Bocks, Levendosky & Semel, 2001, Medina, Margolin & Wilcox, 2000). Specifically, Huth-Bocks et al. (2001) found that witnessing violence affected verbal and visual-spatial skills through a moderating effect on mothers’ level of depression and intellectual quality of home. This is supported by research undertaken by Refuge (2005) which found that a mother who is anxious or depressed is less likely to play or interact verbally with her infant at a time that is crucial to a child’s language development. This will be discussed further in relation to attachment (section 1.6.1).
It can be hypothesised that the factors discussed above coupled with practical difficulties will affect a child’s capacity to learn and consequently their likelihood of achieving and being successful within school. Practical difficulties include problems sleeping because of arguments, frequent house moves and changes of school, reluctance to attend school and difficulties concentrating when present because of fear of what may happen while they are away from home (Poole & Sterne, 2009).

Lemmey et al. (2001) interviewed mothers who had experienced DA and found that 15% reported their children had experienced academic difficulties. However, arguably in order to understand and support children most effectively children’s views must also be sought.

McGee (2000) makes reference to this criticism of research and as a result interviewed 54 children and 48 mothers in order to obtain qualitative data about both mothers’ and children’s experiences of DA. Individuals were contacted using a variety of methods including mail-outs to relevant organisations and approaches from workers in voluntary and statutory groups. Participants were required to 'opt-in' to take part in the research. The children were aged between five and 17 years, with one woman of 19 and one of 24 who had grown up with DA also taking part. On average the children had been exposed to DA for six years. Increased aggression, difficulty concentrating in class and refusal to attend school were all cited by both mothers and children as factors which contributed to poorer educational achievement. Fear about what may be happening to their mothers was also an important element leading to attention and attendance problems;

"I didn't like the thought of her being on her own, so I stayed at home all the time." (15 year old female, McGee, 2000, pg 81).

As participants chose to 'opt-in' to this research it is possible that the sample may have been biased. Individuals who felt it was important that their experiences were heard may have strong views about the impact of DA. In relation to education children and mothers may have felt that DA was a justification for not doing well at school.
Stalford, Baker and Beveridge (2003), in their research into DA in rural settings, support the view that there is a negative correlation between experience of DA and children’s progress at school. However, this research involved relatively few participants, 19, and critics may argue has the same potential weaknesses as McGee (2000). However, within this sphere it would be unethical to conduct research which was more 'experimental' in design and thus qualitative case studies are likely to be the best way of gathering information about the impact of DA.

Most of the literature which focuses on the effects of witnessing DA does not talk explicitly about school outcomes or attainment. However, an American study conducted by Kennedy and Bennet (2006) found that as exposure to violence increased school outcomes tend to worsen. 120 female adolescents aged between 16 and 20 were asked to complete a self-administered survey. As one of the aims of the research was to focus on adolescent mothers of low socio-economic status all of the participants were pregnant or had given birth before turning 20. One should therefore be cautious about drawing conclusions about the general population as it is possible that this sample may have poorer school outcomes than the general population. Furthermore, this research must be interpreted cautiously as the individuals experienced cumulative forms of exposure including in some cases direct abuse.

A key finding within this research was that a positive attitude to school impacted upon the extent to which exposure to all types of violence affected behaviour problems in school. This suggests that not only can DA affect how the child behaves at school but the relationship with school can affect their response to DA. This is supported by research around resilience which shows that having people they can turn to and having strong social networks, which could both be provided in a school setting, are resilience factors (Humphreys, 2006).

In an Australian study Mathias, Mertin and Murray (1995) found that in a sample of 79 children, who had previously lived in households where DA was occurring, 43% had reading ages which were more than one year below their chronological age. Furthermore, they found there was not a significant
difference between those who had actually observed the abuse and those who had lived in households where they knew it was occurring.

It is difficult to establish causal relationships in relation to cognitive abilities as it is likely that many factors are interacting with each other in complex ways. For example difficulty concentrating in class may lead to slower progress in reading. However, less opportunities to read at home may also result in slower progress and hence difficulty keeping up with the rest of the class. This may be perceived as difficulty concentrating or demonstrated through behavioural problems.

1.5.5 Summary

Thus it is evident that there exists a relationship between witnessing DA and a variety of outcomes.

However, not all children who witness DA will be detrimentally affected. Factors such as resilience and type and length of abuse all play an important role (Poole and Sterne, 2010). Attachment to a key adult is also frequently cited as a protective factor (Kitzman et.al, 2003) and will be discussed in more detail in section 1.6.1.

Furthermore, with increasing research it is becoming apparent that age effects the way in which children are impacted. Devaney (2010) provides a summary of the differences in how children are affected. Babies more commonly suffer from poor health and sleeping patterns and disrupted attachment. In contrast pre-school children show higher levels of behavioural difficulties such as bed-wetting, sleep problems and difficulties with eating. Evidence of DA is more likely to be demonstrated by older children through poorer social relationships, difficulty at school and attempts to self-harm or run away (Devaney, 2010; Humphreys and Houghton, 2008).

There are criticisms of many of the studies in this field. It has been argued that as much of the research has been conducted with samples drawn from individuals who are placed in clinical or refuge settings one should be cautious about drawing conclusions about the general population. It is hypothesised that individuals in these settings may have experienced very
severe levels of DA, additionally outcomes may be a result of living in this setting rather than the initial abuse. However, as stated earlier Evans et al. (2008) demonstrated in their meta-analysis that the setting from which samples were taken had no significant impact on the outcomes.

Another criticism is that much of the research focuses on qualitative data obtained from abused mothers who have left the perpetrator of the abuse. It is thus possible that she will over-emphasise the effects of the abuse on her children in order to justify the decision to leave. It is therefore important that data is triangulated from other sources. However, in examples when this has been provided early research suggests that negative outcomes can still be evidenced for example Meltzer et al. (2009).

Caution must also be taken when interpreting research in this area as the definition of DA is often varied, for example, some authors include being in a household where any type of DA is occurring as witnessing abuse whilst others refer only to direct observation of physical violence.

Furthermore, given the relationship between witnessing and experiencing direct abuse (Fantuzzo & Mohr, 1999) it is possible that the outcomes evidenced are a result of direct abuse. However, more recent research has controlled for this possibility and still found a relationship to negative outcomes.

Lastly, relatively few studies have employed longitudinal designs with large samples (Wolfe et al., 2003). Furthermore, whilst much research focuses on prevalence and outcomes there is a need for a greater investigation into protective and risk factors in order to best support those affected by the issue of DA.

However, despite the flaws identified there is an increasing body of research suggesting that witnessing DA can negatively impact on outcomes for children. This is evidenced by the meta-analysis conducted by Kitzman et al., (2003) which found that children exposed to DA showed significantly poorer outcomes on 21 developmental and behavioural dimensions compared to children who had not been exposed.
1.6 Psychological theories linked to witnessing domestic abuse.

Psychological theories which can be used to explain these patterns of development include attachment and theories around trauma specifically PTSD.

1.6.1 Attachment

Discussion around the impact of witnessing DA often centres on attachment. Attachment theory was first proposed by psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Bowlby who described it as a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” (Bowlby, 1969, p.194). Attachment and trauma are inextricably linked as trauma can impact on the degree to which this 'connectedness' can exist.

The most important component of attachment theory is that a young child needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally. Without this, it is argued that, the child is at risk of facing permanent psychological and social impairment. Attachment theory claims that as children we learn how to respond and behave in relationships through our early interactions with our parent or carer. A secure or insecure attachment is then formed dependent on these interactions (Bomber, 2007). Thus these early experiences impact on the individual's ability to interact and have relationships throughout life.

Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) introduced the term ‘secure base’ to describe the role of the primary caregiver whereby the caregiver provides a secure and dependable base from which the child is safe to explore the world. The term 'good enough' parenting was described by Winnicott (1964) to describe the parent's ability to attend to, attune to and satisfy the basic needs of a child, adequately and more than adequately most of the time. Through this consistency the child is able to gain a sense of security and confidence which enables them to reach developmental milestones (Sunderland, 2006). This is described as a secure attachment and these children are able to tolerate time away from their caregiver but are happy to return to them.
Ainsworth et al. (1978) developed Bowlby's work using what is now referred to as 'the strange situation' study. In this study children between the age of 12 to 18 months were briefly left alone and then reunited with their mothers. From the results of this study Ainsworth concluded that there are three attachment styles. She described a healthy attachment as 'secure' and coined the terms ambivalent insecure attachment and avoidant insecure attachment to describe insecure attachment styles. Later, researchers Main and Solomon (1986) added a fourth attachment style known as disorganised insecure attachment.

In households where DA occurs it is less likely that the parents are able to provide 'good enough' parenting and thus that a secure attachment is formed. Mullender et al. (2002) state that the ability of both parents to meet their child's needs are compromised in households where DA occurs. Furthermore, for women, continual abuse can affect their ability to parent effectively and form good quality attachments with their children (Mullender et. al 2002 and Huth-Bocks et.al., 2001). Thus as the level of seriousness of DA increases the likelihood of a secure attachment forming decreases (Poole & Sterne, 2010). As the primary caregiver, usually the mother, may respond to the baby in an inappropriate or inconsistent manner the baby does not learn suitable strategies for obtaining help and comfort from its mother. Gerhardt (2004) states that the primary caregiver becomes a source of both comfort and fear; the baby is afraid of and for their mother.

In contrast, research suggests that a secure attachment to a significant carer or to the non-violent parent is a protective factor against the distress associated with witnessing DA (Holt, Buckley & Whelan, 2008).

However, it is also worth noting that there are criticisms of attachment theory. This is a considerable topic in itself and thus cannot be described in detail here. Harris (1998) argues that a child's peers have more influence on them than their parents. She illustrates this by using an example of a child who has parents that speak English as an additional language; whilst the parents have an accent the children do not because they want to fit in with their peers. She goes on to argue that the way a child is brought up or 'nurtured' has much
less impact than 'nature’. She provides examples of twins separated at birth who despite very different 'nurturing' have similar styles, hobbies and habits. Furthermore, she argues that if 'nurture' was as important as 'nature' siblings would be much more similar than is evidenced.

Field (1996) also provides a critique of attachment theory stating that it is too simplistic. Her main arguments are; firstly, the theory is based on observation of behaviour during stressful times which does not provide information about interactions during non-stressful situations; secondly, attachment behaviours may be different towards different people; thirdly, there is an incorrect assumption that there can be only one primary attachment normally towards the mother; lastly, the theory does not consider attachments that occur later in life.

Arguably the criticisms provided by Harris (1998) are too simplistic and a much more complex relationship between nature and nurture is likely. Furthermore whilst Field (1996) criticises the specifics of attachment theory her arguments do not deny that relationships where individuals become attuned to each other are important. Further evidence for the importance of this relationship comes from neuropsychology. There is increasing evidence that there are neurological and physiological differences between individuals with secure attachments compared to those with insecure attachments (Schore, 2001a). These findings are again closely linked to trauma as if a child does not experience love and nurture then they are likely to become scared and feel a sense of betrayal.

The existence of the stress hormone cortisol exists in abnormally high levels in babies who are brought up without appropriate care. This can lead to impaired development of the brain and body (Perry, 2001; van der Kolk et al., 1996). The ability to think, retrieve information and manage behaviour are all affected by this hormone as is the immune system (Gerhardt, 2004).

Schore (2001b) describes the development of the brain as 'use-dependent' stating that only those parts of the brain that the child uses will develop neural connections. Thus if the child does not receive appropriate and sensitive care connections between certain neurons are not made in the
brain. The pre-frontal cortex is the area of the brain responsible for empathy, logic, cause and effect and reasoning. Research suggests that children who have experienced insecure attachment due to loss or trauma have large areas of inactivity in their pre-frontal cortex (Wilkinson, 2006).

Schore (2001a) describes the neurobiology of a secure attachment. He states that the primary caregiver psycho-biologically regulates the infants maturing limbic system. The right brain has deep connections into both the limbic and autonomic nervous system and is key for stress response. Thus he states that a secure attachment is essential for the individual to learn appropriate coping capacities and for dealing with the novelty and stress that is inherent in human reactions (Schore, 2001a). Thus a child who has not experienced a secure attachment is likely to be able to deal less effectively with stress in the future.

In a child living with DA it is probable that future stress will occur which the child has not yet developed appropriate coping capacities for. This in turn causes use-dependent development of the brain leading to an increased propensity towards this reaction due to over-development of these neural connections.

Characteristics of attachment disorders according to the ICD-10 (WHO, 2007) include poor social interaction, hyper vigilance and aggression; features also identified within children who have witnessed DA.

The length of time the child has been exposed, the nature of the abuse, the effects on the mother’s mental health and the relationship with the abuser are all likely to impact on attachment. If the violence has been occurring for a long time and is severe this is more likely to impact on the caregiver’s ability to be emotionally available to the child. Furthermore, if the abuser is also a caregiver then it is probable that the child will have an insecure attachment with this figure.

Caution must be taken when interpreting research around attachment. It is plausible to generalise that the brains of individuals who have witnessed DA at a young age have been permanently changed and thus further negative
consequences are unavoidable. However, there is research to suggest that this is not the case. Sternberg, Lamb, Guterman, Abbott and Dawud-Noursi (2005) investigated attachment using the 'Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment' and found that if the abuse had occurred five or more years previously the adolescents’ perceptions of current attachment were unrelated. This suggests that opportunities for a secure attachment to form can continue after the abuse has stopped. It is however unclear whether the abuse existed during the individuals' early years and thus whether there had been opportunities for a secure attachment to form before the onset of abuse existed. Support for the potential development of secure attachments is also provided by Dodd (2009). She evaluated therapeutic group work with mothers and children who had experience of DA and found that the work was effective in helping to enhance the psychological well-being and in promoting positive mother-child relationships.

1.6.2 Trauma, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and domestic abuse

In the past research on trauma focused on one-off severe events such as sniper attacks (Pynoos & Eth, 1986). However, the definition of trauma now encompasses a wider definition including events that threaten the physical integrity of the individual or a loved one (Gelinas, 2001).

As previously stated trauma and attachment are inextricably linked. If a child has an insecure attachment they experience uncertainty about whether their needs will be met and thus their physical integrity is at risk. In contrast children who have a secure attachment seem more able to cope with traumatic events such as DA. Humphreys (2006) found that resilience factors included having a parent who can maintain reasonable parenting skills whilst dealing with the DA and having people they can turn to.

Within research on DA it is perhaps surprising to note that relatively few researchers focus specifically on trauma symptoms; in the meta-analysis conducted by Evans et al. (2008) only six out of 61 studies provided data relating to trauma symptoms from which effect size estimates could be calculated. Caution must be taken due to the small sample size, however,
they did find a significant association between exposure to DA and trauma symptoms. This finding is supported by qualitative data where children described traumatic events and their consequences;

"He used to say, 'I am going to kill you at night time when you are all asleep'
(Secondary school girl, Mullender et al., 2002, p94)

"I have pictures in my head...I see it happening over and over again."  
(Secondary school boy, Poole and Sterne, 2010, p27).

In addition, research exists which investigates the relationship between DA and PTSD. PTSD is the most common diagnostic category used to describe symptoms arising from emotionally traumatic event(s) where the individual felt fear, helplessness or horror. PTSD is described by the International Classification of Diseases (ICD)-10 (WHO, 2007) as a delayed or protracted response to stressful event(s) of an exceptionally threatening or catastrophic nature. It is characterised by episodes of repeated reliving of the trauma (flashbacks), dreams or nightmares, a sense of numbness, detachment from others, unresponsiveness to surroundings and avoidance of situations similar to the traumatic experience. The individual often experiences a state of hyper arousal with hyper vigilance, enhanced startle reaction, insomnia and anxiety or depression.

Whilst the existence of the brain's reaction to trauma is not questioned the existence of PTSD as a psychiatric disorder is called into question by some. The term PTSD was coined in the 1980's to describe the symptoms seen in soldiers returning from the Vietnam war. Yehunda and McFarlane (1995) thus argue that as opposed to having an objective existence the diagnosis was created as a result of socio-political pressures to validate the experiences of Vietnam veterans. Paris (1999) argues that PTSD only meets one of the criteria required for diagnostic validity described by Robins and Guze (1970). Whilst PTSD does have a precise clinical description there do not exist: laboratory studies identifying biological markers; a clear delineation from other disorders; characteristic outcomes in follow-up studies; and a genetic pattern in family history studies (Paris, 1999).
The relationship between trauma and PTSD is complex and cannot be explained by a cause and effect argument. Research suggests that individual differences exist in the impact of trauma. Bowman (1999) found that regardless of the extent of the trauma around three quarters of individuals will not develop symptoms of PTSD.

Neuropsychological research suggests that trauma may have a much greater impact on the developing child than at any other stage. Perry (1997) argues that the stage when adults presume the most resilience, in infancy and childhood, is ironically when the individual is most vulnerable.

Perry, Pollard, Blakely, Baker and Vigilante (1996) describe the reaction to an emotionally traumatic event or threat. The brain reacts with a set of neurobiological, neuroendocrinological and neuropsychological responses aimed at ensuring the individual survives. Hyperarousal, also known as 'fight or flight', or dissociation (freeze and surrender) are two adaptive responses to trauma. Both responses activate a combination of neural systems which in turn cause use-dependent neurobiological changes. Within the developing brain, as opposed to making changes, the brain organises itself in a use-dependent manner. It is these use dependent changes, or organisation, in the brain that cause observed emotional, behavioural, cognitive, social and physiological changes.

The adaptive state of the individual during the traumatic situation will determine the symptoms that will develop, for example, a child who responds by freezing during the traumatic event will be more likely to develop a sensitised disassociation pattern for example compliance and flattened moods. Simplistically, the child is in a persisting fear state and as a result will display maladaptive behaviours and cognitions which were adaptive in response to the original trauma.

The early years are crucial for normal child development to occur. An individual's experiences and environment as well as genetic factors play a key role in the development of neural pathways (Devaney, 2010). Research suggests that a weak developmental foundation increases the odds of later difficulties (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2007). If the
child's stress management system is active more frequently then higher levels of stress hormones and brain chemicals can affect normal development of the brain and lead to difficulties in self-regulation, learning and memory (Devaney, 2010). Furthermore, the immune system and other metabolic regulatory mechanisms can be permanently affected leading to a greater risk of developing stress-related physical illness and mental health problems such as anxiety and substance abuse (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2007).

The overlap between these characteristics and the behaviours/features identified in research with child witnesses of DA is clear. PTSD symptoms can be seen as an underlying stress reaction produced by the trauma of exposure to DA.

Chembtom and Carlson (2004) found very high rates of PTSD, 40%, in children who had witnessed violence despite the fact that the mothers had left the violent relationship on average two years prior to the research. However, 60% of the children had also experienced direct violence. As stated previously a weakness of much of the research conducted in this sphere is that many individuals who have witnessed violence have also directly experienced it. Kilpatrick, Litt and Williams (1997) noted this factor within previous research and screened for other PTSD-inducing stressors such as direct abuse. They found that all but one of the child witnesses qualified for a diagnosis of PTSD. The very high levels of PTSD suggested by these pieces of research should however be treated with caution. The mothers in both of these studies had chosen to leave their partner which suggests that the level of violence was severe. Furthermore, the sample size in the Kilpatrick et al. (1997) study was relatively small; 58 children in total of which 31 were classed as ‘witnesses’.

In an overview of research Rossman, Hughes, and Rosenberg (2000) found that 13% to 50% of children who had witnessed DA would qualify for a diagnosis of PTSD. The reason for this large discrepancy may be due to the fact that often individuals only display certain characteristics required for diagnosis. Margolin and Vickerman (2007) hypothesise that this may be
partly due to the unique nature of witnessing DA. Diagnosis can be made more difficult by factors such as; a lack of a pre-trauma state of functioning, individuals may not have experienced a life-threatening situation and a lack of one specific traumatic incident. However, arguably DA may be more traumatic than a one off incident as the individual is constantly under threat of experiencing another incident.

1.7 The developing role of education

In 2003 The Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) agenda stated that every school should ensure that five outcomes are met for every child, namely; be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. These outcomes encompass a much wider domain than simply ensuring children are taught academic skills. Schools are now seen as having a legal duty to ensure pupils’ moral, spiritual and social development is promoted (Poole and Sterne, 2010). Statutory responsibilities are also much more holistic; promote children and young people's wellbeing, achieve the whole curriculum aims and promote community cohesion (DCSF, 2010a). Programmes such as Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) (DfEE, 1999a), Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) (DfES, 2005; DfES, 2007) and National Healthy Schools (DfEE, 1999b) all play a role in ensuring that the five outcomes are met.

The development of PSHE (DfEE, 1999b) aims to ensure that children are equipped with the knowledge and skills to deal with a range of issues they may face as they mature, for example, drug and alcohol education and sex and relationship education. The previous government planned to make PSHE a statutory requirement by 2011 (DCSF, 2009a). Whilst this is not a requirement of the new government some of the content of the programmes of study and frameworks will remain statutory (PSHE association website, 2010).

Another important development is that of SEAL (DfES, 2005; DfES, 2007). SEAL aims to ensure that materials which focus on the more holistic development of the child is covered in schools. Durlak and Weissberg (2007) describe social and emotional learning as a process helping to
develop the skills essential for life effectiveness. Stating that, through the learning of these skills, children will be able to, “calm themselves when angry, make friends, resolve conflicts respectfully, and make ethical and safe choices” (p7). The skills are in five groupings: self-awareness; managing feelings; empathy; motivation; and social skills. These are the five main areas of emotional intelligence as proposed by Goleman (1995).

Emotional intelligence is described as the interaction between emotion and cognition that leads to adaptive functioning (Salovey & Grewal, 2005). Thus, in the same way that trauma can have a detrimental effect on health and well being it is argued that emotional intelligence promotes health and well being. Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar and Rooke (2007) conducted a meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and health. Their analysis was based on the responses of 7897 participants between the ages of 11 and 51. They found that higher emotional intelligence was significantly associated with better health. Of particular significance was the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health. They hypothesise that participants with higher emotional intelligence may be less likely to experience mental health problems because of better perception, understanding, and management of emotions. Similar results were found by Martins, Ramalho and Morin (2010) when they considered research conducted after the date of Schutte et al.'s (2007) meta analysis. Again, higher associations were found between emotional intelligence and mental health. Thus, it seems plausible that positive emotional intelligence can be a predictor of health and well being.

Although SEAL and PSHE are obviously inextricably linked there are important distinctions. PSHE focuses on a discrete body of knowledge and understanding, attitude and value clarification and skills development. SEAL allows for the opportunity for pupils to develop and apply their social and emotional skills in order to enhance pupil well-being and learning across the curriculum. Thus SEAL provides a framework through which PSHE can be supported. SEAL work can also be undertaken with groups of individuals
whom it is felt would benefit from an increased level of input. Healthy schools can be described as providing the whole school context and a conducive social and learning environment for the promotion of SEAL and teaching and learning practice in PSHE (DCSF, 2010a).

The changing roles of schools and the curricula that they cover can be divided into three levels of work; universal, targeted and specialist. This is also referred to as the 'Waves of Intervention Model' (DfES, 2005) with universal equating to wave one and specialist wave three. It describes the idea of working at a range of progressive levels, and through more tailored teaching and provision. PSHE is at the universal level; all individuals receive generic information. In contrast SEAL can be applied at all levels as shown below:

![Wave Model of SEAL delivery](taken from DfES, 2005)

Social skills groups for individuals with social-communication difficulties would be part of wave two whilst specialist work would be wave three. This may involve work around a specific area and/or the involvement of external professionals such as EPs, clinical psychologists (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), health professionals and voluntary agencies.

There exists some specialist topics which relate to the generic teachings of PSHE and SEAL. Topics may include more sensitive areas such as self-
harm, eating disorders and DA. These topics need to be more explicitly discussed/taught within the classroom environment and often require input/support from outside agencies who are more familiar with the topic area. Due to the sensitive nature of these topics school staff may feel less competent and less qualified in delivering sessions in this area. Programmes which focus on specialist topics such as DA have a foundation in these universal skills, for example, teaching about ways of dealing with anger would be categorised as a self-regulation skill. Therefore it is important that the evidence base for these skills and their impact on well being is considered.

An evaluation of SEAL and its effectiveness was conducted by Hallam, Rhamie and Shaw (2006). 16 primary schools described as 'good practice schools' were involved in the research. After the implementation of wave one SEAL, head teachers, teachers and non-teaching staff were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a range of statements. The results showed that all of the head teachers (13) agreed that the programme had promoted the emotional well-being of the children. There was also a high percentage of teachers who believed that the programme had increased pupils' ability to control anger (81%), resolve conflict (73%) and promote well being (87%). Similar results were found for non-teaching staff.

Pupils' views were also established by comparing the pre and post intervention responses on a questionnaire and in interviews. The results showed complex relationships between age, gender and school factors. Due to a lack of Key Stage One responses the research does not indicate any statistically significant changes. However, within Key Stage Two there was positive age related change in Social Skills and Relationships. A multiple regressions analysis indicated that this was not solely due to age. The results also indicated a positive change in awareness of emotions. However, caution must be taken when interpreting these findings as there was no control group to make comparisons to.
Furthermore, arguably the teaching of skills linked with specialist topics is more comparable to wave two and three of SEAL as it more likely to involve a brief but more intensive intervention. Humphrey, Kalambouka, Wigelsworth and Lendrum (2010) state that compared with the US there is comparatively little research evaluating this kind of work. They conducted a quasi-experimental study evaluating a wave two intervention aimed at increasing self-awareness and motivation. The experiment involved 182 children including 80 within a comparison group. The children involved in the experimental group comprised of 54 role models and 128 children selected for extra support. Data was gathered using the Emotional Literacy: Assessment and Intervention (ELAI, Faupel, 2003) which provides indices of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. The strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997) was also used to provide a broad behavioural screening profile.

The results from both child self-report and staff informant-report ratings indicated that the intervention had a positive impact upon the social and emotional skills of participants selected for extra support. However, the effect sizes were small. Informal staff informant-report ratings did, however, also indicate an improvement in behavioural and emotional well-being. These positive effects remained several weeks after the intervention ended. However, parental reports did not support these findings. Furthermore, significant change was not observed in children selected as role models.

It is therefore debatable whether this programme should be described as successful. The argument against its success may be supported by the fact that there was no evidence of impact for the 'core skills'; motivation and self-awareness. However, it is possible that the interventions work at a more generic level for example increasing self-esteem which may over time lead to increased motivation. Furthermore, these findings are similar to research conducted by Larkin and Thyer (1999) who conducted an eight week intervention involving structured group activities facilitated by an adult.
Significant changes were found in self-esteem, self-control and reductions in behaviour problems when compared with comparison groups.

The DfES (2007) state that the benefits of teaching social and emotional learning include an increase in positive behaviour, increased attendance and reduced stress and anxiety as well as improvements in staff morale and staff retention. Others argue that the benefits reach even further for example reduction in bullying outside of schools (Greenburg, Kusche, Cook & Quamma, 1995) and in some cases even long term reductions in neighbourhood crime (Caplan et al., 1992).

There does however exist much debate about the efficacy of teaching these skills(Humphrey, Curran, Morris, Farrell & Woods, 2007; Mayer, Roberts, Barsade, 2008; Craig, 2007). In brief some of the aspects that critics of SEAL are concerned about are: the intellectual rationale behind SEAL; lack of evidence that making children express their emotions in a structured environment leads to lifelong emotional literacy and wellbeing; the move towards a checklist of learning outcomes relating to emotions; and the impact on parents and teachers with increasing responsibility being placed on teachers (Craig, 2007).

However, the research discussed within this section provides evidence that schools may be able to support the development of children's emotional skills and that these skills can be effective tools at promoting positive mental health. Thus, whilst there is agreement that there are benefits of actively developing intra- and inter-personnel skills for healthy relationships and well being there still exists debate about the specific content, pedagogy, process and ethos within which programmes are delivered (Roffey, 2010). There is not space within this review to consider this in relation to all aspects of social and emotional learning, however, this will be considered with reference to more specialist topics such as DA.
A literature search for journals dated 1990 onwards was conducted using PsychInfo, Science Direct, ERIC and EBSCO in order to establish whether literature existed about the delivery of such material within schools. A combination of the following terms was used: 'sensitive topics', 'self-harm', 'eating disorders', 'education', 'schools' and 'teaching'. This search suggested a lack of research regarding the best-practice in delivery of sensitive topics in schools. The majority of the research instead focused on delivering material to students engaged in higher education and university settings (for example Russel, Soysa, Wagoner & Dawson, 2008). However, there does exist research which focuses on the role of external professionals in the delivery of such topics. Douglas, Kemp, Aggleton and Warwick (2001) used evaluation forms and interviews with staff to investigate views on the involvement of external professionals. They found that teachers and pupils responded positively to support from external professionals during a programme focused on sexual orientation. Furthermore, teachers felt that the involvement of external professionals had helped support them in development of PSHE ideas. Similarly, Smith, Roberts, Nutbeam and MacDonald (1992) found that teachers valued input on health education from professional agencies particularly in more specialist areas. Buckley and White (2007) conducted a literature review in order to evaluate the effectiveness of external contributors in delivering substance-use education. They found that whilst it was not possible to state which type of external professional was most effective at delivering this kind of work, pupils did enjoy and value the opportunity to work with external contributors.

This research will focus specifically on DA. School based work on DA can be seen as having two broad purposes. Firstly, children can identify they are living with DA and be provided with support within a potentially less stigmatising environment (Jaffe et al., 1990). Secondly, all children can learn how to conduct healthy non-abusive relationships (Mullender, Humphreys and Saunders, 1998).

In order to support children living with DA, programmes normally attempt to increase awareness about DA, for example, what it is and how it affects victims. Information on support services is also provided within many of the
programmes with the intention of enabling children to seek support if needed (Gamache & Snapp, 1995, Ellis, 2008, Bell & Stanley, 2006). It is less likely that this kind of information would be provided within more general education about relationships. It is hoped that this will provide children with the tools needed to recognise DA is occurring and to seek help.

Secondly, in an attempt to reduce the prevalence of DA in the future, children are taught the skills to conduct non-abusive relationships. Programmes about DA frequently cover conflict resolution, anger management, communication, problem solving, mediation and assertiveness (Suderman, Jaffe & Hastings, 1995; Mulroney, 2003; Tutty & Bradshaw, 2002 and Ellis, 2004). Undesirable attitudes to violence are also challenged within many programmes about DA (Gamache and Snapp, 1995; Jaffe, Wolfe, Crooks, Hughes & Baker, 2004). Furthermore, learning to identify and express emotions in a non-violent way is often included in programmes about DA (Gamache & Snapp, 1995; Wolfe & Jaffe, 2001; Ellis, 2004). It is hoped that by learning these skills children will be less likely to go on to become perpetrators of DA. The efficacy of these arguments will be discussed in detail later with regard to specific programmes and their impact.

1.7.1 Involvement of other agencies
There are various agencies/organisations who may provide information relating DA to schools, some of which are specific to the Local Authority (LA) within which this research will be conducted. Tacade is an organisation which aims to promote young people’s health and well-being and is based in a geographically similar area. However, despite covering a range of topics they do not have material which explicitly discusses DA (Tacade, 2010).

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) plays an important role in increasing awareness of DA. In February 2009 it produced a public petition to highlight better protection for children living with DA. The aim of this petition was to: ensure that children affected by DA are provided with adequate therapy and refuges; train those who handle issues of DA to deal with the impact on any children in the family and lastly to teach every child in school about DA (NSPCC, 2010). The NSPCC is involved in a
range of work when there is known DA such as work with the perpetrators and other family members as well as direct therapeutic work with children. The NSPCC also provide school teams who can help develop PSHE lessons. However, at this stage the NSPCC do not provide schools with teaching material relating to DA. It is possible that schools may have had members of the NSPCC visit the school and DA may have been discussed. The efficacy of one-off interventions such as this will be discussed later (see section 1.8).

There are also charitable organizations such as M6 Theatre Company who can deliver productions about specific sensitive topics such as DA. The use of drama in preventative work is common and will be discussed later (section 1.8). At this stage they have not been involved in such work within the primary schools in the authority where this research will be taking place.

1.8. Interventions

Given the widespread nature of domestic abuse, demonstrated within the introduction, there is clearly a need for intervention aimed at supporting those individuals affected by DA including children who have been living in households where DA has occurred. However, in order to reduce DA occurring there is also a need for preventative programmes aimed at increasing awareness and changing attitudes towards DA (Dodd, 2009).

Mullender (2001) concludes from a literature review, targeted at meeting the needs of children, that work must be undertaken in; primary prevention, aimed at preventing DA from happening at all; secondary prevention, stopping it immediately once its occurrence is known and lastly tertiary prevention, reducing the harm to those who have already experienced it.

As stated previously, schools are arguably best placed to fulfil this role as they have a legal duty to promote pupils’ moral, spiritual and social development in which healthy and safe relationships play a key role (Poole and Sterne, 2010). Mullender (2001) argues that education about DA is,
'one of the very few contexts in which genuine primary prevention can be undertaken, helping young people to respect themselves and one another sufficiently to develop non-abusive relationships.' (p40)

The need for awareness raising work in schools is supported by recent research conducted with school aged pupils (Mullender et al., 2002; End Violence against women, 2006; Burton, Kitzinger, Kelly & Regan, 1998) which suggests that not only is DA occurring within teenage relationships but that unhealthy attitudes to DA are still relatively common.

Mullender et al. (2002) conducted a two phase large scale study combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The first phase investigated knowledge and thoughts about DA using questionnaires which were completed by 1395 children aged eight to 16. The questionnaire completed by pupils at secondary school contained additional attitude questions. The results indicated that a third of boys and a fifth of girls agreed with the statement ‘some women deserve to be hit’.

In Scotland, Burton et al. (1998) investigated attitudes towards violence, sex and relationships using a large scale survey of 2,039 young people aged between 14 and 21 and ten in-depth focus groups. They found that the majority of young men and a small majority of young women thought that women were ‘often’ or ‘sometimes’ to blame for DA. However, more recently Burman and Cartmel (2005) completed research with young people aged 14 to 18 which focused on their views concerning the acceptability of violence. The study was large-scale, involving ten secondary schools in Scottish authorities. In total 1,395 young people completed a questionnaire based survey. The results evidenced a better understanding of types of abuse and less tolerance of gendered violence than was indicated by Burton et al. (1998), for example, the majority of youths stated that they did not agree with any violence unless it was used as self-defence. However, some of the findings suggested that whilst individuals may not believe DA is acceptable they did feel that certain behaviours may provoke violence for example a third of young men and over a third of young women believe that ‘women sometimes provoke violence by the way they dress’.
This literature supports the view that in order to have the most impact work needs to start at a young age, preferably primary school, (Poole and Sterne, 2010) as by the time students have reached secondary school they have already formed potentially dangerous beliefs and attitudes about DA. School pupils also show a desire to learn about DA. In research conducted by Mullender (2002) 84% of secondary pupils and 52% of primary aged pupils stated that they would like lessons about DA and what to do about it.

A literature search using identified databases (PsychINFO; JSTOR; ERIC, British Education Index (BEI) and EBSCO) was conducted using the key words “domestic violence”, “domestic abuse” and “schools”; “education” which identified a relative lack of research on preventative programmes within the UK. Mullender (2001) states that perhaps the most well-known educational materials, those provided by London Borough of Islington (1995), have not yet been evaluated. Within the United States (USA) and Canada there is more research available which evaluates preventative programmes. This is probably due to the fact that DA programmes have been running longer than within the UK where they are in their infancy (Bell and Stanley, 2006).

Hague, Kelly and Mullender (2001) state that a distinction between work on DA in Canada compared with that in the UK is that work within the UK is dependent on local enthusiasm and fund-raising. Within Canada a scheme exists, through the Ministry of Education, which funds the development of teachers and identifying and supporting children with needs relating to living with violence (Hague et.al., 2001). The ministry also provides schools with learning resources on violence against women free of charge. However, the Joint Committee on Domestic Violence (1999) found that there is a large amount of variance in the number and degree to which schools in Canada pursue DA agenda with some choosing not to participate at all.

This lack of support and guidance around DA was recognised by the Home Office (2005) report, 'Tackling Domestic Violence; Effective Interventions and Approaches'. It states that whilst it is suggested within sex and relationships guidance (Department for Education and Science, 2000) that sex related
education is dealt with in Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education (PHSE) curriculum there is nothing specifically about violence against women.

Macgowan (1997), Avery-Leaf, Cascarci, O'Learly and Cano (1997), Foshee et al. (1998), Foshee, Bauman, Greene and Koch (2000), Foshee et al. (2004) and Meyer and Stein (2001) have all provided examples of preventative programmes which have been evaluated in the USA and Canada. These programmes all focused specifically on dating violence as opposed to more generally on DA and were delivered to pupils who it was felt were beginning to start dating, predominantly early stages of secondary school. Caution must therefore be taken when considering the more general topic of DA as arguably students may see this issue as having more relevance. Avery-Leaf et al. (1997) make reference to this point stating that little is known about the relationship between dating violence and DA later in life. However, they hypothesise that early intervention may avert the development of such difficulties.

Macgowan (1997) implemented a five-hour programme which was evaluated positively using a survey consisting of 22 items. The programme was delivered to 11 to 12 year olds and 13 to 14 year olds in Miami, Florida, USA. The conclusions were based on the finding that improvements were seen on six of the 22 items for 440 pupils in the treatment group. This is arguably too simplistic a measure and should be triangulated with data from other sources or measures. Furthermore, the survey used within this research was not standardised and thus there are concerns about its reliability and validity. Caution must also be taken due to the duration of the programme, it is arguable that the intervention may have little long-term impact.

In comparison, Foshee et al. (1998) conducted a much more detailed evaluation of a dating violence programme, Safe Dates. In order to examine the value of school-based interventions Foshee et.al (1998) compared individuals who had received only community based interventions with those who had received both community and school-based interventions. School activities included a theatre production preformed by peers, a ten session
curriculum and a poster contest. Community activities included specialist services for adolescents in abusive relationships and community service provider training. Pupils involved in the study were aged between 12 and 14 and at school in North Carolina, USA. Using a questionnaire that addressed different aspects of violence they collected data measuring both outcome measures such as physical, psychological and sexual victimisation and perpetration and mediating variables such as acceptance of prescribed norms and perceived consequences of dating violence.

The results indicated that those who had received the school-based intervention reported less psychological abuse, sexual violence, and physical violence at follow-up. Foshee et al. (1998) explained these effects through awareness of services, changes in dating violence norms and gender stereotyping.

It is possible that the changes recorded were due to students’ perception of social desirability. However, Foshee et al. (1998) make reference to this criticism and state that whilst this was apparent for outcome variables it was not the case of the mediating variables as indicated by the responses to norms items. However, it is possible that obtaining qualitative data would have enabled this factor to have been investigated more thoroughly. It is also of note that the questionnaire that Foshee et al. (1998) used was not a standardised questionnaire and was instead created for this study. Thus questions in relation to the reliability and validity of the measures arise.

This study is also of interest as longitudinal data was collected up to four years after the intervention (Foshee et al., 2000; 2004). Initially the findings suggested that behavioural effects were not sustained but that cognitive effects had been (Foshee et al., 2000), however, the four year follow-up showed significant differences between the treatment and control groups for both cognitive and behavioral effects. It is unlikely that social desirability effected the data due to the length of time since the programme was implemented.
However, this programme was relatively large scale involving a theatre production performed by peers, a ten session curriculum and a poster contest.

Avery-Leaf et al. (1997) evaluated a five-session dating programme that was delivered to 193 students in a secondary school in America. The research used a quasi-experimental design and pupils were randomly assigned to either the treatment or no treatment condition. Quantitative measures included The Modified Conflict Tactics Scale, The Justification of Interpersonal Violence Questionnaire and The Social Desirability Scale. Using these measures there were significant decreases in overall attitudes to dating violence. However, there exists criticisms of this research.

Despite relatively high levels of reported aggression over half of the students reported that violent actions were 'never' acceptable at the pre-programme assessment. This raises questions about the link between attitudes and actions as well as the sensitivity of the measures used. Furthermore, no longitudinal data was collected so it is possible that pupils' attitudes may have only been affected in the short-term.

The findings from these evaluations suggest, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the longer and more integrated the programme is the better the outcomes are for students (Meyer & Stein, 2001). Within all of these evaluations one outcome cited as a result of the programme is an increased knowledge about relationship violence. Meyer and Stein (2001) highlight the concern that despite increased knowledge a change in behaviour or attitude was not reported and thus the relationship between knowledge and behaviour must be investigated. However, it is possible that not enough time had elapsed between the intervention completion and data collection for significant behavioural changes to occur. This is supported by the longitudinal data collected by Foshee et al. (2004).

As previously stated a criticism of these studies is the lack of qualitative data (Bell and Stanley, 2006). Many of the evaluations used only the analysis of survey items to indicate significant change in attitudes and behaviour. It may have been the case that individuals felt that they should not admit
participating in behaviour described as violent after the implementation of the programme (Foshee et al., 1998). Without qualitative information it is difficult to establish the reasons for these positive results and therefore draw conclusions about the effectiveness of elements of the programme. In addition, within the literature discussed there is little consistency in how ‘significant or meaningful change’ is defined for example a pupil may move from 'strongly disagree' to 'disagree' on a Likert-type scale which may be described as positive change but could still be indicative of harmful ideas or behaviours.

Furthermore, Meyer and Stein (2001) in their review of DA awareness raising programmes draw attention to the fact that some of the evaluations of programmes were conducted by the creators (Foshee et al.,1998; 2000; 2004; Avery-Leaf et al., 1997). Whilst this ensures the evaluator has a good knowledge of the programme it introduces a degree of uncertainty about their neutrality.

Within the literature there is little consistency regarding the staff delivering the programme. It is not always clear who had delivered the programme and how much training they have received, for example within the Avery-Leaf et al. (1997) study the programme was delivered by health teachers who received eight hours training whilst in the Foshee et al. (1998) study teachers received 20 hours of training. This therefore poses questions about who should be delivering such programmes and the level of training they require.

Bell and Stanley (2006) were aware of many of these limitations when they embarked on research within the UK. They evaluated a drama based healthy relationships programme on domestic violence delivered to 85 year eight pupils. The programme consisted of the observation of a play, delivered by a local theatre-in-education company, featuring a father who was abusive to his partner and son followed by six workshops. Questionnaires consisting of both open-ended and closed questions were used to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. Questionnaires were completed before the implementation of the programme, at the end of the final workshop and a year later. Focus groups were also conducted. Responses to the closed questions on each
questionnaire were collated and compared in order to obtain a general view about changes in understanding and knowledge. More detailed information was obtained by comparing the open-ended questions and data from the focus groups. The results indicated that the programme enhanced pupils' understanding of DA and perhaps most importantly this enhanced understanding was still apparent a year after the programme. However, caution must be taken when interpreting this finding as only 55 of the original 85 pupils completed the final questionnaire. Furthermore, the use of drama as a medium for learning was evaluated positively by the pupils.

A criticism of this research is that it was relatively small scale, featuring only 85 pupils. The fact that individuals volunteered to take part in the focus groups may have biased the results as it is probable that those wishing to discuss the programme would hold strong views, either positive or negative, about its efficacy. Furthermore, those for whom DA was already a concern may have been reluctant to volunteer for discussions because of concerns about confidentiality. There are also questions about the sustainability of this programme. The first workshop was delivered by members of the theatre company and the following workshops were delivered by a school nurse, a youth worker and a domestic violence project worker. This is arguably a very labour intensive delivery method. Furthermore, projects covering topic such as DA are often dependent on funding. A member of teaching staff was present during the workshops, however they received no training and their role was to supervise the children. Thus, it is unlikely they would feel competent to deliver the programme independently.

As previously stated one criticism of much of the evaluation work on DA awareness raising programmes is that whilst awareness and understanding may increase in the short-term this may simply be as a result of focused work. Programmes need to have a longer-term impact if they are to change individuals' beliefs and ultimately lead to a reduction in DA. For this reason Bell and Stanley (2006) completed a follow up a year after the program was implemented where individuals were asked to complete another questionnaire. As stated the results suggested that the views were still evident a year after the programme had been implemented. However, one
must be cautious about drawing conclusions when the data was gathered using only one potentially biased data-gathering tool, a non-standardised questionnaire. Triangulating data, for example, with staff views or focus groups may have strengthened the findings of this research.

A one-off drama programme evaluated in Bridgend (Home Office, 2005) used all of the data gathering methods described above. The drama production was delivered to all year 11 students in five secondary schools. 422 pupils completed questionnaires before and after the drama production and two groups of nine pupils took part in focus groups. Student narratives were also obtained from seven pupils in one of the schools and interviews were held with the head teachers and PSHE co-coordinators. The questionnaires indicated that pupils had increased their awareness of factual information regarding DA. However, the results also showed a lack of understanding about what was considered DA. Furthermore, the focus groups, interviews and narratives suggested that both staff and pupils felt that staff seemed to lack confidence and skills and that support from outside agencies was needed to address these issues (Home Office, 2005). It is arguable that the weaknesses seen in the results can be attributed to the one-off nature of this programme.

All of the research discussed thus far has taken place in secondary schools. This is perhaps because it is felt that primary aged children may not be emotionally mature enough to deal with such a sensitive topic. If attitudes are to be influenced, however, Mullender et al. (2002) argue that work needs to start at least from the age of 11 and preferably in primary school. It is probable that individuals in the later years of primary school have some experience of DA either directly or indirectly through soap operas, song lyrics, biographies and autobiographies, including those of celebrities (Poole and Sterne, 2009).

The Home Office recognised the need to ascertain which approaches and practices were effective in supporting victims and tackling domestic violence. In 2000 they implemented and evaluated a range of interventions centred on violence against women including raising awareness and challenging
attitudes among young people about DA. Three of the programmes that were evaluated were school-based awareness raising programmes of which two also included a primary school intervention; Thurrock and Cheshire.

In Thurrock the primary material was delivered through circle time. The programme consisted of seven sessions and was delivered in one primary school to 68 pupils. The material centred around respect, discrimination, power and stereotyping. Impact was evaluated using a questionnaire based on the ‘Zero Tolerance Respect’ evaluation (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2002). The results indicated that the pupils had a greater understanding about respect and 60% of boys and 40% of girls stated their views or behaviour had changed. One criticism of this programme is that specific education about violence in relationships was not given. It was hoped instead that teaching about respect, stereotyping and power would be just as valuable in increasing understanding about healthy relationships. Critics may argue that this programme is too generic to ensure the needs of children witnessing DA are met and attitudes and behaviour are influenced.

In Cheshire the programme involved; a drama about a violent relationship within a family, which focused on secret-keeping; workshops; teacher packs; guidance for schools; lesson plans; support around child protection issues; guidance on handling disclosure and teacher training materials. A range of professionals including NSPCC, Social Services, outreach services and Education Welfare Officers were involved. The project was extensive; 7,500 children in 80 schools saw the production and over 400 teachers and classroom assistants saw and discussed the production. Schools were provided with questionnaires to be completed by teachers, parents and pupils before and after the production. 955 questionnaires were administered in 38 classes and eight teacher interviews were completed. The programme was evaluated positively by both teachers, parents and students. The interactive student-centred nature of the programme as well as the use of drama was evaluated positively by the pupils. Training support offered was cited in the evaluation by staff. However, caution must be taken when interpreting these findings as Raines (2008) states that satisfaction measures are unreliable.
He argues that survey questions often reflect a desire for social desirability as opposed to an indication of effectiveness.

Within the literature the number of teacher and parent questionnaires completed is not provided. It is possible that this is due to a poor-return rate. Furthermore, although 950 pupil questionnaires provides a good sample size it is perhaps surprisingly few given that the programme was delivered to over 7,000 children. It would be useful to be provided with information about how the sample was chosen.

Responses to this programme were positive, however, this programme was a large scale project with the involvement of a wide range of professionals. It is possible that without involvement/support from a range of agencies school staff would not feel confident in delivering training around the sensitive topic of DA.

Another UK evaluation is of a Scottish programme entitled 'Zero Tolerance Respect' programme (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2002). This programme was carried out in two secondary schools, two primary schools and seven youth groups in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The programme lasted eight weeks and was delivered by guidance staff, youth workers and primary school teachers. All school staff who delivered the programme received training from Zero Tolerance, a charitable trust. The programme comprised of practical sessions and discussion. Schools were also provided with materials such as a CD-Rom, posters and screen savers. Bus sides advertising was also used in each area to increase awareness of DA.

Data was gathered from a range of sources including: interviews with all staff involved at both the start and end of the programme; interviews with 81 children at the start of the programme and 71 at the end; self-completion questionnaires given to all pupils at the start and end of the project; staff feedback forms; and group discussions. The evaluation completed was very thorough and looked at all aspects of the programme including sizes of the groups, launch of the programme and materials provided. Furthermore, the difficulty in measuring tangible changes in attitude and knowledge was acknowledged and the evaluation instead focused on participants'
perceptions of the impact of the project. The programme was evaluated positively by both pupils and adults involved with a large percentage of individuals stating that they believed they had changed as a result; 86% of primary respondents and 78% of those who completed questionnaires.

There are many similarities between this programme and the programme that will be evaluated within this research, for example, both programmes consist of a number of sessions which tackle different topics thought to be related to DA such as stereotyping. In addition, teaching staff were involved in the delivery. However, the existence of materials such as bus-sides suggests a slightly larger-scale involvement. Furthermore, questions around sustainability still exist due to the number of professionals involved. The question of whether staff would feel confident to deliver the material independently was not addressed.

From these findings the Home Office (2005) have provided a list of recommendations about primary prevention, namely: primary prevention programmes should be implemented in both primary and secondary school; primary prevention should be included within the PSHE curriculum; programmes should have a cross-curricular approach and be approached from a school-wide perspective; teachers providing primary prevention programmes should be trained and confident in using the project materials including dealing with disclosures and lastly that teachers should feel supported via local education and multiagency links to deal with any issues raised in order for effective implementation of preventive programmes.

It is possible that criticisms similar to those cited within this review will also apply to the Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid (2007) programme. At the time the programme was chosen no evaluation had been conducted and this remains the case at the time of writing. As stated the local authority produced their own materials for use in secondary schools but decided to use a programme already in existence for their primary schools. The lead EP investigated what programmes were available and discovered that very few local authorities had programmes covering the sensitive topic of DA; five in total. This is perhaps unsurprising given the lack of research identified. All of
these programmes were looked at and the decision to use the Birmingham and Solihull Women's Aid (2007) programme was made. This programme was chosen because:

- Unlike many of the programmes there was material specifically for primary aged pupils.
- The programme was very teacher-friendly, for example, including lesson plans. As discussed much of the literature describes programmes which have been evaluated positively but that would be difficult to sustain due to the level of involvement from external agencies. Therefore, it was felt that it was key that teachers were able to deliver the programme.
- The programme was designed by a team of professionals.
- The programme had been used by a Women's Aid worker in a small area of the local authority. Those involved in this work were positive about the programme.
- The secondary materials designed by the LA team had a similar format and content.

There currently exists some debate about the gendered nature of educating about DA. In Canada preventative work has moved away from one-off events such as violence awareness weeks and is now more integrated within the curriculum, as recommended by the Home Office (2005) within the UK. Whilst this move has generally been met with positivity there has been concern that this move has meant that programmes are less gendered and do not take account of the wider social context and different patterns of socialization for boys and girls (Hague, Kelly & Mullender, 2001). However, Bell and Stanley (2006) and Suderman, Jaffe and Hastings (1995) caution that discussing the gendered nature of DA can be very difficult and can risk some students perceiving such programmes as ‘male bashing’ and thus reacting defensively and choosing not to engage with the programme. The use of male facilitators may be useful in tackling this difficult balance.

All of the programmes discussed include an element of education about social-communication skills. Hague, Kelly and Mullender (2001) argue that
promoting social-communication skills as strongly could be counterproductive. Teaching skills such as empathy could actually encourage individuals to empathise with the perpetrator and thus not make disclosures. A balance between teaching these skills whilst also ensuring that children understand the importance of keeping themselves safe is therefore paramount.

1.8.1 Programme Overview
The programme consists of six one hour weekly sessions. The content of the sessions is provided below (for a more detailed programme outline including the full overview of a session see appendix one).

Week 1- Respectful relationships.
Week 2-Consequences of being violent.
Week 3- Gender Inequality.
Week 4-Conflict Management.
Week 5- Children's experiences of Domestic Violence.
Week 6- Where to go for help.

1.9 The role of the Educational Psychologist
Given the behaviours characteristic of those who have witnessed DA it is plausible that EPs will frequently work with this population knowingly or unknowingly. Targeted work focused specifically on those who have experienced/witnessed DA has also been undertaken by EPs (Dodd, 2009). EPs have an understanding of both child development and the potential impact of trauma and are thus well placed to deliver work in this area. Within the BPS Child Protection Portfolio (2007) reference is made to psychologists' safeguarding responsibility due to their unique understanding of children's individual development and identity needs, professional assessment skills, understanding of organisational and family systems including DA, intervention strategies, knowledge of multi-professional working and knowledge of research and evaluation.
Whilst it is clear that educating children about DA is important whether this should be considered as part of the role of an EP is less clear. The role of preventative work is discussed within the Child Protection Portfolio (BPS, 2007). Specific reference is made to support for individuals running preventative programmes. Arguably due to the unique knowledge identified above EPs are well placed to support the delivery of work on DA. This is supported by findings from the DfEE (2000) which showed that EPs want to see a greater emphasis on their role in problem solving and preventative work at a range of levels. The same research suggested that schools were not always aware that EPs could provide this service.

Work which empowered teachers to develop their knowledge and skills was also valued as it further enabled EPs to undertake more preventative work (DfEE, 2000). Much of the research discussed above cites the importance of support from external agencies. Whilst their involvement is positive, it is important that staff feel confident in dealing with issues surrounding DA in order to improve their capacity and not develop a reliance on external staff. Furthermore, many of the agencies who deal with DA are of a voluntary nature. Caution must be taken when using these agencies as funding may not allow the work to continue indefinitely and there may be a political agenda behind their work.

Therefore, perhaps if EPs are not always directly involved in delivering programmes about DA they could increase teacher confidence by being available to deliver particularly sensitive sessions or co-deliver the material alongside staff the first time the material is delivered in the school. At a minimum they could be involved in providing support to teaching staff who are involved in the delivery.

There has been a move towards EPs considering themselves as scientist practitioners whose work is evidence based. Evidence based practice was a concept developed in a health context but which over the last five to ten years social policy including education has placed an emphasis on (Frederickson, 2002). An important role that EPs can take is both in ensuring that they use and recommend empirically validated interventions and tools
and also in developing the research evidence on intervention efficacy and effectiveness (Frederickson, 2002). The move towards a doctorate level qualification for EPs and opportunities for continuing professional doctorates for those already qualified thus provides a unique opportunity for EPs to be directly involved in research. Therefore whilst the EPs role may not be in directly delivering material around DA they may have a role in gathering evidence of its efficacy. This is supported by the Child Protection Portfolio (BPS, 2007) which argues that an important element of any preventative programme is evaluation. EPs are well placed and skilled to fulfill this role.

1.10 Literature Review Summary

Within section 1.7 the changes in the role of education have been discussed. Within the school setting there is now an expectation that children should not be taught solely academic skills and that instead there will also be a focus on enabling children to develop into confident and considerate adults. Curricula such as SEAL and PSHE have been introduced to facilitate this development. Most of this work is at the universal and targeted level. There is also a need for more specialist work for example around sensitive topics such as DA.

Discussion about healthy relationships is included within these curricula, however, DA is not explicitly covered. It could be argued that as a high number of children will be affected by DA and in order to ensure that these children are supported and to reduce DA occurring in the future this topic should be explicitly taught (Poole and Sterne, 2010).

The effects of witnessing DA have been researched in depth and are described in section 1.5. The research suggests that although not all children will be affected some consequences of witnessing DA include externalizing behaviour such as anger outbursts and internalising behaviour such as withdrawal and bed-wetting. Research also exists linking witnessing DA to attachment problems and PTSD.

The importance of preventative programmes aimed at increasing knowledge and changing attitudes about DA is therefore paramount. Section 1.8
provides an overview of current knowledge about preventative programmes. The evaluation of such programmes within the UK is limited particularly with regard to primary school programmes. The programmes which have been evaluated positively are often large scale projects which have been delivered almost exclusively by external agencies/professionals. Whilst the involvement of external agencies is positive it is important that teachers have the capacity to confidently deal with the issues of DA. Thus the effectiveness of smaller scale, classroom based programmes which can be confidently delivered by teachers are still in question.

1.11 Gap in knowledge
As stated there currently exists a gap in current knowledge regarding the effectiveness of small scale classroom based programmes within primary schools aimed at increasing awareness and changing attitudes about DA. It is possible that larger scale programmes, such as that run in Cheshire, will have a different impact than smaller scale classroom based programmes. The scale of the programme and the fact that a large number of professionals were involved may have made the programme more interesting for the children and adults involved. Furthermore, the scale of the project may have highlighted the importance of the topic. However, it is also possible to argue that frequent smaller scale work may have a longer-term impact than a shorter-term intensive programme. Furthermore, whilst the Cheshire evaluation indicates a positive impact, little information is provided about how the programme was delivered. This research will thus aim to provide more detail about this process.

Much of the work conducted in this field has been undertaken primarily by external professionals and hence does not build capacity within schools. Whilst many of the evaluations discussed were positive, school staff were not asked their views about this involvement and whether they would feel confident in delivering this type of material without it. If schools are expected to deliver this type of material it is arguable that school staff should not be reliant on external staff as: pupils may make disclosures after external staff have left; external professionals do not know the pupils which may create
anxiety; and school staff may feel disempowered by a reliance on outside agencies. It is arguable that without such involvement school staff would not feel confident in delivering this material and therefore would choose not to deliver. Schools may need initial support from external agencies in the delivery of such programmes but the long term aim should be that school staff feel confident in tackling this topic independently. Thus, within this research, an EP will be involved in the delivery of the material with the aim of increasing staff confidence in this field and to ensure that it is delivered. This research will obtain staff views on the involvement of external professionals with the aim of identifying the best ways of supporting staff to ensure that they feel confident in educating children about this topic. Pupils’ experiences of external professional involvement in such a sensitive area will also be explored.

This research may also have wider implications. The issue of DA is obviously a very specific and sensitive topic which can be considered specialist. However, there exists other sensitive topics about which schools may wish to educate school pupils, for example, self-harm, drug use and aspects of sex education. It is possible that the findings from this research could be useful when delivering material on a range of sensitive topics. Pupil and teacher views about the involvement of external professionals may also be generalised to other topics. Furthermore, the findings may support the delivery of work of a more generic nature for example in PSHE (DFEE, 1999b). This is supported by Buckley and White (2007) who found that teachers believed the involvement of external professionals had helped them to develop ideas for PSHE.

Analysis of the current literature has led me to the following questions:

1.11.1 Research questions
1-What were staff and pupils’ thoughts and feelings about the strengths and weaknesses of the DA awareness raising programme?

2.-Did pupils' awareness and understanding of DA change as a result of the implementation of DA awareness raising materials? If so, in what ways?

3-What were staff and pupils’ views about the involvement of an EP in the delivery?
Chapter Two-Methodology

2.1 Section Outline

This chapter aims to explain the methodology of the research and the philosophical rationale behind it. The data-gathering methods as well as analysis will be explained within this context. The reliability and validity will be explored through exploration of the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen techniques. Lastly, ethical considerations and the role of the researcher will be discussed.

2.2 Philosophical and methodological approach employed

The table below outlines the philosophical and methodological approach to this research.

Table 1-2.1 Overview of philosophical and methodological approaches

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<tr>
<th>Paradigm</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research design</td>
<td>Case study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Epistemology</td>
<td>Critical Realist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ontology</td>
<td>Role of values in research/researcher considered.</td>
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<td>Axiology</td>
<td>Role of values in research/researcher considered.</td>
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<td>Research methods</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
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<td>Interviews</td>
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<td>Research Diary</td>
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<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis</td>
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2.3 Positivism, Relativism and critical realism

In order to understand the philosophical underpinning of this research it is first necessary to explore the wider role of research. Mouly (1978) stated that there are three ways in which individuals seek to understand and explain the
world around them; experience, reasoning and research. Kerlinger (1970) described research as the investigation of hypothetical propositions through systematic, controlled and empirical methods. Furthermore, research can be understood as a combination of both experience and reasoning and can thus be seen as the most successful way of discovering the truth (Borg, 1963). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) state that research is distinct from both experience and reasoning in three ways: firstly, research is systematic and controlled; secondly, research is empirical; and thirdly research, is self-correcting.

This definition of research is perhaps easiest to equate to scientific experiments such as the implementation of randomised controlled trials (RCTs). However, when conducting research within the social world questions arise about the feasibility and ethics of control and empiricism. Thus questions about the nature of reality 'ontology' and what we can know about reality 'epistemology' arise. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) argue that it is the assumptions we make about ontology which lead to epistemological assumptions which in turn influence our methodological choices and thoughts regarding instrumentation and data collection.

This research was conducted from a critical realist stance. This section will outline the approach and how it has influenced the design of the research.

Critical realism has become influential within the philosophy of science perhaps due to its rejection of the extremes of both traditional positivistic science and relativistic approaches (Robson, 2002). These approaches link closely to the concepts of objectivity and subjectivity.

The term positivism was coined by a French philosopher, Auguste Comte in the nineteenth century (Beck, 1979), however, Outhwaite (1987) identifies three distinct generations of positivists that have followed. Positivism is sometimes referred to as 'the standard view' or 'scientific method' (Robson, 2002) and has a strong focus on objectivity. Bentz and Shapiro (1998) provide a detailed explanation of positivism and its critiques. In brief, proposers of positivism argue that there is an objective and external reality which exists outside of subjective experiences. Thus scientific propositions
are based on facts which can be tested using strict rules and procedures. Phenomena that cannot be observed and are theoretical or invisible are rejected. Furthermore, the assumptions and methods of natural science can be transferred to social science (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998). Advocates of this viewpoint thus believe that quantitative methodologies must be used within research.

There exists strong criticism of positivistic approaches both from a philosophical perspective (Blaikie, 1993) as well as more specifically in relation to social research (Sarantakos, 1998). Critics of positivism argue that the fundamental weakness of positivism lies in its simplicity; they argue that facts and values are interwoven (Blaikie, 1993) and that reality is social action that has been interpreted rather than existing independently (Sarantakos, 1998). The role of both participant and the researcher is also questioned by critics of this approach. Within this approach participants are treated as scientific 'objects' from whom the researcher is required to distance themselves in order to maintain objectivity. However, Sarantakos (1998) argues that this creates an artificial world from which valuable information relevant to the real-world cannot be obtained.

In contrast a relativistic approach, in its extreme form, argues that there is no external reality which exists outside of human consciousness (Robson, 2002). The main argument proposed by this tradition is that natural science methods cannot be used to recognise 'truths' about the social world (Robson, 2002). The natural and social world are seen through subjective experience and hence it is argued that there is no objective reality. Steinmetz (1998) argues that language is central to this understanding of the world as it is through this instrument that the world is represented and constructed. In this way scientific accounts and theories are seen as holding the same value as those of a lay person. Thus the process of research is seen as generating working hypotheses as opposed to providing unalterable facts. (Fletcher, 1996). Advocates of this viewpoint therefore believe that qualitative methodologies should be employed within research. Social constructionism (Gergen, 1985), discourse analysis (Potter & Wetherwell, 1987) and feminist psychology (Rieger, 1992) all have a strong foundation in relativism.
There also exists strong criticisms of relativist theory. Robson (2002) argues that in its most extreme form relativists make no distinction between ontology and epistemology instead presuming that the world is whatever they choose to perceive it as. Furthermore, the value of adopting such a view is questioned as illustrated by Fletcher (1996, p 415);

"by discarding the criteria or aims concerned with truth or objectivity and adopting a full blown constructionism, such theories become entangled in a web of internal contradictions."

More simplistically it becomes impossible to discuss the value of relativism because in order to do so one imposes values and concepts which the theory itself rejects. The idea of fallibility is also introduced as a criticism of relativism. Fallibility refers to the experience of getting things wrong or having our expectations confounded and hence reminding us that things exist in the world regardless of what we think or believe (Sayer, 2000). Fletcher (1996) also discusses the possible dangers of science becoming less interested in truth and instead embedded within a wider political stance citing examples such as Nazi Germany. If we subscribe to relativism then views such as this should be considered as good as any other.

2.3.1 Critical realism

It appears that both of these approaches alone are insufficient in providing an understanding of ontology and epistemology relevant to real-world research. Thus the value of an approach which does not suffer from the criticisms encompassed by the extreme views held by both positivist and relativist spheres can be seen. Society can be seen as influencing theory whilst also acknowledging that because this is the case then rules, norms or rational aims need not be rejected (Bunge, 1992). Critical realism is an approach which it is argued does exactly this.

"Realism can provide a model of scientific explanation which avoids both positivism and relativism." (Robson, 2002, p29).

The theory has been argued most strongly by Bhaskar (1989) and Harre (1981; 1986), however, the terminology and stance chosen by each is
significantly different (Lewis, 2000). The key argument, however, is that a reality exists which is independent of our awareness of it, 'things exist and act independently of human activity' (Bhaskar, 1989, p.13). Thus, realism allows individuals to conduct social research which acknowledges the influence of the researcher whilst also maintaining a basis in scientific research. Johnson and Duberley (2000) outline six key concepts of critical realism which are summarised in the table below:

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<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>There is a social and natural reality which exists independently of our human knowledge. This is described as a metaphysical ontology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>This social and natural world is comprised of entities which may not be observable and may be experienced differently due to individual differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Critical realism rejects the idea of theory-neutral observational language and theory of truth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Science cannot be understood as objective or pure due to the influence of individual differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Positivist views of science are only relevant in relation to how scientists justify their actions and explain themselves, all other positivist views of science are rejected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Unobservable events can be shown to be real through what Bhaskar (1989) describes as 'retroductive' argument whereby events can be explained by postulating and identifying mechanisms which are capable of producing them.</td>
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This theory attempts to answer questions about both the nature of knowledge, ontology, and how we acquire it, epistemology, and can thus be described as a meta-theory. The role of individual differences between researchers in beliefs, cognitive capacities and social constructions is acknowledged.

Within this research I aim to explore the views of pupils and members of staff about their experiences of the domestic abuse (DA) awareness raising
programme. However, as my philosophical stance is one of critical realism I am aware that the research will be influenced by my own understanding of the social world and as a result I am aware that I will be unable to establish an absolute truth as this is beyond my personal capabilities.

2.3.2 Research design within a critical realist framework

Bryman (1988) argues that a logical relationship does not exist between ontology, epistemology, strategy and methods by stating that the decisions about methods of data collection are affected by any number, or cluster, of considerations. However, Scott (2005) argues that the ontological and epistemological stance undertaken by the researcher clearly underlies the methodological choices made due to the fact that the researcher engages with, and describes, the world.

Critical realists stress the importance of the role of the researcher both within data collection and interpretation since their knowledge, views and beliefs will influence the results. The importance of fallibility is also stressed by Scott (2005) as critical realists accept that interpretations of the social world may be found to be incorrect. However, the likelihood of this happening can be reduced if the researcher remains mindful of validity and reliability. This will be discussed in more detail within section 2.6.

2.4 Qualitative vs. quantitative research

As stated, the debate between positivist and relativist theory has been longstanding. Embedded within this are questions regarding quantitative versus qualitative paradigms.

The concept of 'quantity' is central to quantitative research and hence the approach deals with numerical measurements. Numerical data is collected in order to test hypotheses and thus this approach is commonly used by advocates of positivism.

In contrast qualitative research deals with quality. Qualitative research aims to create a rich description and possible explanation of people’s meaning-
making through the collection and analysis of non-numerical data (Lyons & Coyle, 2007).

"Qualitative researchers aim to understand "what it is like" to experience particular conditions and how people manage certain conditions" (Willig, 2001, p9)

Qualitative researchers thus believe that knowledge and the processes which lead us to acquire this knowledge are heavily based in the context within which the research takes place. Furthermore, the researcher and participants, along with the groups, ideologies and social structures that are in existence, are an essential part of the context (Dallos & Draper, 2000).

Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) state that whilst the qualitative/quantitative debate was necessary in the 1980's and 1990's in current times its requirement has reduced. Bryman (1988) argues that there is a much greater compatibility between the two traditions than their philosophical underpinnings would suggest. Reichardt and Rallis (1994) state that four key beliefs that are fundamental to both quantitative and qualitative researchers include:

1. Enquiry is value-laden.
2. Facts are theory-laden.
3. Reality cannot be seen as simple.
4. More than one theory can explain any set of data.

Thus, Bryman (1988) argues that those working within the applied field should use a pragmatic approach choosing whichever approach works best for a particular problem. The arguments proposed by Reichardt and Rallis (1994) can be seen to be similar to the key beliefs of critical realists and it is perhaps unsurprising that advocates of critical realism do not believe that quantitative and qualitative methods are irreconcilable (Scott, 2007).

Furthermore, in order to triangulate data the use of mixed-methods designs where both quantitative and qualitative approaches can be used side by side are applied. The process of triangulation will be discussed in more detail in section 2.6.2.1.
2.5 Case study methodology

"The essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result." (Schramm, 1971, p6).

Case study design is used with this research. Yin (2003) distinguishes between three types of case study namely exploratory, explanatory and descriptive case studies.

Yin (2003) states that there are three conditions which need to be considered when deciding whether case study is an appropriate methodology. Firstly, the type of research question, more specifically case studies tend to ask ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions. Secondly, the amount of control the researcher has over events as within case study the researcher has little or no control. Lastly, whether the focus is on historical phenomena or contemporary events as a case study design is not appropriate when studying historical events.

Within this research the third consideration is the easiest to resolve. The phenomena being observed is a programme delivered recently within the real-world and thus a case study is appropriate. However, the first and second considerations are perhaps more complex. Initially my research questions do not appear to ask ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions. However, when considered further; research question one aims to identify how staff and pupils feel about the programme and why (advantages/disadvantages); research question three asks how they felt about the involvement of an EP in the delivery; and lastly research question two asks how children's beliefs and understanding about DA have been affected by the implementation of the programme. Secondly, the amount of control I have over the events is arguably questionable as I was involved in co-delivering the programme. However, the programme materials were delivered as suggested within the manual and no changes were made to the format or content, furthermore no attempt was made to manipulate the individuals involved. Furthermore, Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) state that whilst the researcher has little
control over the events one of the unique features of a case study is that the researcher is integrally involved in the case.

Evaluating the use of a specific programme about DA within a small number of schools can be considered to be at the top of the hourglass model proposed by Salkovskis (1995). It can be considered the initial phase of more in depth research aimed at developing the theory and practice of the approach with ideas being tested through case study. Once this stage has been conducted then research that conforms to the most rigorous forms of enquiry can be conducted before finally questions about generalisation can be asked (Frederickson, 2002). This research will use multiple case-study design so could be placed slightly below the top in Salkovskis (1995) hourglass model but has not yet progressed to research that conforms to the most rigorous standards of enquiry which sits in the centre of the hourglass. Yin (2003) states that an exploratory study is the best form of research when asking questions with the goal being to develop pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry.

Yin (2003) also distinguishes between single-case designs and multiple-case designs. Yin (2003) argues that single-case study design should be used when the case is: unique; representative of a typical case; longitudinal; or a critical test of existing theory. If the case does not meet this criteria then arguably a multiple-case study will be a more appropriate design. Yin (2003) states that multiple-case study design is regarded as more robust as having evidence from multiple cases is considered more convincing. The more cases that are included in the design the greater the ability to make this generalisation. However, Yin (2003) suggests that as opposed to viewing multiple cases as similar to multiple respondents in a survey each case within a multiple case design should be seen as a replication. By using more than one case study within this research it is possible to see if pupil and staff experiences of the programme are the same in different schools and thus provide a more thorough evaluation. It will also allow implementation factors to be considered.
Yin (2003) states that units of analysis must be specified when conducting a case study. He equates this to the 'case' within a case-study. Within this research the case study was the programme and the units of analysis were the participants experiences of the programme and its delivery.

The role and value of case study as a research method is debated by some, for example, Shavelson and Townes (2002) state that cases studies should only be used when conducting the initial exploratory phase of research. However, Yin (2003) argues against this.

Like all research methods there exists both strengths and weaknesses of case study. Nisbet and Watt (1984) attempt to provide a summary (see table below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reality is key.</td>
<td>Lack of generalisability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The results require little interpretation.</td>
<td>They may be biased, selective and subjective as they are not open to cross-checking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique features can be caught.</td>
<td>Despite reflexivity attempts they are prone to observer bias.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The results are understandable by lay people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They provide insight into other similar situations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They only require a single researcher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are flexible and as a result can build in unexpected data.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When considering the weaknesses as stated by Nisbet and Watt (1984) it is arguable that there is an overlap with the features identified as being central to qualitative methods. Whilst case studies commonly fall into the qualitative
paradigm rather than quantitative this is not always the case (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). However, whilst I am mindful of the suggested weaknesses proposed, it can be argued that due to my critical realist stance and the collection of only qualitative data these criticisms were already in existence. Thus issues of reliability, validity and reflexivity must be addressed.

These criticism also highlight that whilst this research may provide important information it could be seen as an initial stage in a more detailed investigation.

2.6 Issues of reliability and validity

Reliability and validity link closely to the epistemological basis of the research design as both terms relate to the seeking for accuracy and/or truth. As a result some researchers who are from a relativist stance reject the idea of evaluative criteria such as reliability and validity (Wolcott, 1994). However, Morse (1999) argues that reliability and validity are essential within qualitative research if we are to argue that qualitative research is taken seriously and classified as science. Thus, both reliability and validity need to be addressed within quantitative and qualitative paradigms although it is arguable that within these two paradigms they need to be addressed in different ways.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggest that whilst reliability is a necessary precondition of validity, validity may be a sufficient but not necessary condition for reliability.

2.6.1 Reliability

Within quantitative research reliability refers to the replicability of the research whereby it would be expected that similar data would be found at a different time or if a different researcher was involved. Thus it also links closely to generalisability since it would be expected that similar results would be found if the research was conducted with a similar sample.

It therefore becomes clear why the concept of reliability has become contentious within qualitative research as few qualitative researchers would
state that their work is perfectly replicable (Parker, 1994). For this reason the
idea of reliability is often avoided within qualitative research (Lewis & Ritchie,
2003). This has led some qualitative researchers to adopt terminology such
as 'applicability', 'trustworthiness' (Glaser & Straus, 1967) and 'dependability'
(Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as opposed to reliability. However, within a critical
realist stance it is believed that reliability should be considered since the task
of science is to test theories through rational criteria (House, 1991) in order to
develop our understanding of the world. Thus critical realists would state that
replication aims to confirm the structures and mechanisms of the original
study but that replication, or lack of it, does not prove conclusive verification,
or falsification, of their existence (Robson, 2002).

Seale (1999) argues that reliability can be difficult to achieve because of
practical implications as opposed to 'insuperable philosophical problems'
(Seale, 1999, p158) but that reflexivity, see section 2.6.2.3, can enable good
practice in relation to reliability.

Lewis and Ritchie (2003) state that there are five considerations which need
to be made in order to ensure reliability, namely;

- Was the sample selection without bias?
- Was fieldwork carried out consistently?
- Was the analysis carried out systematically?
- Is there evidence for the interpretation?
- Was there opportunity for all perspectives?

These considerations were made when conducting this research. Information
is provided about the sample selection and its representation of the target
population within section 2.14. I have attempted to provide comprehensive
information about how the research was completed. Consistency across
focus groups and interviews was ensured using set scripts. Within the results
section I have aimed to clearly detail the process of data analysis and have
provided a detailed worked example (appendix two).
2.6.2 Validity

Validity refers to the 'correctness' or 'precision' of a piece of research (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). Validity is commonly split into two categories. Internal validity refers to whether you are investigating what you claim to be (Arksey & Knight, 1999) whilst external validity refers to the degree to which generalisation can be made to the wider population, cases or situations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Thus the overlap between generalisability and external validity in qualitative research is clearly interwoven (Robson, 2002). Again, as with reliability, some qualitative researchers have chosen to use different terminology such as 'credibility' or 'transferability' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and 'plausibility' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Within quantitative research discussion about validity tends to focus on measurement, however whilst qualitative research does not claim to offer objective measurement the issue of validity is still understood as important (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). Hammersley (1992) describes validity:

"an account is valid or true if it represents accurately those features of the phenomena that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise."

(Hammersley, 1992, p69).

There are a number of methods employed to ensure the validity of qualitative research which include triangulation, respondent validation and reflexivity and these will be discussed in more detail below. Furthermore, I have attempted to be explicit within all stages of the research and have attempted to remain true to the data provided by all participants. I have also attempted to acknowledge any bias that may have occurred within this research.

The sample size involved in this study is relatively small and thus it may not be possible to draw general conclusions about the use of the programme within the wider population. However, it is hoped that this research may provide a starting point from which more detailed research possibly involving quantitative measures could be conducted.
2.6.2.1 Triangulation
Triangulation is a method of cross-checking that assumes that obtaining information from different sources, or through different methods, will both help to confirm and improve the clarity of a research finding. This has been an area of much debate as many qualitative researchers criticise triangulation on both ontological grounds and epistemological grounds (Denzin, 1989). Within this research the value of triangulation is understood as a method described by Fielding and Fielding (1986) of ‘adding breadth or depth to our analysis’.

Denzin (1978) distinguishes between four types of triangulation; methods triangulation, triangulation of sources, triangulation through multiple analysis and theory triangulation.

Within this research I have used triangulation of sources; this type of triangulation involves using several sources of data about the same phenomenon. This was achieved by obtaining information about the programme from both staff members and pupils. The use of three different case study schools also enabled triangulation of sources. The use of a research diary also enabled triangulation of information relating specifically to research question three which focuses on the involvement of an EP in the delivery of the programme. Triangulation through multiple analysis was also achieved by inviting a colleague to analyse the findings and discuss their interpretations.

2.6.2.2 Respondent validation
Respondent validation involves the research participants being given the opportunity to see the researcher’s interpretations and decide whether the meanings or interpretations assigned to themselves are correct (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003).

In the case of staff interviews once the data had been transcribed and initial themes created the participants were asked their views about the interpretation. It was felt that returning to the pupil focus groups would be time-consuming and likely to result in more data from differing perspectives. For this reason, pupils were instead supported to create a ‘spider-diagram’
containing what they considered to be the main ideas for each question. Arther and Nazroo (2003) describe this as mapping emergent ideas. At the end of each focus group I returned to this spider-diagram and summarised the points; participants were invited to make changes or add information if they felt their views had not been sufficiently documented.

2.6.2.3 Reflexivity
Reflexivity refers to the awareness of the researcher’s involvement within the research and the acknowledgement that it is impossible to remain entirely objective when conducting and analysing the data. Willig (2001) argues that there are two types of reflexivity; personal and epistemological. Personal reflexivity refers to the researcher’s own values and experiences which may shape the research. This is of particular concern if the researcher is conducting work in an area which is personally relevant to themselves. In contrast epistemological reflexivity refers to assumptions that have been made in the course of the research, for example, around the chosen design which may have affected the results.

Throughout the implementation of the programme and research I received supervision from both a university and work-based supervisor. My colleagues also played the role of ‘critical friends’ and were available at the end of each stage of data collection. This enabled me to reflect on the process and was a valuable experience.

A research diary was used to track my observations and judgements. This was completed after the delivery of each session as well as after each focus group and interview. The diary provided an opportunity to track my thoughts and opinions during the process of the programme delivery and data collection. This was a useful tool as it provided an opportunity to reflect and document any anxieties I was experiencing.

2.7 Axiology
Whilst I have discussed the topic of both the nature of reality (ontology) and what we can know about reality (epistemology) a third concept also plays an
important role within research, that of axiology. Axiology refers to the nature of value and value judgements.

As previously stated critical realists believe that a singular reality does exist but also acknowledges that individual differences exist in how the world is experienced. This will be partly due to the values held by the individual. As this research was conducted solely by myself and as I hold a critical realist viewpoint it is important that I acknowledge my own values, beliefs and preconceptions. My beliefs in relation to research and more specifically in relation to my chosen topic are listed in appendix three.

### 2.8 Research questions and chosen method of enquiry

Table 4-2.4 Research Questions and chosen method of enquiry and analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Participants involved</th>
<th>Method of enquiry</th>
<th>Method of analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.-What were staff and pupils’ thoughts and feelings about the strengths and weaknesses of the DA awareness raising programme?</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff members</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.-Did pupils' awareness and understanding of DA change as a result of the implementation of DA awareness raising materials? If so in what ways?</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3-What were staff and pupils’ views about the involvement of an EP in the delivery?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pupils Focus groups</th>
<th>Thematic analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff members</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Research diary</td>
<td>Thematic analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.9 Ethical considerations in this research

Within any research there are ethical consideration, however, as this research involved children and focused on the topic of DA this area was of particular importance. It is important to be mindful of the impact of research on those involved. The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) provide guidelines which should be followed when conducting educational research. These guidelines stress the importance of maintaining an ethic of respect for 'the person, knowledge, democratic value, quality of educational research and academic freedom'. (BERA, 2004, p5). This may be a difficult position to maintain as the researcher may be in a position where respect for the person and respect for knowledge seem to be in opposition. For this reason it is important that all research is conducted in an honest and open way and that all involved are fully aware of the implications of being involved in the research.

During all stages of the research ethical principles as stated by the British Psychological Society’s Code of Conduct and Ethics (2009) and the British Psychological Society's Professional Practice Guidelines (2002) were followed. Guidelines as set by the Health Professions Council (2009) when conducting research were followed at all times. Some of the key elements of working within these guidelines are informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, right to withdraw and access to research findings. As my research involved children and adults some of the ethical considerations
differed for each group. Participants, both children and adults, were not deceived at any stage in my research.

2.9.1 Informed consent

Pupils: Written consent was obtained from the parents/carers of all pupils who took part in the focus groups. An information sheet, letter and consent form (appendix four) were sent to all possible participants which included information about the DA awareness raising programme and research being conducted. The nature of my involvement was detailed. Within this letter pupils and parents were made aware that they would be given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any stage. The consent letter required the parents to 'opt-in' to the research. This decision was made as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) framework for research ethics (ESRC, 2010) states that research participants must participate in a voluntary way.

Staff: Consent for the involvement of the school within the research was obtained from the person I initially liaised with (appendix four). Staff directly involved were also provided with an information sheet and consent form (appendix four). After a discussion with myself detailing the research, staff members were provided with a short period of time (one week) to decide whether they would like to take part in the research.

2.9.2 Anonymity

The concept of anonymity, confidentiality and data protection are closely linked. All schools which were used as case studies remained anonymous throughout the research and are referred to by a letter of the alphabet. Staff and pupil names remained anonymous throughout the research and in the write up of the study.

Pupils: Focus groups were recorded and transcribed and after the completion of transcription the recording was destroyed. All pupils’ responses were coded to ensure anonymity. The concept of confidentiality was explained to all pupils at the start and end of each focus group. It is arguable that Year Five children may not have understood the concept of confidentiality.
However, as part of the DA awareness raising programme the concept of confidentiality was discussed and re-introduced at the start of every session.

Staff: Interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were anonymised. After transcription had been completed the recordings were destroyed. The principle of confidentiality was explained to all members of staff and all data was anonymised when writing up the research.

2.9.3 Right to withdraw
Both staff and pupils were made aware that they could withdraw from the research at any stage. The children were told at the start of each focus group that if they felt uncomfortable at any stage they did not have to stay. They were also made aware that it was up to them if they contributed to the discussion or not. At the end of each focus group pupils were asked if they were happy for me to use the recording we had completed.

The school staff involved in the research were made aware that they could withdraw from the research at any stage. Furthermore, the person with whom the research had initially been co-ordinated, in most cases the head teacher, was made aware that they could withdraw the school from the research at any stage.

2.9.4 Debriefing
Participants involved in the focus groups were offered opportunities to ask questions both before and after the focus groups. I was available on a one-to-one basis both before and after the focus groups if participants had any concerns.

Participants involved in the interviews were given opportunities to ask questions before and after the interviews. As DA affects one in four women and one in six men (Council of Europe, 2002) it is possible that staff within the school may have had personal experience of DA. All staff members were made aware of support agencies in the area.
2.9.5 Access to research findings
Participants were offered a written summary of the findings and if required an opportunity to discuss the findings in more detail with myself.

2.9.6 Other ethical considerations
It was possible that pupils may have disclosed information about their home life. This was not as a result of the research but being involved in a DA awareness raising programme. This occurred once during the sessions and correct safeguarding procedures were followed at all times. This disclosure did not occur in the presence of other students although if it had there would have been ethical implications. As the programme aims to help pupils understand the effect that DA can have on children it was hoped that pupils would be supportive if the situation did occur. Furthermore, at the onset of each session the principle of confidentiality was explained.

This research covers a sensitive topic area and therefore I required access to a high level of supervision. In order to ensure ethical safeguards I was closely supervised by two Health Professions Council registered practitioner psychologists within university and in my work setting.

2.10 Chronology
An overview of the chronology of data collection is presented in the table below.

Table 5-2.5 Overview of Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>By whom:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2010</td>
<td>Discussion with the Principal EP about the programme and LA’s plan for implementation</td>
<td>Researcher, Lead EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2010</td>
<td>Decision made to contact schools directly</td>
<td>Researcher through discussion with university supervisor and lead EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April 2010</td>
<td>Arrange meeting with schools to</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Discuss research with Link member of staff in each school and Colleague within LA</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-May 2010</td>
<td>Meet with staff members to discuss programme, research and their role</td>
<td>Researcher, Staff members in case study schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June 2010</td>
<td>Planning and implementation of programme. Schools provided with consent letters.</td>
<td>Researcher, Staff members in case study schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-June 2010</td>
<td>Confirm questions to be used in focus groups and interviews</td>
<td>Researcher, Staff members in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2010</td>
<td>Run three focus groups for pupils. Semi-structured interviews with relevant staff</td>
<td>Researcher, 20 Year five pupils, Five members of staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2010</td>
<td>Transcribe interviews and focus groups</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2010</td>
<td>Analyse data using Thematic analysis</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2010- April 2011</td>
<td>Complete write up of thesis. Feedback findings to local authority</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.11 Research methods

2.11.1 Focus groups

A focus group consists of a group of individuals discussing a topic provided by the researcher. Krueger (1994, p6) defines a focus group as ‘a carefully planned discussion, designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatenng environment’.

Focus groups are common practice within business and politics and are becoming increasingly popular within education (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The history of focus groups lies within market research in the twenties when it was acknowledged that many consumer decisions were made within a group context (Bogardus, 1926). A focus group is a type of group interview, however, emphasis is placed on the interaction within the group as opposed to between the individuals and the researcher (Morgan, 1988). It is this interaction that is thought to yield rich data. Johnson (1996) argues that focus groups have the power to raise consciousness and empower participants when seen from a critical realist perspective.

Robson (2002) provides a summary of situations where focus groups are useful. The list includes:

- gathering qualitative data.
- when we seek to find out information about attitudes, values and opinions.
- when the focus is on encouraging groups, rather than individuals to voice opinions.
- generating hypotheses from the insights and data from the group.

Finch and Lewis (2003) add that focus groups are useful when there is a shared relationship to the research topic and also when seeking to discuss differences within the group. As this research primarily sought to obtain qualitative data about participants attitudes to the DA awareness raising programme, focus groups were thought to be an appropriate method. Furthermore, as the participants had all received the DA sessions it was
thought that there may be differences in the perceptions of the experience. The decision was therefore made that focus groups were an appropriate methodology.

Furthermore, due to the group nature of focus groups it was hoped that children would have less anxiety about participating in this method of data collection than they may have experienced in an interview. Therefore questions concerning the use of focus groups with children arise.

2.11.1.1 Characteristics of Focus groups with children
Children's views are clearly important when evaluating a programme designed for children. Furthermore, there now exists a legal requirement, as detailed by the Children's Act (Great Britain, 1989), to consult children when assessing their physical, emotional and educational needs (Greig & Taylor, 1998). The characteristics of a focus group may however be different when conducting research with children.

Gibson (2007) details the considerations which need to be made when running a successful focus group with children: early planning, group composition factors, creating the right environment and the role of the researcher. Many of these factors would also need to be considered when working with adults.

**Early planning:** Morgan (1995) emphasises the importance of planning centred on goals and design. Issues such as timing and location need to be considered as it is important that the participants feel comfortable in the focus group (Gibson, 2007). The focus groups took place in school within the same one hour time slot that the programme had been run in. As the children had been able to engage for this time period during the running of the DA awareness raising programme this was felt to be a suitable amount of time. At the start of the focus group participants were shown a copy of the questions which would be discussed in order to reduce anxiety. Robson (2002) recommends the use of 'what' and 'how' questions as opposed to 'why' or closed questions. This was taken into consideration when choosing the questions. A detailed structure of the focus groups and the questions asked are provided (appendix five and six).
Group composition factors: Morgan (1988) suggests between four and 12 people should be involved in the group. However, when working with children research suggests that for younger children aged below nine, four to six should be the largest number (Kennedy, Kools & Krueger 2001) whilst with older children up to eight (Horner, 2000) participants works well. The groups ranged in size within this research from four to eight group members. This was due to the high variance in return rates of consent forms between schools. The individuals involved were already acquainted with each other which Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) argue is advantageous since the individuals will be familiar with joint discussions. As the DA awareness raising programme required a high level of group discussion participants were already familiar with this medium.

Creating the right environment: Robson (2002) states that establishing early positive engagement with participants is key to this. Furthermore, Shier (2001) state that creating early opportunities for making choices is beneficial. As I was involved in the co-delivering the DA awareness raising programme I was in the fortunate position that I was able to build an early rapport with the children and also had the opportunity to facilitate their decision making within the session activities.

Role of researcher: The role of the researcher is sometimes referred to as the 'moderator' or 'facilitator' and this encapsulates their unique role (Robson, 2002). It is the researcher's role to ensure that the group stays on task whilst also ensuring that the group runs effectively. Sim (1998) states that the researcher is in a difficult position as they have to promote discussion about a topic, which they are obviously interested in, without biasing the respondents in any way. Furthermore, Brown (1999) states that individuals from certain backgrounds, for example, those from caring professions, may find the process difficult as a focus group is not the same as a support group.

Morgan, Gibbs, Maxwell and Britten (2002) also discuss the power imbalance that can exist when running focus groups with children. Scott (2005) states that interviews within school undertaken by adult may equate to a test-taking scenario where a teacher is seeking a correct answer. For this reason as part
of the introduction at the start of each focus group I stated, 'I am going to ask you some questions but there are no right and wrong answers I just want to know what your views are. I would really like to hear from all of you but do not worry if you do not have anything to say for a particular question'.

2.11.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of focus groups

Robinson (1999, p909) summarises the perceived advantages and disadvantages of focus groups.

Table 6-2.6 Advantages and disadvantages of focus groups (Robinson, 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A large amount and range of qualitative data can be collected due to the presence of a number of individuals.</td>
<td>Only a limited number of questions can be covered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme views tend to be moderated by participant checks and balances on each other</td>
<td>Facilitating the process requires considerable skill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to see when there is a consistent and shared view and group dynamics help focus on the most important topics.</td>
<td>Less articulate individuals may not express their views and dominant members of the group may bias the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants tend to react positively to the experience.</td>
<td>Personality conflicts may occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible and inexpensive.</td>
<td>Confidentiality may be a concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants are empowered and able to make comments in their own words.</td>
<td>The results cannot be generalised as they are not representative of a wider population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions can be encouraged from people who may normally be reluctant to provide an opinion or view.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The method does not discriminate against those who cannot read or write or have other specific difficulties.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The method can be useful in taboo or sensitive topics since less inhibited members may help break the ice.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
These factors were considered when choosing a method of data collection. It was felt that the perceived advantages outweighed the disadvantages. In particular this research method was felt to be suitable as focus groups would enable a large amount of data to be collected partnered with the ability to gain evidence about similarities and differences in the participants’ opinions (Morgan, 1997). Furthermore, ensuring that the focus group was carefully planned and constructed enabled the likelihood of some of the disadvantages to be reduced.

2.11.2 Interviews

Interviews were used in this study in order to obtain information about the perceptions and experiences of the members of teaching staff involved in co-delivering the programme. Interviews are one of the most commonly used methods of qualitative data collection and it is thought that through language the participant is able to provide meaning (Robson, 2002).

There are a range of different types of interviews most frequently categorised by the degree of structure to them. Robson (2002) distinguishes between three types of interviews namely: fully structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

Powney and Watts (1987) make a distinction between respondent interviews and informant interviews. Semi-structured interviews fall into the respondent sphere as the interviewer steers the agenda and remains in control throughout the process. Data from staff members was obtained using semi-structured interviews. This was felt to be the best mode of data collection as, although the research aimed to obtain rich qualitative data about staff experiences, specific questions in relation to their experience also existed. Using a semi-structured format allowed flexibility and enabled new questions to be added when appropriate.

The structure of the interviews is provided in appendix six. The questions asked were similar to those asked within the pupils’ focus groups with the addition of specific questions about delivering the programme.
2.11.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of interviews

Interviewing is one of the most common data-gathering methods used within social research (Robson, 2002). One of the advantages of interviews is that they are flexible and thus enable the researcher to adapt dependent on the responses provided. However, it is possible to argue that this is also a disadvantage of interviews. The lack of standardisation implied by flexibility leads to questions about reliability (Robson, 2002).

Another advantage of interviews is that the respondent can clarify their understanding of questions. This is not possible using techniques such as questionnaires. Furthermore, non-verbal cues may support the respondent's understanding. However, it is also possible that non-verbal cues may bias the respondent, for example, if the interviewer smiled during a specific response the respondent may be more likely to continue to respond in this manner.

In most cases it is the researcher who asks questions of the participants (Robson, 2002). An advantage of this is that in most cases the participants will have had experience of the researcher before and thus this will hopefully reduce anxiety. However, if the participant is being asked questions concerning something which they perceive the interviewer has an invested interest in they may not feel they are able to give an honest response. Within this research I co-delivered the programme and also undertook the interviews. However, participants were made aware that I had not designed any of the materials or been involved in the process of choosing a programme, thus I did not have an opinion about the quality of the programme. It is possible, however, that participants did not feel they could honestly comment on aspects of the delivery due to my involvement.

2.11.2.2 Interviewer skills

The success of interviews as a method of data collection is largely dependent on the skills of the interviewer (Legrad, Keegan & Ward, 2003). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) provide an extensive list of guidelines for the conduct of interviews including:

- Avoid saying 'I do not want to know...'
- Make sure you summarise and crystallize every so often.
• Give some feedback.
• If people speak fast try to slow everything down.
• Avoid using your pen as a threatening weapon, pointing it at the interviewee.
• Give people time to think. (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007)

Before commencing the interviews I made sure I was aware of all of these guidelines and attempted to control for them by ensuring I was well prepared. Throughout the interviews I attempted to express unconditional positive regard, empathy and genuineness as encapsulated by a person-centred approach (Rogers, 1957).

It is possible that as I conducted more than one interview my confidence and skills may have increased during the interviews and as a result this may have influenced the interview. However, it is hoped that as within my professional capacity I am required to work in one-to-one situations coupled with using a person-centred approach then in all of the interviews there should not have been a significant difference in my skills and confidence.

2.12 Data Analysis

2.12.1 Thematic analysis

All data was analysed using thematic analysis. Within thematic analysis the researcher aims to identify a number of themes which reflect the text; 'a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p79). Braun and Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis is a highly flexible tool which can provide a rich and detailed, yet complex, account of data. Thematic analysis can be used across a range of epistemological perspectives and thus fits the critical realist epistemology of this research.

Thematic analysis also allows for the active role of the researcher in interpreting the themes rather than simply providing a voice for the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In this way the researcher’s interpretation is considered an important element of analysis. Thematic analysis from a critical realist perspective allows for the reflection of reality as well as the
unpicking of that reality, for example, theorising motivations. (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Boyatzis (1998) argues that thematic analysis is not a method in its own right and should be seen as a stage performed within qualitative methods whilst others have criticised it because of the lack of theory produced and obviousness of findings (Coolican, 2009). However, this study has used the approach outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) and relates the findings back to previous research and thus hopes to establish themes which may not initially have been apparent.

One of the criticisms of thematic analysis is that there is not a clear explanation of how it should be conducted (Attride-Stirling, 2001) and thus many books on the subject of qualitative analysis do not include it as a method of analysis (for example, Lyons and Coyle, 2007). It is therefore important when using this method that the process is explicitly described. For this reason within this research thematic networks, as described by Attride-Stirling (2001), are used to illustrate the process of analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) identify a number of decisions that must be made before commencing thematic analysis. These decisions are considered with relation to this research in appendix seven.

2.12.2 Thematic networks

Attride-Stirling (2001) states that thematic analysis aims to identify the themes that exist in a data at different levels and thus thematic networks facilitate the structuring and depletion of these themes. Thematic networks provide a web-like illustration which enables themes to be structured and classified as basic themes, organising themes and global themes. This can then be represented by a visual image which depicts the salient themes at each of the three levels and the relationship between them.

Attride-Stirling (2001) distinguishes between the three levels of themes which are described as:

**Basic theme**: This is the lowest order theme which contains basic premises of the data and is derived directly from the text. These basic themes may
make little sense when considered independently but are combined to represent an organising theme.

**Organising theme**: This theme is within the middle tier and provides organisation of the basic themes. They summarise the key ideas within basic themes and also provide meaning and significance to a broader theme that groups several organising themes into the global theme.

**Global theme**: These themes are ‘super-ordinate themes’ (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p389). The global theme provides meaning to a set of organising themes which together provide an argument or assertion. They enable the reader to make sense of the lower-order themes and provide a summary of the main themes.

**2.12.3 Conducting thematic analysis**
As stated the method of thematic analysis I have chosen to employ is described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001). Appendix eight provides a description of this process whilst an illustration is provided in appendix two.

**2.13 Triangulation**
In order to ensure validity multiple analysis triangulation was conducted. I invited a research colleague to analyse the data and compared their interpretations with my own. The research colleague was provided with a transcript for one focus group and one interview in order to compare initial codes and to discuss the process of producing themes. We spent time revising the original text to ensure that the themes adequately reflected the original text. We also reflected on how the basic themes had been organised into organising themes. As a result I made changes to some of the thematic networks in order to reflect my research colleague's views. (Within appendix two illustrations of the adaptations made to original thematic networks are provided).
2.14 Sampling

There are a number of different sampling strategies which can be employed within research. The broadest categories of sampling plans are those which are described as probability samples and those described as non-probability samples. Probability sampling aims to make statistical inferences about the population from the responses of the sample. In contrast in non-probability samples such statistical inferences cannot be made. For this reason sampling links closely to ideas of external validity (Robson, 2002).

The size of a sample is largely dependent on the area of study being explored. Within qualitative studies the sample size is not influenced by the need to ensure that statistical calculations can be made and thus often sample sizes are smaller. Furthermore, large amounts of qualitative data can be obtained from relatively few participants so practical considerations must be made when considering sample sizes.

This study sought to explore the views of both pupils and staff members towards the DA awareness raising programme and as a result the general population from which I aimed to obtain my sample was pupils who had received the programme and staff members who were involved in the delivery. Furthermore, in order to evaluate the programme without bias it was important that the programme had been delivered in the manner described within the manual and that this was consistent across all of the schools involved. Thus, practical considerations arose, as without my involvement in the delivery the likelihood of differences existing between the delivery would increase. I therefore made the decision to co-deliver the programme within the case study schools.

There were three case study schools within this research. The initial plan was that schools would be made aware of the programme through a local authority (L.A.) launch day. Schools would then be invited to show an interest of which three would be picked used simple random sampling (SRS). However, due to constraints within the L.A. the launch was delayed. It was therefore decided that three schools with whom the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) already had links would be approached by myself about the
possibility of taking part in the research. These schools were selected by a
colleague as a result of positive relationships with a key staff member within
them, for example SENCo or head teacher. This may have introduced a
degree of sampling bias as the staff within these schools may have had a
more positive attitude to EPs, however, as the research did not directly
involve the member of staff with whom the initial liaison was conducted I felt
that this should not greatly influence the research and due to time constraints
this was the most practical option. Furthermore, if schools had volunteered
an element of bias may also have existed as they would have an increased
interest in the programme.

The three schools, which are referred to as school 'A', 'B' and 'C', were all
located within a North-West City location. All three schools were in areas of
social and economic disadvantage with an above average number of pupils
eligible for free school meals. The schools were also similar in the large
number of pupils who were from ethnic minority groups and as a result there
was a significant number of pupils with English as an additional language in
all schools. The religious character of all three schools was different; two
schools could be described as faith schools whilst one had no applicable
religious character. However, it is of note that all three schools educated
children with a wide range of religious beliefs and backgrounds.

School A had 234 pupils on roll and is a Church of England Primary School.
It was described by Ofsted (2011) as an average sized school. The
catchment area was an inner city location which had undergone a high level
of redevelopment and had a significant number of families who experience
social and economic disadvantage. 80% of pupils belonged to a wide range
of ethnic minority groups and around one third of pupils spoke English as an
additional language. There was also a high level of transience within the
pupils at the school. Three times the national average were eligible for free
school meals and there were an average number of individuals with learning
difficulties and/or disabilities.

School B was also described as an average sized school with 229 pupils on
roll. The school was a Roman Catholic Primary School and the catchment
area included some social and economic disadvantage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals was described by Ofsted (2009a) as well above the national average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups was also above average and increasing and as a result there was a high number of pupils who spoke English as an additional language. The school also had an above average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

School C was described by Ofsted (2009b) as being a larger than average sized school with 362 pupils on roll. The catchment area had significant levels of social disadvantage. A high proportion of pupils came from a wide range of ethnic minorities with almost two thirds of those having English as an additional language. There was a very small minority of pupils of White British Heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals was over half of all pupils. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was slightly below average.

The initial plan was that the research would be conducted with Year Six pupils and thus the programme would be delivered to this age group. The programme pack does not identify a specific age group for whom the materials are designed and instead provides suggestions for different tasks dependent on abilities. However, due to the sensitive nature of the topic it was felt by members of staff within the case study schools that they would feel most comfortable trialling the material with an older age group first. Furthermore, it was felt that older pupils may feel more comfortable taking part in the research and would be more used to participating in group discussions due to the stage in their education. Heary and Hennessy (2002) state that there appears to be a consensus that focus groups should not be used with children below six due to their limited social and language skills.

However, due to the timing of the research all of the year six pupils were involved in revision for exams. The decision was therefore made by myself in collaboration with a key member of staff in each school that the programme would be delivered to year five pupils. Thus all of the pupils who participated in the research were between the ages of nine and ten years old. Year five
and six pupils were thought to be at a developmentally similar age, for example, at this stage according to Piaget children are at the 'concrete operational stage' (Piaget, 1977).

All of the adults involved in the delivery of the programme were asked to take part in interviews. They all gave consent and thus there was a total of five participants. This type of sampling is referred to as 'criterion based' or 'purposive' sampling as the sample was chosen due to their specific experience (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003); within this research the experience being explored was involvement in the delivery of the programme.

In order for the pupils to take part in the research they were asked to return a consent form signed by their parents. The pupils were then also asked if they were happy to take part in the research. There was a high degree of variance in the number of consent forms returned. It is hypothesised that this may have been due to a number of factors including how organised each school was in ensuring that letters were sent home and requests made for them to be returned.

The only exclusionary criteria that was set was that pupils could not take part in the focus groups if they had not attended all of the programme sessions. I planned to use simple random sampling (SRS) to select those pupils who would take part in the research, however, due to the low numbers of consent forms returned within some of the schools convenience sampling was used whereby all individuals who returned their consent forms took part in the focus groups.

### 2.14.1 Sampling Bias

Due to the nature of the pupil participant recruitment it is possible that there may exist a sampling bias within this research. It is possible that parents who were experiencing DA may have an extreme view about the involvement of their child in research focusing on the topic. It is arguable that if DA is still occurring parents may not wish their child to be involved in case they make a disclosure. However, conversely it is also possible that parents who have experienced DA may feel that it is important that individuals are educated about the topic and thus wish their child to be involved within the research.
2.15 Location
The interviews and focus groups were all conducted in the school grounds. It was hoped that this would ensure that both pupils and staff members felt comfortable. During the focus groups the pupils sat in a circle around a large table, Heary and Hennessey (2005) argue that using a table can make children feel less self-conscious.

2.16 Focus group specifics
A script was used for both the interviews (appendix six) and focus groups (appendix five). This was used to ensure consistency across interviews and focus groups. I moderated the focus groups and acted as scribe. The concept of confidentiality was explained to all participants and they were offered an opportunity to debrief with myself after the focus group, however, no pupil took this opportunity.

The focus groups differed in length due to the number of individuals involved. The focus groups lasted approximately 45 minutes (the longest was 47 minutes and the shortest 44) which included time for establishing rules and summarising the main discussion points.

2.17 Interview specifics
As stated a semi-structured format was used for the interviews. The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. The main questions are provided in appendix six.

2.18 Recording of data
All data was recorded using a digital audio recorder. This information was later transcribed. As previously stated spider-diagrams were also completed as part of the focus groups. These materials were collected at the end of the focus group. My research diary was written after each interview and focus group was completed.
Chapter 3: Results

3.1 Chapter outline
This chapter aims to provide a detailed description of how the data collected has been analysed and to make explicit any assumptions that have been made within the analysis. This will enable the reader to obtain a detailed understanding of the analysis conducted and its relationship to the research findings. It is hoped that this will provide a degree of reliability to the research. This chapter will also critically evaluate the methods used, namely thematic analysis, and provide a thorough description of the research findings.

3.2 Contextual Information
Appendix nine provides contextual information about how the programme was implemented within the three schools and more detailed information about whom the data was gathered from.

3.3 Thematic analysis of focus group and interview transcripts.
Having conducted thematic analysis, as described in chapter two, the following section will explore and describe each thematic network and provide text segments from the original transcripts that support the descriptions. Due to the high number of themes illustative quotes have not been provided for all themes. Additional quotes are supplied in appendix ten. The process of transcribing, coding, theming and creating networks is illustrated in appendix two.

All data was analysed with regard to the research questions, furthermore, staff and pupil responses were analysed independently. The data from each school was also analysed independently. The similarities and differences will be considered within chapter four (discussion).
3.4 School A- Research Question 1- Pupils

Figure 2- 3.1 Thematic Network for Views about the Programme - School A Pupils

3.5 Thematic Network for views about the programme

The thematic network above illustrates the global theme of 'views about the programme'. It consists of three organising themes and ten basic themes. This network illustrates features of the programme the pupils enjoyed as well as aspects of the programme that the pupils thought were areas of weakness. The data suggested that there were many positive aspects of the programme. These factors could be summarised as relating to the specific content of the programme and the ethos in which the programme was delivered which enabled the pupils to feel more comfortable. There were some criticisms of the programme content although there was often a mixture of views about these factors, for example, see basic theme 'gender'. Furthermore, one of the factors considered within this thematic network is
that of 'restriction'. This theme may not be considered a weaknesses per se as it relates to a desire from the participants to have an increased level of involvement as opposed to a direct criticism.

3.5.1 Organising theme- Programme content

There were various aspects of the programme content that the pupils evaluated positively. Some of these factors related to specific sessions or activities whilst other comments related to the generic content of the programme and its perceived importance. Interestingly, some pupils evaluated the drama element positively whilst others did not. There were also two basic themes which may be considered criticisms of the programme. The first related to the fact that some of the content was upsetting and the second to the fact that there were some restrictions to the programme.

3.5.1.a Basic Theme- Important Information

Data from the focus groups suggested that the pupils valued the information provided. There was a sense from some of the pupils that domestic abuse (DA) was a topic which everyone needed to know about and that therefore should be covered within school.

"I think the programme has helped us learn more about things"

3.5.1.b Basic Theme-Drama

Many of the children talked positively about specific activities within the programme. In particular, sessions which involved acting and role plays were highlighted by many of the pupils as being an enjoyable aspect of the programme. These sessions were considered to be light-hearted and fun by the pupils. However, some pupils did not enjoy this aspect.

"I liked it when you gave us the sheets and it said things like imaging you were out at a party..."

"I don't really like acting"

3.5.1.c Basic Theme-Phone Numbers

The fact that the children had been provided with a list of contact numbers for help-lines and websites was discussed within the focus group. The children
commented on the value of this information even if they did not require it at present. The fact that they had all been given a physical copy to take home with them was considered to be of value.

"I have put the numbers under my bed that way if I ever need them I know what to do"

3.5.1.d Basic Theme-Restrictions
Some of the factors which participants discussed had a strong relationship to feasibility. The children discussed the fact that they would like the programme to be longer. The discussion suggested they felt this would allow for more discussion as well as enable them to go on visits to a refuge or so that relevant professionals could come and talk to them, for example, the police. They felt this would provide them with more real-life information.

"Make it longer so we can carry on learning more about everything and hearing people's opinions"

3.5.1.e Basic Theme-Upsetting
The pupils discussed the emotive content of some of the sessions and its effect. In particular some of the children did not enjoy listening to the real-life children's experiences.

"I wanted to help the children in the stories"

3.5.2 Organising Theme- Ethos
Many of the pupils talked about the ethos that the programme was delivered within. In particular they identified aspects which helped them feel comfortable about discussing a topic which they understood to be sensitive. Furthermore, the pupils valued the opportunity to engage in discussion within this ethos.

3.5.2.a Basic Theme- Rules
The pupils made reference to the fact that they helped to formulate the rules and that everyone abided by the rules. The fact that there were clear boundaries appeared to help the pupils feel comfortable.
"I liked it when everyone used the rules...like the rules we all said, that we actually then did it. We didn't break any of the rules"

3.5.2.b Basis Theme- Confidentiality
The principle of confidentiality was identified as being a feature of the programme that the pupils liked. Some of the pupils talked specifically using the term 'confidentiality' whilst others talked more generically about feeling safe because they knew things would not be discussed outside of the classroom unless there were concerns about their safety.

"If it wasn't then everybody in the playground would just be talking about it"

3.5.2.c Basic Theme- Open discussion
The pupils spoke very maturely about the programme providing an opportunity for honest and open discussion. They valued the opportunity to have discussions where they felt able to share their personal views. They also discussed the fact that they enjoyed listening to the views of others and that this may have enabled them to understand more about different viewpoints.

"We were all, like sharing ideas and listening and understanding"

3.5.3 Organising Theme- Gender
The issue of gender and whether the entire programme or sections of it should be delivered within same-sex groups featured heavily in the focus groups. Some of the pupils felt it was important that the programme was delivered in mixed-sex groups as they felt this provided a learning opportunity whilst others thought they would be more comfortable particularly within some of the sessions in same-sex groups. There was also a theme relating to 'session three' which focused on gender. Most pupils did not value this session.

3.5.3.a Basic Theme- Composition
There was a basic theme within the data relating to whether the pupils thought the programme should be delivered within same-sex or mixed-sex groupings. There was a mixture of views with some pupils discussing the fact they thought it was important to know about and hear the views of both
genders. However, some pupils thought that within session three, which focused on gender, it would have been beneficial to be in same-sex groups.

"I think it was fine to be with the boys because you need to know those things as well"

"The boys were just being silly in the session about boys and girls (session three)"

3.5.3.b Basic Theme- Session 3

Many of the pupils did not enjoy session three which focused on gender issues. As discussed above many of the pupils felt this session would have been better if it was delivered within same sex groups.

"I didn't like the girls and boys bit because sometimes that should be private"

3.6 School A Research question 1- Staff

![Figure 3-3.2 Thematic Network for Views of the Programme- School A Staff]
3.7 Thematic Network for views of the programme

This thematic network illustrates the global theme of 'views of the programme' as identified by staff members. The network consists of four organising themes and eleven basic themes. The data gathered from staff focused on four main areas: the value of the programme and a sense that the this topic should be discussed within school; a sense of surprise at the level of maturity that the children showed; specific aspects about the content of the programme; and lastly concerns relating to gender both specifically in relation to session three and more generally in relation to a concern that the programme may be slightly biased towards girls.

3.7.1 Organising Theme-Value

The data generated by staff suggested that they felt the programme and its content was valued. There was a sense from the text that staff felt this topic should be covered within school and that it was necessary for pupils to have an understanding of the topic. Staff comments also suggested that the programme was genuinely interesting.

3.7.1.a Basic Theme-Interest

Textual data suggests that staff members thought that the programme was interesting personally as well as for the pupils. Staff valued the opportunity to be involved in the both the programme and some of the comments suggested that they had learnt new things.

"I think it was a really, really interesting programme...I'm really pleased I was asked to be involved"

3.7.1.b Basic Theme-Necessity

As well as finding the programme interesting textual data suggested that staff members felt that it was essential that the topic of DA is tackled within schools. Staff members acknowledged that it was a sensitive topic and as a result sometimes schools may be reluctant to talk about it.

"I think this kind of work is vital"
3.7.2 Organising Theme-Maturity
Data from staff members indicated that they were surprised by how well the pupils had dealt with the programme. Staff reflected within the interview how pleased they were about the level of maturity shown in the group.

3.7.2.a Basic Theme-Attitude
Staff talked positively about the pupils attitude towards the programme as a whole as well as their attitude within specific lessons.

"...the pupil she delved into the topic in a mature and careful manner"

3.7.2.b Basic Theme-Open Discussion
Another aspect of the pupils maturity related to their ability to participate in open discussions.

"It really made them think...rather than just saying this is right or wrong"

3.7.3 Organising Theme-Content
Many of the basic themes identified within textual data related to the content of the programme. Aspects of the programme that staff commented positively about related to specific sessions, activities within those sessions and aspects of the medium of delivery. Staff also valued the fact that there was a gradual build up to the work focusing on DA. The only basic theme which was an area of weakness was that of the medium of delivery which staff discussed could have involved a greater range.

3.7.3.a Basic Theme-Introduction
Textual data indicated that staff felt that it was positive that the topic of DA was not introduced immediately and that the programme developed over the weeks. Their comments suggested that this provided the children with an opportunity to get to know me as well as to build up to the more emotive subject material.

"I liked the way you sort of lead into it so it wasn't straight away about domestic violence"
3.7.3.b Basic Theme-Inclusive
The data suggested that the nature of the activities was felt by staff to be very child-friendly. There were also comments that the activities were flexible enough to be adapted in order to be accessible to all children including those with special educational needs.

"With the activities you could do lots of cutting and sticking which meant all abilities could get involved"

3.7.3.c Basic Theme-Kinaesthetic element
Staff rated highly the kinaesthetic activities in the programme. The data suggests that these activities had gone well and that the children enjoyed them.

"I think just moving the chairs around and then having the discussion...I think the kinaesthetic element was good in that lesson"

3.7.3.d Basic Theme-Wider range of mediums
The textual data suggested that whilst members of staff were not critical of the medium through which the programme was delivered they would have valued a wider range including visual and multimedia input.

"The visual input was a bit limited. There is a lot to be said for videos and things"

3.7.4 Organising Theme-Concerns about gender
Some of the textual data indicated an anxiety that the medium through which the programme was delivered may be more suitable for girls. There was also a concern that the definition and examples of DA were gendered and that this may influence how the boys engaged with the programme. There was also a basic theme relating to concerns about session three which focused on the topic of gender.

3.7.4.a Basic Theme-Activities
There was a basic theme which indicated that staff thought that some of the activities were more suitable for girls than boys. The staff discussed the fact
that many of the activities involved a high level of discussion which it was felt was preferred by the girls.

"But I did think that the nature of the activity really, it accessed the girls a lot more than it did the boys"

**3.7.4.b Basic Theme-Definition**

The textual data highlighted a concern that the programme focused on abusers being male. Staff discussed how this may have influenced how the boys within the group reacted to the programme.

"The boys were a little quiet and maybe not getting involved because I think maybe they sensed...statistically the majority of abusers are male..they felt a little intimidated."

**3.7.4.c Basic Theme-Session 3**

The textual data indicated that staff thought this session was an area of weakness within the programme. Staff discussed the fact that they sensed that the purpose of the session, that of stereotyping, had been lost due to a focus on the anatomical differences between boys and girls.

**3.8 School A- Research Question 2**

*Figure 4-3.3 Thematic Network for Increased Knowledge- School A*
3.9 Thematic Network for Increased Knowledge

Only pupil data was used to answer research question two. The thematic network above illustrates the themes identified within the global theme of 'increased knowledge'. There are two organising themes and six basic themes. One of the organising themes was that of abuse and an increased understanding of what was meant by this. The other organising theme, safety measures, related more specifically to a greater knowledge about ways of reducing the likelihood of experiencing DA and what to do if the situation did occur.

3.9.1 Organising Theme-Abuse

The data gathered from the participants suggested that they had a greater knowledge of what the term abuse meant and the situations in which it can occur.

3.9.1.a Basic Theme-Definition

The textual data showed that pupils had a greater knowledge of what the term abuse and DA meant. Participants discussed having heard the word before without really understanding what it meant. Participants also discussed the fact that they now understand that there are different types of abuse and that abuse does not have to be physical.

"I'd heard the word before but I didn't really know what it meant"

3.9.1.b Basic Theme-Nature of abuse

Closely linked to the definition of abuse is a deeper understanding of the nature or context of abuse. The participants' comments suggested that their understanding about the context in which abuse and DA occurs had been relatively narrow. The data highlighted a greater knowledge about the frequency of abuse and the potential victims.

"Because before I thought adults didn't really get abused that much. I thought it was just children that got abused"
3.9.2 Organising Theme-Safety Measures

Many of the comments made in the focus group related to an increased understanding about ways of reducing the likelihood of DA occurring or an increased confidence in knowing what to do if the situation did arise. Discussion about reducing DA focused on a better understanding about ways of dealing with anger and how to have safe relationships. The comments about knowing what to do could be split into two categories, firstly, generic pro-active strategies comments and secondly a deeper understanding of the role of teachers in this area.

3.9.2.a Basic Theme-Role of teachers

The textual data suggested that participants had a better understanding about the value of telling a teacher. The data suggested that prior to the programme participants had not realised that there was a member of staff in school who was trained to deal with these concerns in a safe way.

"I learnt that teachers are trained and they wouldn't just go and talk to..."

3.9.2.b Basic Theme-Pro-active strategies

Textual data highlighted that participants felt more equipped to deal with DA if the situation arose.

"You know what to do when you're older if like a situation like that happens to you"

3.9.2.c Basic Theme-Anger

The data suggested that the participants had a better understanding about anger and ways of dealing with anger.

"We learnt about anger and the ways of dealing with anger"

3.9.2.d Basic Theme-Safe Relationships

The textual data highlighted that participants had a greater understanding about how to protect themselves within their friendships. Participants discussed ensuring you had information about an individual before spending time with them alone as well as ways of protecting themselves on social networking sites such as face-book.
"You have to be careful on things like face book and not give all your information out"

3.10. School A Research Question 3- Pupils

**Figure 5-3.4 Thematic Network for role of external professional- School A Pupils**

3.11 Thematic Network for role of external professional

The thematic network for the global theme 'role of external professional' is provided above. The network consists of two organising themes and five basic themes. Data from the participants was organised into basic themes relating to the fact that an external professional is independent from the school and its staff members and issues relating to gender.

3.11.1 Organising Theme-Independent

Within the data the fact that I was independent from the school and teachers was an important aspect. The participant data suggested that the fact I was not a teacher made it easier to discuss things with me. In addition, the participants valued the fact that an external professional had a more specialist knowledge of the topic and could provide more realistic information.
3.11.1.a Basic theme-Not a teacher
The textual data suggested that one of the important aspects of an external professional being involved in the delivery of the programme was the fact that they were not a teacher and thus did not know the pupils. There was a mixture of opinions on whether this was an advantage or a disadvantage, however, most pupils valued the fact that the relationship was different to that which exists with their teachers.

"It was good because you can't say the same thing to teachers"

"They say don't talk to strangers and you were a stranger"

3.11.1.b Basic Theme-More realistic
Within the data there was a sense that participants felt an external professional provided more real-life information. They discussed the fact that a teacher may not have this knowledge nor feel comfortable talking to pupils about the topic.

"It was good because you gave us more realistic stuff"

3.11.1.c Basic Theme-Specialist Knowledge
Data from the participants suggested that they felt an external professional had specialist knowledge and skills which made them more comfortable about talking about the subject matter.

"But you've been trained to talk about this with children and stuff"

3.11.2 Organising Theme-Gender
The theme of gender featured heavily within data concerning the pupils views about an external professional being involved. Some of the data suggested that participants valued the involvement of both a male and female adult, it was felt this may have been particularly useful in session three which focused specifically on gender issues. Within this school the class teacher was male and some of the female participants stated that they would have experienced anxiety talking about the subject matter with him due to his gender.
3.11.2.a Basic Theme-Male and Female adults present
Data from the participants suggested that they valued the involvement of both a male member of staff and a female member of staff in order to provide a balance of views.

"...the woman would know more things about girls because they were a girl and now they are a woman ....and the man was a boy"

3.11.2.b Basic Theme-Session 3
The textual data highlighted that the children valued having an external professional present during session three which focused on gender. This session appeared to cause a level of embarrassment for the participants and as a result they felt more comfortable talking to someone who was not a teacher.

" I think I would be shy talking to my teacher about those kinds of things"

3.12 School A Research question 3-Staff
Figure 6-3.5 Thematic Network for Role of External Professional- School A Staff
3.13 Thematic Network for Role of external professional

The thematic network above illustrates the themes encompassed within the global theme of 'the role of external professional'. Within this network there are three organising themes and nine basic themes. The organising themes focus on: the idea of an independent professional being perceived as an expert, the fact that working with an external professional provided a learning opportunity and the role of a teacher in the delivery.

3.13.1 Organising Theme-Expert

The data from staff highlighted one of the important elements of involving an external professional was their perceived level of expertise. Textual data suggested that the sensitive nature of the topic material was an important reason for valuing the involvement of someone with a greater knowledge about the topic and programme. The data also highlighted that involving somebody independent gave pupils a sense that the work they would be doing was important and 'special'. Within the textual data there was also a basic theme about pupils attitudes being different because they perceived me as being an expert in this topic. However, staff also acknowledged that the value of involving an external professional was dependent on the individuals' personal skills.

3.13.1.a Basic Theme-Sensitive Topic

A basic theme about the nature of the topic and the fact that it is considered sensitive by many adults existed in the data set. The participants discussed the fact that they felt more confident dealing with a subject which may cause offence when they were supported by someone independent. The data also suggested that participants thought the pupils would feel more comfortable talking about a sensitive topic with someone independent.

"I was more relaxed knowing that there was someone there who is used to dealing with these kinds of issues"
3.13.1.b Basic Theme-Special
Some of the textual data suggested that members of staff felt the pupils perceived the programme as something different or special due to the fact that someone independent was involved.

"...they liked the idea of someone coming in for a topic...it makes it more special"

3.13.1.c Basic Theme-Pupils' attitudes
The members of staff made reference to the fact that the pupils' attitude towards the programme was different because someone external, whom they perceived to have specialist knowledge, was involved.

"Because you were involved the children think you know all about this topic so they won't be judgemental"

3.13.1.d Basic theme-Individual skills
Textual data highlighted the theme that the individual skills of the person delivering the programme were more important than their job role or status.

3.13.2 Organising Theme-Learning experience
Within the interviews participants talked about valuing the opportunity to see a programme like this delivered. The comments made by participants suggested that due to the topic they may have been reluctant or anxious about delivering such a programme. The data suggested that being provided with an opportunity to co-deliver enabled staff to see that their anxieties were unnecessary as well as to increase their confidence.

3.13.2.a Basic theme-Anxiety
Participants voiced a sense of surprise about the content of the programme. They discussed the fact that they would have been anxious about delivering material about DA but that being provided with an opportunity to co-deliver meant that they had seen that the programme was not as hard-hitting as they had expected.

"Just being given a manual on a topic like this can be daunting"
3.13.2.b Basic Theme - Confidence
Participants also discussed a sense of feeling more confident about delivering the materials in the future because they had been provided with an opportunity to see how it could be done.

3.13.3 Organising Theme - Role of the teacher
Within the textual data there was a number of themes which related to the role of the teacher. The staff talked about the importance of having a member of staff present due to their knowledge of the children. However, staff also discussed the pressures which are placed on teachers and the impact this can have.

3.13.3.a Basic Theme - Pressures
The textual data suggested that whilst participants felt that the topic was important and that they should be involved in delivering the materials it can be difficult due to the other pressures placed on them.

3.13.3.b Basic Theme - Presence
Participants thought it was important that a member of staff was present when the programme was being delivered.

3.13.3.c Basic Theme - Knowledge
The fact that teaching staff have a specific knowledge of the children and the subject matter that they have already covered was felt to be important as this enabled them to make links to other topics.

"I know that we have already covered bullying so I would be able to bring that in"
3.14 School B Research question 1-Pupils

![Thematic Network for Views of the Programme - School B Pupils](image)

3.15 Thematic Network for views of the programme

The thematic network above illustrates the themes provided by pupils for 'views of the programme'. There are three organising themes and eight basic themes. The pupils discussed positive aspects of the ethos that the programme was delivered within. Another organising theme centred around programme materials and activities which the pupils enjoyed or thought were valuable. The pupils also discussed practical considerations such as interruptions and groupings. The textual data suggested that these were aspects which the pupils thought were areas of weakness.

3.15.1 Organising Theme-Different Ethos

The textual data featured comments relating to the ethos the programme was delivered within. Pupils appeared to value the fact that the programme was delivered within a different ethos to their day-to-day lessons. Pupils spoke directly about the fact that the programme was delivered by someone outside the school and its content was different to their normal lessons. They also discussed valuing the fact that there was opportunity for discussions.
Furthermore, they valued the fact that discussions held within the context of the programme were confidential and that no teacher (only a TA) was present during the delivery.

3.15.1.a Basic Theme - Confidentiality
Pupils discussed feeling they could trust me and each other because confidentiality had been stressed within each session.

3.15.1.b Basic Theme - No teacher
The textual data suggested that pupils valued the fact that having no teacher present changed the normal dynamics of the classroom in a positive way.

" ...There was no teacher to correct you"

3.15.1.c Basic Theme - Open discussion
The textual data suggested that pupils valued the opportunity to engage in open discussion with their peers. The fact that there were often no right or wrong answers and that they were allowed to share their views were aspects of the programme that the pupils appreciated.

"You could have an opinion even if everyone else thinks it is wrong"

3.15.2 Organising Theme - Programme materials/activities
Many of the basic themes within the data related to activities or materials that the pupils enjoyed. The textual data also highlighted that the pupils thought the information they were being provided with was valuable.

3.15.2.a Basic Theme - Valuable information
Pupils valued the fact that the programme focused on a subject matter which they considered to be more about real-life than their day-to-day lessons. The textual data suggested that they thought this information was valuable.

3.15.2.b Basic Theme - Phone Numbers
The textual data suggested that the pupils valued the fact they were provided with the phone numbers for help lines. Many of the comments made reference to keeping them in case they needed them at a later date.
"I really liked that you gave us the sheet of numbers ...if I need it I will know who can help"

3.15.2.c Basic Theme-Drama
The pupils enjoyed being provided with the opportunity to act out scenarios.

3.15.3 Organising Theme-Practical considerations
The textual data suggested that there were practical considerations that the pupils felt weakened how effective the programme was including the fact that the sessions were interrupted a number of times and the fact that all sessions were delivered within a mixed sex group composition.

3.15.3.a Basic Theme-Interruptions
The data suggested that the pupils did not like the fact that a number of the sessions were interrupted as they valued privacy.

"Sometimes when you were in the middle of talking if someone came in you felt you couldn't carry on talking"

3.15.3.b Basic Theme-Mixed sex group composition
There was a theme within the data which related to the group composition both within small group activities and for the whole group. However, there were mixed views about whether pupils wanted to work in mixed sex groups or whether they would rather work within same sex groups.

" ... I don't like that because ... because you always end up working with the same people... so boys always want to work other boys and the girls only work with ... work with the girls or …"

"I think when we did the session about boys and girls it might have been better if the girls and boys were separate"
3.16 School B Research Question 1 - Staff

Figure 8-3.7 Thematic Network for Thoughts about the programme - School B Staff

3.17 Thematic Network for Thoughts about the programme

The thematic network above shows the global network for 'thoughts about the programme' as described by staff within school B. There were two organising themes and six basic themes. The first organising theme is that of strengths and relates to features of the programme that the staff thought were strengths including elements of the content as well as more generic factors such as the fact that it raises awareness. The second organising theme relates to concerns about the programme.

3.17.1 Organising Theme-Strengths

Within the interview there were many comments relating to factors about the programme which staff valued. The content of the sessions featured in a positive manner within the textual data. The fact that the programme raised awareness about a topic that was perceived by the member of staff to be important was considered valuable. Furthermore, the textual data highlighted the role of the programme in helping to identify and support specific children.
3.17.1.a Basic Theme-Child-friendly Programme Content
Within the data there were many positive comments about the materials and activities within the programme. The textual data highlighted that the member of staff thought that the content of the session was very child-friendly due to the mixture of fun and serious activities. Furthermore, the delivery of the serious topic was again made more child friendly through the medium it was delivered within.

"The video used cartoon clips which was good…it made it more appealing for children"

3.17.1.b Basic Theme-Signposting for staff
One of the basic themes within the data was that of ‘signposting for staff’. The textual data referred to the role of the programme in helping to identify children who may need additional support either as result of information disclosed during the discussions within the programme or due to the pupils’ increased knowledge leading to disclosures outside of the session.

"Some of the pupils said things which surprised me…I will keep an eye on things…it’s good that we know "

3.17.1.c Basic Theme-Awareness Raising
The textual data suggested that the member of staff felt that the pupils had been provided with valuable information which raised their awareness both directly about DA and more holistically about protecting themselves.

"...but I think it’s been good for them to have this awareness and to know that it’s actually out there and lots of people know that it’s out there, it’s not a hidden thing."

3.17.2 Organising Theme-Concerns
Within the data there were three basic themes which related to concerns about the programme. The basic themes related to a sense of anxiety about providing the children with an opportunity to ask questions and to be given information which could be misinterpreted. Furthermore, the data highlighted anxiety about the fact that within the class there was a mix of cultures who all have different belief systems regarding discipline .
3.17.2.a Basic Theme-Misinterpret information
The member of staff discussed an anxiety about providing the pupils with information which the children may not interpret the way it was intended and may actually be damaging.

3.17.2.b Basic Theme-Control
There was a basic theme within the data of anxiety about the lack of control regarding what pupils may make disclosures, or ask questions, about. Due to the nature of the programme pupils were given opportunities to ask lots of questions and at times the questions did not directly relate to the session. The textual data suggested that the member of staff was very uncomfortable with the inability to plan for this element of the programme.

"...sometimes kind of when you introduce things that then does that make them start thinking and are you opening sort of a can of worms"

3.17.2.c Basic Theme-Different cultures
Another basic theme related to different cultures and the fact that within the group there were children from different cultures whose families may have different attitudes about discipline. The textual data suggested that the member of staff was anxious about how this issue was dealt with within the programme.
3.18 School B Research Question 2

Figure 9- 3.8 Thematic Network for Increased Knowledge- School B

3.19 Thematic Network for Increased Knowledge

The thematic network above details the themes encompassed by the global theme of ‘increased knowledge’ as described by the pupils in school B. There are three organising themes and ten basic themes. The organising themes centre on increased knowledge about; abuse, the choices available and the value of learning about this topic.

3.19.1 Organising theme-Choice

The textual data suggested that many of the basic themes related to an increased knowledge that an individual has a number of choices in any situation and that it is important to consider the different solutions.

3.19.1.a Basic Theme-Parents

Pupils discussed the fact in the past they would often act in the manner they had been told to do so by their parents but now they realised there may be other options.
"And when your Mum like say hit back twice as hard alright, sometimes you shouldn't...you have to listen to other people"

3.19.1.b Basic Theme-Thought provoking
The textual data highlighted the fact that the programme made the pupils think more especially when they were in a situation that may have resulted in anger in the past.

" If I was in a corner...I'd know to think more and look at the different solutions"

3.19.1.c Basic Theme-Different solutions
Closely linked to the organising theme of choices is the basic theme of different solutions particularly with regard to getting angry. Pupils spoke about being made aware that there are many different solutions to a problem and that it is important to think through the consequences.

"...you can work things out in different ways, it's not always about hitting people back"

3.19.2 Organising Theme-Abuse
Within the data there was a number of basic themes which were about an increased knowledge about abuse and an increased sense of empathy towards those affected by it.

3.19.2.a Basic Theme-Types
Pupils spoke about a better understanding of the different types of abuse. Prior to the programme many pupils thought that abuse had to be of a physical nature.

"...you can have emotional pain...like pain in your heart"

3.19.2.b Basic Theme-Frequency
The data suggested that pupils had a better understanding of the prevalence of DA and that they had been surprised by the figures provided within the programme.

“I never knew it happened so much"
3.19.2.c Basic Theme-Empathy
The data suggested that the programme had increased pupils' empathy towards those affected by abuse and gave the pupils a sense that no-one had to deal with this issue alone.

3.19.3 Organising Theme-Valuable
Within the data there were two basic themes which related to a sense that the information provided by the programme was necessary. The textual data suggested that they thought it was important that children learn about this topic and that they had been provided with necessary tools if they required help.

3.19.3.a Basic Theme-Necessity
The textual data suggested that pupils felt it was important to learn about this topic.

3.19.3.b Basic Theme-Help Seeking strategy
Pupils discussed feeling more equipped to deal with a situation where abuse was occurring due to the programme content. The textual data highlighted pupils understanding about seeking help.

"…you can get your life back on track."

3.20 School B- Research Question 3-Pupils
Figure 10-3.9 Thematic Network for External Professionals-School B Pupils

- External Professional
  - Concerns about teacher
    - Restricted
    - Confidentiality
  - Do not know each other
    - Initial anxiety
    - Continued anxiety
3.21 Thematic Network for External Professionals

The thematic network above illustrates the themes within the global theme of 'external professional'. There are two organising themes, firstly, those relating to concerns regarding having a teacher involved and secondly relating to basic themes about the fact that the children did not know me.

3.21.1 Organising Theme- Concerns about teacher

The textual data suggested that many of the basic themes related to the fact that the pupils had anxiety about having a teacher present within the sessions. Pupils discussed feeling restricted by the presence of a teacher due to the normal role of a teacher. Pupils also voiced a concern that teachers did not value confidentiality in the same way as an external professional may do.

3.21.1.a Basic Theme- Restricted

Within the data there was a basic theme of pupils feeling restricted by the presence of a teacher. Pupils discussed feeling that they could not talk freely with a teacher present and were instead worrying about the rules that the teacher would normally enforce.

"I worried about the rules when the teacher was present...but I was emotional"

3.21.1.b Basic Theme- Confidentiality

The text suggested that pupils felt teachers may not respect the confidentiality agreement that was expressed at the start of each session and that they therefore did not want them present.

"A teacher might tell someone"

3.21.2 Organising Theme- Do not know each other

Many of the basic themes identified within the textual data related to the fact that I had no knowledge of the pupils and they had no knowledge of me. There was mixed opinions within the group about whether this was an advantage or a disadvantage.
3.21.2.a Basic Theme-Initial anxiety
Pupils expressed an initial level of anxiety about not knowing me. However, the textual data highlighted the fact that for most pupils this initial anxiety reduced over time.

"At first I thought it was a bit scary and a waste of time but then you said something I can't remember what and I thought yeah..."

3.21.2.b Basic Theme-Continued anxiety
The textual data suggested that for some pupils the anxiety continued. The data suggested that they thought it would be easier to talk to someone they knew about this subject because they were fearful of talking to someone they didn't know very well.

"You are more likely to talk about something serious like that to someone you know because you might be scared"

"It was a bit scary to talk to you...but it would have to be a teacher you knew really well"

3.22 School B Research Question 3-Staff
Figure 11-3.10 Thematic Network for Role of External Professional-School B Staff
3.23 Thematic network for role of external professional

The thematic network above illustrates the themes identified within the global theme of 'role of external professional' for the member of staff within school B. There are two organising themes. The first organising theme related to the fact that the involvement of an external professional provided a learning opportunity. Secondly, the fact that an external professional is independent featured in a number of basic themes in the textual data.

3.23.1 Organising Theme-Learning Opportunity

Within the textual data two of the basic themes related to comments about how having the involvement of an external professional provided the member of staff with a unique learning opportunity. This opportunity to co-deliver the programme helped build their confidence and allowed them to realise their initial anxieties had been unfounded.

3.23.1.a Basic Theme-Unnecessary apprehension

One of the basic themes related to the fact that without the involvement of an external professional the member of staff would have been anxious to deliver the programme because of the subject area and as a result may have chosen not to deliver it. The fact that the programme was co-delivered with an external professional ensured the programme was delivered and made the member of staff realise their initial anxieties were unfounded.

"I would have worried about delivering something on this topic...once you have seen it you realise it's not that scary"

3.23.1.b Basic Theme-Builds confidence

The other basic theme related to the fact that the staff member felt that co-delivering the programme had provided them with a learning experience which resulted in an increased sense of confidence about delivery in the future.

"Having seen it delivered I feel much more happy about doing it again"
3.23.2 Organising Theme-Independent

Another organising theme related to the fact that an external professional is independent from the school and staff. The data suggested that the member of staff had mixed views about the value of this. However, she felt it would be valuable to have a knowledgeable external professional with her during sessions five and six due to the number of questions asked.

3.23.2.a Basic Theme-Knowledge of the children

The data suggested that the member of staff was undecided in her view about whether it was advantageous for an external professional to be involved. She discussed the fact that because I was an external professional I had no knowledge of the children and they had no knowledge of me. Again, she expressed mixed feelings about the value of this.

"There are pluses and minuses to having someone they don't know"

3.23.2.b Basic theme-Specific sessions-five and six

The textual data highlighted the fact that there were specific sessions where the member of staff valued the involvement of an external professional and would seek this support in the future. This was due to the content of these sessions which related more directly to DA and also allowed for opportunities for discussion and questions.

"I think it would be good to have someone with you on the last sessions because of all the questions"
3.24 School C-Research Question 1-Pupils

Figure 12-3.11 Thematic Network for Views of the Programme - School A Pupils

3.25 Thematic Network for views of the programme

The thematic network below illustrates the themes encompassed within the global theme ‘views of the programme’ as viewed by the pupils. There are two organising themes, strengths and weaknesses. There are four basic themes encompassed by the organising theme of strengths and two basic themes within the organising theme of weaknesses.

3.25.1 Organising theme-Strengths

Within the textual data there were a number of basic themes which related to factors which the pupils considered to be strengths of the programme. Some of these related to specific activities, such as the drama, whilst others were more general to the whole programme, such as being provided with opportunity for respectful discussion.

3.25.1.a Basic Theme-Helpline

The textual data suggested that pupils valued being provided with a list of helpline and website details. Pupils discussed how this may be useful information in the future.
3.25.1.b Basic Theme-Real-life content
Pupils valued the fact that the programme included real-life examples. They spoke positively about the video which provided real-life stories about children who were living in houses where DA was occurring.

"... when we were watching the video of people who’d had domestic violence...In their house, because it showed us people who’ve had experience..."

3.25.1.c Basic Theme-Drama
The data suggested that the pupils enjoyed the acting element of the programme.

3.25.1.d Basic Theme-Respectful discussion.
Within the data there was a basic theme which related to respectful relationships. The discussion suggested that pupils enjoyed being provided with the opportunity to listen to each other and felt that the discussion took part in a respectful manner.

"Everyone had an opinion but they respected each other"

3.25.2 Organising Theme-Weaknesses
There was also a number of basic themes which could be organised together because they were elements of the programme that the pupils did not think were very good. These related to a specific session within the programme and more generally to the timing of the programme.

3.25.2.a Basic Theme-Timing
Within the textual data the pupils discussed the fact that they were not always pleased about the timing of the programme. Specifically on one occasion the other pupils within the school were given the opportunity to watch the opening of the world cup.

"I didn’t enjoy when you were, that time, I can’t remember, when we were watching the England match. I liked it a bit though, I liked it a bit when we had a discussion but I didn’t like the timing, the timing of it"
3.25.2.b Basic Theme-Session 3
The theme of gender was apparent in the textual data with regard to session three. Most of the pupils discussion suggested that they had not enjoyed this session, however, some pupils felt that it was valuable to get a better understanding of what girls and boys were able to do.

"I didn't like the bit about what is different between boys and girls"

"I did really like both of the parts because I found it... we got to talk and we got to get our ideas straight about what girls do, what girls do rights, and what do boys do right."

3.26 School C- Research Question 1- Staff views

Figure 13-3.12 Thematic Network for Views of the Programme- School C Staff

3.27 Thematic network for views of the programme
The global network above illustrates the themes within the global theme of 'views of the programme'. Within the textual data there were no basic themes
which were aspects of the programme that the staff had negative views about. There are five organising themes and eleven basic themes within this network.

3.27.1 Organising Theme-Learning
The textual data highlighted two basic themes which related to the manner in which learning took place within the programme. Staff members discussed the fact that the learning style was non-intrusive and that it was conducted within an environment where confidentiality was stressed.

3.27.1.a Basic Theme-Non-intrusive
The textual data suggested that the members of staff valued the fact that the programme developed pupils understanding through a shared learning approach as opposed to relying on personal experiences that the pupils may have had.

"...it was un-intrusive... we all shared a learning experience and I think that’s really important."

3.27.1.b Basic Theme-Inclusive
The textual data indicated that staff thought the programme was appropriate for the age group. Furthermore, they data highlighted that they thought that children with a wide range of abilities including special educational needs could access the material.

3.27.2 Organising theme-Format
Staff spoke positively about the format of the programme. They valued the fact that the programme was very structured and as a result did not require a lot of planning. The length of each session was also discussed in a positive manner.

3.27.2.a Basic Theme-Structured
Staff valued the fact that the programme provided a structure for each session which included suggested activities. This meant that staff did not feel it required a high level of planning.
3.27.2.b Basic Theme-Length
The textual data indicated that both the length of the programme and the sessions within it were considered a strength as it could by easily run both within a normal school day and term.

"It fitted nicely into the school term...it wasn't too long"

3.27.3 Organising Theme-Helped identify pre-held beliefs
Within the textual data there were two basic themes which related to helping staff to identify some of the pre-held beliefs of the pupils in the class. Some of these views were positive whilst others were negative. Staff discussed how this was valuable as it helped to identify where they may need to do further work.

3.27.3.a Basic Theme-Positive images
Staff discussed being very pleased to discover that many of the females in the class had a very positive self-image. The textual data suggested that they were surprised by this fact possibly due to their perceived idea about the cultural norms of these pupils.

3.27.3.b Basic Theme-Gaps
The textual data also highlighted that the members of staff had also become aware of some of the more negative pre-held beliefs, specifically those relating to sexism. They discussed the fact that the activities helped identify these areas which was beneficial as it would enable them to undertake more focused work.

"And I think that you having given us the training it identified where the gaps obviously are in what we are doing, it’s something that we can choose then to extend on, because I find it quite shocking how you know, we’ve got several cavemen already in there and it was a real eye opener for me"

3.27.4 Organising Theme-Content
Three of the basic themes related to the content of the sessions. Staff spoke positively about the activities within the programme as well as about the fact that open discussion was encouraged throughout all of the sessions.
3.27.4.a Basic Theme-Open discussion
Within the data there was a theme which related to open discussion. The members of staff discussed the fact they thought it was positive that there were lots of opportunities for the pupils to talk to each other as well as to staff.

"I think it is good that we get them to talk and we get them to talk about it to each other or to us"

3.27.4.b Basic Theme-Activities
The textual data highlighted the fact that staff thought highly of the activities.

"All of the activities were really engaging"

3.27.4.c Basic Theme-Confidential
Within the textual data there was a theme of 'confidentiality'. The comments suggested that staff valued the significance placed on the concept of confidentiality and the fact that this was stressed to the pupils each week.

"I thought the use of confidentiality it was always mentioned, that was really good"

3.27.5 Organising theme-Value
Within the textual data there was a theme relating to the value of the programme. The members of staff discussed feeling that it was necessary that schools were involved in tackling the issue of DA. The staff also discussed feeling a sense of pride that they were tackling a difficult topic and hopefully helping to prevent the children being affected by DA in the future.

3.27.5.a Basic Theme-Important
The textual data highlighted that staff members felt it important that schools were providing children with work around DA.

"I think it's something that we really welcome into school"

3.27.5.b Basic Theme-Pride
The members of staff discussed feeling proud to be involved with work in this area and a desire to help change children's perceptions about violence.
3.28 School C Research Question 2

Figure 14-3.13 Thematic Network for Increased Knowledge- School C

3.29 Thematic Network for increased knowledge

Within the global theme of 'increased knowledge' there are three organising themes and seven basic themes. Within the textual data there were a number of themes which related to a recognition of the value of the programme. Pupils also discussed having an increased understanding about violence and help-seeking strategies such as talking to an adult.

3.29.1 Organising Theme-Violence

There was two basic themes relating to an increased knowledge about violence.

3.29.1.a Basic Theme-Cyclical

The textual data highlighted a basic theme about an increased understanding about the nature of violence. The pupils discussed the fact that the programme had made them realise that violence often results in more violence and that it can then be difficult to stop this chain of events.

"There’s like a circle thing with anger, it spreads to each person like a virus so like if a person, if a person acts to it in a good way he breaks a link off it"
3.29.1.b Basic Theme-Blame
The pupils also discussed the fact that when people are violent they often blame other people for their actions. In particular the pupils discussed that fact that children are often blamed or may feel it is their fault.

"It’s not the child’s fault at all"

3.29.2.Organising Theme-Help-seeking strategies
The textual data highlighted a number of themes which related to an increased understanding about how to seek help.

3.29.2 a Basic Theme-Talk about it
The textual data suggested that the programme had made them less fearful about talking about the topic of abuse whether to a member of staff or to each other.

"...I learnt how to not be afraid to ask my friend what’s happening at home."

3.29.2.b Basic Theme-Tell someone
Closely related to the basic theme of talking about violence/abuse was that of telling an adult if something was happening. The children talked about telling the parent of someone they knew well or a teacher in school. The data also suggested that the pupils realised if they had information about a friend they should tell someone. They discussed the fact that this would be difficult and may have repercussions for their friendship but was necessary.

3.29.2.c.Basic Theme-Websites/Phone numbers
The data suggested that pupils valued the fact they had been provided with the contact details for a number of help lines.

3.29.3 Organising Theme-Recognition of value
The textual data indicated that the pupils felt the programme had been valuable. The data related to two basic themes, firstly a recognition that this was a topic that affected everyone and secondly to valuing the opportunity to be provided with information and to have these discussions.
3.29.3.a Basic Theme-Affects everyone
The pupils discussed the fact that they were aware this topic affected a large number of people and as a result the programme would be beneficial for everyone.

3.29.3. b Basic Theme-Information
Pupils valued the opportunity to discuss the topic of abuse and to learn new things which they felt were important.

"I think it's good to talk about these things because really if I didn't talk about it, if you looked at me then I would have got a bad intention like to get mad with ....so I was actually happy that I talked about it."

3.30 School C Research Question 3-Pupils

The thematic network above illustrates pupils views about 'the role of external professional'. There are two organising themes. Firstly, encompassing basic themes about the fact an external professional is independent and secondly basic themes relating to staff members within the school.
3.31.1 Organising Theme-Independent
There were two basic themes which related to the fact that an external professional is independent from the school and staff within it. The data highlighted a basic theme relating to the fact that I was a stranger to the pupils and secondly that I did not know the pupils' families.

3.31.1.a Basic Theme-No knowledge of family
The text suggested that the fact that an external professional did not know their families were important. However, there were different views about whether this was an advantage or a disadvantage.

"It depends if my family is really keen on them, so in like, Mrs ***, she knows my mum very, very well, so that I could talk to her about anything?"

"It was better because you don't know my mum or dad or anyone"

3.31.1.b Basic Theme-Stranger
Within the textual data there was a theme relating to the fact I was a stranger. The discussion suggested that the pupils had mixed feelings about this with some feeling uncomfortable with the fact that they didn't know me whilst others were ambivalent.

"You're a stranger, the world's a big place ...it wouldn't be better, it wouldn't be worse with someone different "

3.31.2 Organising Theme-Internal staff
There were a number of basic themes within the data which related to staff who were internal to the school. The pupils expressed an anxiety about a teacher delivering the programme due to their belief that teachers would break the confidentiality agreement. The pupils also discussed the role of family support officers and the value of them being involved in delivering the programme.

3.31.2.a Basic Theme-Anxieties regarding confidentiality.
The pupils expressed a high level of anxiety about a teacher delivering this programme because they felt that a teacher would not respect the fact that the pupils may want elements of their discussions to remain private.
“Really some teachers they don’t keep information to themselves, because I’ve heard, while I’m walking past I’ve heard teacher say things about children”.

3.31.2.b Basic Theme-Family support officers
The pupils spoke very positively about the involvement of family support workers in the programme. The pupils valued their unique role and felt they had a different relationship with them than they would have with their teachers.

“...like, Mrs *** (family support officer), ... I could talk to her about anything?”

3.32 School C Research Question 3 Staff

![Thematic Network for Delivery - School C Staff](image)

3.33 Thematic Network for delivery
The thematic network above illustrates the themes encompassed by the global theme of staff views about 'delivery' of the programme. There are three organising themes and six basic themes. The textual data suggested that staff thought the programme was a valuable resource and that they benefited from the support of an external professional in the delivery. There were also a number of themes which related to the fact that staff thought it
was beneficial that the delivery of the programme was different to normal school lessons. The role of school staff within this kind of programme was also an organising theme.

3.33.1 Organising Theme-School staff
A number of basic themes related to school staff. The textual data highlighted that it was important that there was someone from the school present in the sessions. The discussion also focused on ensuring the right person knew about the programme.

3.33.1.a Basic Theme-School staff present
The textual data highlighted the fact that members of staff thought it was essential that someone from the school was present during all of the sessions. The staff members discussed that this helped reduce the anxiety of the pupils. Furthermore, if there were no members of staff present then the staff reflected that they would feel anxious in case complaints were made and they had no knowledge of the programme. Thus, having a member of staff in all of the sessions helped reduce both pupil and staff anxieties.

"I think it is really important when you are doing something like that that it is you and it's people that the children know and trust and to bring in somebody that was outside, it might make the children feel a bit like woah..."

3.33.1.b Basic Theme-Identifying who is most appropriate
The textual data suggested that the members of staff thought it was important that the right person received the programme. They discussed that in different schools different people may be best placed to deliver it and it was important that they were made aware of the programme.

"...but had it have landed in the post box to the PSHE coordinator they would have gone oh right that's something else and put it to one side"

3.33.2 Organising theme-Different style of teaching
There was a number of basic themes within the textual data which made reference to the fact that the programme was delivered with a different approach to the pupils normal lessons and that this was beneficial.
3.33.2.a Basic Theme - Informal

The textual data suggested that staff valued the fact that the programme was delivered in a more informal manner. They discussed different factors which they felt enabled this. These included aspects of my personality as well as how the materials and individuals were introduced, for example, the fact that I introduced myself to the children using my first name encouraged them to do so.

"Even though it was in the classroom it was done in a different way and the fact that we used our first names because we were expecting those children to share so much with us, to go in a, to delivering a much more informal way I think really worked"

3.33.2.b Basic Theme - Teamwork

The textual data suggested that teamwork between someone external and someone internal was an important aspect of the delivery of the programme. Staff valued the fact that this enabled them to feel supported (see basic theme 3.33.3.) whilst also ensuring the children felt comfortable.

"But I think that team thing of having you and also having somebody familiar there, even if it's just initially, if that's something that people can learn from in the future."

3.33.3 Organising role - Support

There are a number of basic themes within the data about the supportive role of involvement from an external professional.

3.33.3.a Basic Theme - Increases confidence

The textual data suggested that the members of staff felt co-delivering the programme helped increase their confidence about the programme. The discussion also suggested that due to the topic area some staff may feel very anxious and as a result not deliver it without support.
3.33.3.b Basic Theme-Professional support

Within the textual data there was a basic theme about the fact that an external professional can help raise awareness of important issues and support both staff and pupils. The staff discussed that this type of support may be particularly beneficial if there were any disclosures.
### 3.32 Overview of Themes

Table 7- 3.1 Overview of Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>School A</th>
<th>School B</th>
<th>School C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1.** What were staff and pupils’ thoughts and feelings about the strengths and weaknesses of the DA awareness raising programme? | Views about the programme  
Content  
Important Information  
Drama  
Phone Numbers  
Restrictions  
Upsetting  
Ethos  
Rules  
Confidentiality  
Open discussion  
Gender  
Composition  
Session 3 | Views about the programme  
Different Ethos  
Confidentiality  
No teacher  
Open Discussion  
Programme materials  
Valuable information  
Phone numbers  
Drama  
Practical considerations  
Mixed sex group compositions  
Interruptions | Views about the programme  
Strengths  
Respectful discussion  
Drama  
Real-life element  
Helpline  
Weaknesses  
Session 3- gender  
Opportunities for questions |

**PUPILS**

**STAFF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School A</th>
<th>School B</th>
<th>School C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Views about the programme  
Value  
Necessity | Thoughts about the programme  
Strengths  
Child friendly programme | Thoughts about the programme  
Learning  
Non-intrusive |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Inclusive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>Awareness raising</td>
<td>Format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Signposting for staff</td>
<td>Length</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open discussion</td>
<td>Concerns</td>
<td>Structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Misinterpret information</td>
<td>Helped Identify pre-held beliefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace of introduction</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Positive self-image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Different cultures</td>
<td>Gaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinaesthetic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider range of medium needed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns about gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Confidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Did pupils’ awareness and understanding of DA change as a result of the implementation of DA awareness raising materials? If so in what ways?

| Increased knowledge | Increased knowledge | Increased knowledge |
| Abuse | Abuse | Violence |
| Definition | Type | Blame |
| Nature of abuse | Frequency | Cycle |
| Safety measures | Empathy | Help-seeking strategies |
| Anger | Choice | Talk about it |
| Safe relationships | Parents | People available |
| Proactive strategies | Thought provoking | Websites/numbers |
| Role of teachers | Different solutions | Recognition of value |
| | Valuable | Affects everyone |
3. What were staff and pupils' views about the involvement of an EP in the delivery?

**Pupils**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of external professional</th>
<th>Necessity Help-seeking strategies</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>External professional</td>
<td>Role of external professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not a teacher</td>
<td>Concerns about teacher</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More realistic</td>
<td>Restricted</td>
<td>No knowledge of family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist knowledge</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>Stanger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Do not know each other</td>
<td>Internal Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 3</td>
<td>Initial anxiety</td>
<td>Anxieties regarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and female?</td>
<td>Continual anxiety</td>
<td>confidentiality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role of external professional</th>
<th>Necessity Help-seeking strategies</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>Role of external professional</td>
<td>Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive topic</td>
<td>Learning opportunity</td>
<td>School staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Special'</td>
<td>Unnecessary apprehension</td>
<td>Presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil attitudes</td>
<td>Builds confidence</td>
<td>Identifying who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual's skills</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning experience</td>
<td>Knowledge of children</td>
<td>Informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Valuable in particular sessions</td>
<td>Team work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increases confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Professional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four - Discussion

4.1 Overview

This chapter will discuss the research findings with regard to the research questions. Key factors and future implementation will be considered with relation to previous research. The methodology employed will be critically evaluated and limitations of the study and research process will be considered. The implications of the findings will be discussed from the perspective of schools, local authority, nationally and from an educational psychology perspective. The implications for future research will also be considered.

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1-What were staff and pupils’ thoughts and feelings about the strengths and weaknesses of the domestic abuse (DA) awareness raising programme?

2.-Did pupils' awareness and understanding of DA change as a result of the implementation of DA awareness raising materials? If so, in what ways?

3.-What were staff and pupils’ views about the involvement of an EP in the delivery?

The research findings are summarised in chapter three. Key findings relevant to all schools, or in some cases two schools, will be outlined in the following sections. There was a high degree of similarity in the pupil data across all three schools whilst a greater variance existed in staff views. Possible reasons for these differences will be discussed. Previous literature will be discussed with relation to the findings.

4.2 Research Question One

1-What were staff and pupils’ thoughts and feelings about the strengths and weaknesses of the DA awareness raising programme?
4.2.1 Pupils
The data from the focus groups indicated that pupils had enjoyed the programme and were able to identify a number of areas of strength. In contrast there were very few themes which were negative. Furthermore, there was a high level of similarity between the findings from the three schools.

4.2.1.1 Strengths
Discussion: Within all of the schools there was a basic theme of 'open discussion'. This related to the fact that pupils felt they were able to voice their opinions and that people listened and were respectful even if they did not agree. This is in agreement with Mullender (2000) who suggested that young people respond positively to learning that incorporates discussion.

The value of being provided with opportunity to discuss a topic which may be considered sensitive is cited by Shah (2004) in relation to mental health. She argues that providing a forum for open discussion about a taboo subject may be considered valuable. This is further supported by DeSocio, Stember and Schrinsky (2006) who found that children's knowledge about mental health improved through a combination of didactic presentation and opportunities for open discussion of the topic.

Valuable Information: In schools A and B there was a basic theme which related to a sense that the information the pupils were being provided with was important or valuable. Some of the pupils made reference to the fact that they may need this information later in life. Closely related to this were specific aspects of the information for example being provided with phone numbers and websites. In all three schools reference was made to being provided with information. Pupils talked positively about their value in helping them to know where to seek help if required at present or in the future. This would support the argument made by Bell and Stanley (2006) and Gamache and Snapp (1995). They argue that one of the aims of prevention work in schools is to provide children with information to enable them to seek support if required. This also supports Mullender's findings (2000) which showed that
84% of secondary school children and 54% of primary pupils wanted lessons on DA and what to do about it.

**Drama:** Most pupils valued the use of drama within the sessions as they felt this was enjoyable. Drama was a basic theme within all three schools. However, within school A some pupils spoke negatively about the use of drama. It is possible that within this school this medium of learning is used less frequently and thus pupils may have been uncomfortable.

The use of drama in education is not uncommon. Turner and Bruner (1986) claim that drama helps fill in gaps in meaning. Varelas et al. (2010) develop this idea further by stating that drama is unique as it allows knowledge to be expressed and developed simultaneously in visual-spatial-kinaesthetic and linguistic modes of communication.

Furthermore, drama can arguably be particularly affective when teaching about sensitive topics. Henry (2000) describes drama as providing the opportunity for people to create imaginary worlds that link their own experiences with the unknown, or outer social world. Children are therefore safe to explore experiences outside of their familiar world. Johnson (2001) argues that drama can be a particularly effective medium when looking at anger as it allows children an opportunity to try out different options and emotions. Within this programme it was in this manner that drama was used and evaluated positively.

Drama is a tool that children are familiar with through their own play and television viewing (Johnson, 2001). Furthermore, due to its flexibility, it is a very inclusive medium which can be accessed on some level by all pupils. This is supported by the research findings in relation to the inclusivity of the programme. Drama also promotes the development of speaking and listening skills (Johnson, 2001). The findings illustrate that pupils valued the opportunity to use these skills as demonstrated by the theme 'open discussion.'

Research (Department for Education and Employment, 1995) suggests that drama is a popular approach to the teaching of sensitive topics such as
drugs education. However, in many cases these involve external theatre groups visiting the school and are therefore potentially time consuming and expensive (Blakey and Pullen, 1991).

This research suggests that smaller scale drama opportunities such as 'role-play' were valued and as they are less expensive and time consuming may be a more practical option. Furthermore, the involvement of external drama 'professionals' is arguable unnecessary. Thus, one implication of this research is that teachers should utilise a range of learning mediums including drama. This may be particularly valuable when educating about sensitive topics.

**Real-life element:** In School C pupils also identified the fact that the programme included real-life stories as a strength of the programme. This was not highlighted within schools A or B. However, it is possible that this idea was encompassed within the theme 'important/valuable information' as pupils discussed the fact that the information was relevant to real-life. Furthermore, within school A pupils discussed the value of being provided with realistic information in the context of Research Question Three.

The real-life element of the programme featured within themes relating to weaknesses of the programme within school A. However, it could be argued that the themes are contradictory. One of the basic themes related to the fact that the real-life elements of the programme were upsetting. However, within the basic theme of restrictions pupils discussed that time pressures meant they were not provided with as much real-life information as they would have liked. It is probable that this aspect of the programme was very personal and thus a range of views is unsurprising.

4.2.1.2 Weaknesses

**Gender:** The topic of gender featured within the focus groups in all of the schools. In school A and C specific reference was made to session three which focused on gender inequality. The delivery of this session within schools A and C was different to within school B. In schools A and C the activity undertaken involved the pupils being provided with a worksheet which contained information about some of the physical differences between
boys and girls. Schools A and C were happy for this to be used whilst staff in school B were not. This may have been due to the fact that School B was a Roman Catholic school. Furthermore, despite the fact that this session was delivered slightly differently pupils still expressed a concern about the fact that this session was delivered within a mixed-sex group. This was a view expressed by some pupils within all of the schools most commonly with regard to session three. However, some pupils valued the opportunity to learn and listen to the views of another gender.

More general conclusions cannot be drawn from this finding. Within my research diary reference was made to session three and its content. I did not feel that the lesson materials were conducive to discussion about gender inequality and instead encouraged discussion about physical gender differences. It is my belief that the session could be made more effective through small amendments to the session materials, for example, removing some of the information about physical differences.

**Practical considerations:** Two other basic themes which featured in only one of the schools were interruptions and opportunities for questions. It is likely that this was due to small differences between the delivery within the schools. This is supported by data within my research diary. In school B the sessions were frequently interrupted by the class teacher coming into the class to collect items. In addition within school C due to the timing of the programme, which fell just before lunch, there was often little time for questions. In schools A and B the programme was run at the end of the day so questions could run into the time set aside for 'home-time duties' such as giving out letters.

**4.2.1.3 Overview**

Thus it is possible to summarise that across all of the schools the main strengths were identified by pupils as:

- Aspects of the ethos of the programme
  - Open discussion
- Aspects of the content
Drama
Phone Numbers

Within two of the schools there was a theme of 'Valuable information'. This aspect was not mentioned within school C but this may have been due to the reduced number of participants within this focus group.

The following aspects were identified as weaknesses:
- Gender issues with specific regard to session three.
- Practical considerations such as the timing of the programme.

4.2.2. Staff
In comparison to the views of pupils there was a greater variance of staff views regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the programme across the three schools. This may have been due to the fact that the individuals who co-delivered in each school had different roles as identified below:

- School A - Class teacher and teaching assistant
- School B - Teaching assistant
- School C - Two family support workers

It is possible that this variance in roles may have affected their level of anxiety about the subject matter and their perceptions of the programme. Within school B the greatest number of weaknesses were identified and thus it is hypothesised that this may be due to the staff member's role as a TA and the level of responsibility placed on her in co-delivering the programme.

4.2.2.1 The role of teaching assistants
The role of TAs has relatively recently become a focus for discussion perhaps partially due to the numbers currently employed within schools (Blatchford, Russell, Bassett, Brown & Martin, 2007). The DCSF (2009b) details that in 2009 over half the staff within schools were support staff of which the highest number were teaching assistants which constituted 181,
100 people in 2009. This constitutes an increase of 66% between January 1997 to January 2003 (DCSF,2009b).

However, the role of TAs and their effectiveness has been called into question (for example Blatchford et al., 2007). Focus on the specific roles and responsibilities of TAs has also been an area of research with findings suggesting a lack of clarity about whether the role of a TA is one of 'augmenting' or 'substituting' the teacher role (Mortimore, Mortimore, Thomas, Cairns & Taggart, 1992). Webster et al. (2010) suggest that the role of TAs is ambiguous and that they are often placed in roles where they have to make pedagogical decisions beyond their expertise. Thus, the question arises of whether a TA should be given the responsibility or has the suitable skills to deliver a programme such as the one focused on in this research.

Research indicates that TAs and teachers have a different approach to work within the classroom. Blatchford et al. (2009) found that teaching assistants' interactions tended to focus on task completion rather than on learning and understanding. Furthermore, Radford, Blatchford and Webster (in preparation cited in Webster et al., 2010) analysed talk between pupils and either TAs or teachers. They found that the TAs tended to encourage pupils to 'close down' both cognitively and linguistically whilst teachers talk encouraged them to 'open-up'. These findings clearly have implications when considering who would be the best person to be involved in the delivery of the DA awareness raising programme. As many of the activities within the programme encourage discussion there is a risk that the sole involvement of TAs could hinder this. This is supported by the findings of research question three within this school which suggested that at times pupils felt restricted by the presence of the TA.

However, caution must be taken when drawing conclusions about the affect of the individual roles of staff members. Within school B not only was the programme co-delivered by a TA but it was also the only school where there was only one individual within the school involved in the delivery. It may have been this factor that resulted in increased anxiety.
4.2.2.2 Strengths

Within all of the interviews the members of staff were able to identify a number of strengths. Furthermore within school C the two members of staff were unable to identify any weaknesses. The interviews with staff indicated that the programme was thought to be valuable. In school A and C there was an organising theme of 'value' and in School B there was a basic theme of 'awareness raising' which encapsulated data about the importance of children learning about this topic.

**Appropriate:** The findings show that across all of the schools an identified strength of the programme was the fact that it was appropriate for the age group it was delivered to. Within schools A and C this idea was further developed as staff discussed the fact that it was suitable for a range of children including those with special educational needs.

**Content:** Within schools A and C the results indicated that the content and range of activities, including providing pupils with the opportunity for discussion, was evaluated as a strength of the programme. This supports the views of the pupils. This was not identified within school B, however, this may be related to the fact that the member of staff within school B had concerns about the level of control.

**Increased knowledge about pupils:** The results also indicated that staff had learnt things about the pupils that they did not know before the programme started. The content of this knowledge varied across the three schools. Within school A the findings suggest that staff became aware of the maturity of the pupils. Within school B staff became more aware of pupils who may need support. Lastly, in school C staff discussed the maturity and positive self-images held by some of their pupils whilst the results also indicated a better understanding of the negative beliefs held by others.

**Structure:** Within schools A and C the findings indicated that the way the topic of DA was introduced and discussed was considered a strength. Results from school A highlight the pace of the introduction whilst results from school C reference the non-intrusive nature of the programme. Whilst this was not a finding in school B reference was made within the basic theme
of child-friendly to the fact that the sessions were not all 'heavy'. It is arguable that this relates to the pace and nature of the individuals delivering the programme.

The results showed that within school C there was an additional strength identified relating to the format of the programme. Staff valued the fact the programme was structured and thus did not require a high level of planning. Furthermore, the fact that the programme was only one hour for six weeks was considered a strength. This was not mentioned within schools A or B. This may have been due to the fact that a teaching assistant was involved in the delivery in school B. It is unlikely she would normally be expected to spend a large amount of time planning work and thus may not have realised that this was a strength. However this factor was not mentioned in school A, where a teacher and teaching assistant delivered the programme.

Caution must be taken when considering the positive views expressed by staff about the length of the programme, which was relatively short. Research suggests that the longer and more integrated the programme is the better the outcomes are for students (Meyer and Stein, 2001). Therefore, it is important that a balance is made between ease of delivery for staff and ensuring positive outcomes for pupils. This is likely to be enabled by careful integration of this topic into the curriculum. Arguably, the results from this research support this argument as although staff valued the fact that the programme was relatively short there was also discussion about the fact that the programme could be easily linked to other topics. Within Research Question Three in school A, for example, staff discussed the fact that it was important that a teacher was involved as they knew about other topics covered and could therefore link material.

4.2.2.3 Weaknesses
There was an even greater degree of variance within the findings for the weaknesses of the programme as identified by staff across the three schools. Within school C staff did not identify any areas of weakness.

Gender: Within school A the results indicated that there was a concern with regard to gender both specifically with regard to session three and more
generally with regard to the definition of DA and the nature of some of the activities. The results indicated that staff in this school were concerned that the programme may be slightly gendered towards girls. It is of note that the only male member of staff interviewed was within this school. Thus, it is possible that other staff were less aware of the possible bias of the programme due to their own gender. With regard to session three as stated the session was delivered differently within school B and thus the alternative may also have been evaluated more positively if delivered within school A. Session three was not identified as an area of weakness in school C. However, it is possible that within their role of family support workers the staff may have been more comfortable with the overlap into sex education that this session potentially led to.

The potential gender bias within DA prevention programmes has been cited within previous research. Bell and Stanley (2006) and Suderman, Jaffe and Hastings (1995) discuss the fact that discussing the gendered nature of DA can be very difficult and there is a risk of isolating boys within the group. This is further supported by the evaluation of 'Zero Tolerance' (Scottish Executive Research Unit, 2002), a programme delivered within secondary schools. Their findings indicated that almost a fifth of the secondary school teachers interviewed perceived the programme as having an anti-male approach. Arguably, if this occurs there is a risk that boys will simply choose not to engage with the programme. It is of interest that both within this research and those cited the anti-male nature of the programmes was highlighted by the staff involved as opposed to the pupils. It is possible that this is due to an adult concern with political correctness and a desire not to offend any specific group. However, this has not been discussed within previous research and would require further investigation.

It is also arguable that in order for children to develop a better understanding of DA there is a need for them to have knowledge of aspects relating to gender. Hague, Kelly and Mullender (2001) argue that this aspect of DA should be covered within programmes in order to take into account the wider social context and different patterns of socialisation for boys and girls.
**Information:** Within school B a number of factors were considered to be weaknesses. The results indicated that there was a concern that pupils may misinterpret the information they had been given and inadvertently cause difficulties for themselves. Furthermore, this concern extended to the lack of control over the topic of conversation and questions being asked. Lastly, the fact that the programme was delivered within a class where there were a number of different cultures with different views regarding discipline was considered a concern. Whilst on initial viewing these concerns appear to be very different upon reflection they can all be considered to relate to an anxiety about the level of responsibility being placed upon the individual and the possible repercussions of the programme. This is supported by the textual data within my research diary which indicates that the member of staff within school B was the most anxious about the programme from the onset and often took a 'backseat' in the delivery of the programme. As this was the only school where the programme was co-delivered with a teaching assistant it is possible that the findings were influenced by her role and status within the school. Furthermore, in both schools A and C there were two members of staff involved in the delivery of the programme. In contrast in school B there was only the one member of staff and thus the perceived level of responsibility she had may have been greater than for the other schools.

It is thus arguable that the above factors should not be considered weaknesses of the programme and are instead anxieties experienced by the staff member. Firstly, the risks associated with witnessing DA either directly or indirectly are, in my belief, greater than the risks associated with not providing information or pupils mis-interpreting information. Ward, Brown, Westlake and Munro (2010) argue that due to the high level of risks associated with DA preventative programmes should be available to ensure that children are safeguarded.

Research by Evans, Avery and Pederson (2000) investigating perceptions of taboo subjects suggests that topics concerning discussion of family or personal problems are considered to be highly taboo. They argue that topics with a focus in this area are likely to cause the most anxiety for teachers but
that teachers play a crucial role in stifling or promoting the discussion of such topics.

Furthermore as previously discussed research indicates that providing pupils with opportunities for discussion is a valuable tool in increasing awareness (Shah, 2004; Mullender, 2000; DeSocio, Stember & Schrinsky, 2006). With regard to different cultures it is important that despite cultures having different beliefs pupils and parents are aware of the law within the United Kingdom.

4.2.3 Overview

Thus it is possible to summarise the main strengths as identified by staff as:

- Aspects relating to the content (only found in school A and C)
  - Activities
  - Discussion
  - Child-friendly
- Valuable information provided to the pupils
- They learnt something new about the pupils.
- The pace and nature of the way the topic was presented.

The results indicated that there were no weaknesses of the programme identified in all three schools. However, the topic of gender featured heavily in school A. Within school B it is hypothesised that the identified weaknesses related to the increased responsibility placed on the member of staff delivering the programme.

4.3 Research question Two

2.- Did pupils' awareness and understanding of DA change as a result of the implementation of DA materials? If so in what ways?

The data from all three schools suggested that pupils had become more aware of and had a better understanding about DA and abuse in general.

Safety measures: One of the areas of increased knowledge across all of the schools was that of safety-measures. Pupils discussed that fact that due to
the programme they felt more able to deal with the situation if it arose in the future. Pupils within schools A and C discussed the fact that they now realised how important it was to tell an adult, who may be a teacher. Within school A the results suggested that through the delivery of the programme pupils developed a better understanding of the role of a teachers in child protection concerns. This increased awareness was not just specific to DA or the role of adults, within school C pupils made reference to the fact that they would now be less fearful to talk about the subject of abuse with their friends. Furthermore, pupils in all schools made specific reference to the phone numbers they had been provided with as a way of seeking help. As discussed within Research Question One this supports previous findings by Gamache and Snapp (1995), Ellis (2008) and Bell and Stanley (2006) who argue that one of the aims of DA awareness raising programmes is to provide children with information on available services in order to enable them to seek help if required.

**Anger:** Within all of the schools the subject of anger was discussed. Within the thematic networks for each school the basic themes were often placed within different organising themes, however, there was a large overlap. Within school A pupils discussed understanding more about anger and different ways of dealing with it. In school B, within the organising theme of choice, pupils discussed the fact that the programme had taught them to think more and understand that there are a number of possible solutions if/when they are placed in a difficult situation and that violence is not always the only or best choice. Lastly, within school C there was an organising theme of violence. Pupils discussed very articulately having a better understanding about the fact that violence is often cyclical in nature and thus violence leads to more violence. Furthermore, they discussed the fact that the victim of violence was not to blame. Thus, throughout all of the schools the pupils appeared to have a better understanding of the consequences and alternatives to violence. These results provide support for the argument that programmes about DA help children to identify and express emotions in a non-violent way (Gamache and Snapp, 1995; Jaffe, Wolfe, Crooks, Hughes and Baker, 2004). As stated within chapter one it is hoped that this will help
enable children to conduct health non-abusive relationships when they are older (Mullender, Humphreys and Saunders, 1998).

**Understanding of abuse:** Within two of the schools the results indicated that the pupils developed a better understanding of what the terms abuse and DA mean. This finding supports Ellis (2008) who states that one way of increasing awareness of DA is by providing children with knowledge about DA, for example what it is and its prevalence. Pupils in both schools made reference to the fact they had not known abuse could be emotional. Pupils discussed learning about who could be abused and the abuser, for example, women abusing men. Furthermore, within school B pupils had a better understanding of how many people were affected by abuse and as a result discussed feeling more empathetic towards their peers. This finding supports that of Bell and Stanley (2006) whose evaluation of a secondary school programme delivered in the UK suggested pupils had an enhanced understanding of DA after the programme had been implemented.

Within school C the definition of abuse was not discussed. However, as previously stated this focus group only contained a small number of participants. Furthermore, the pupils within this group appeared to have a very good understanding of abuse and violence. It may be that the pupils within this school had already taken part in work around this topic and thus had a good understanding before the programme. Furthermore, two of the pupils within the group discussed involvement from Social Services and the CAMHS so it is possible that the term abuse had been explained and discussed within this forum. Furthermore, despite the fact that the pupils did not make specific reference to knowing more about abuse and DA their discussions indicated they had a very good understanding which may have been aided by the programme.

Pupils within all of the schools discussed the fact that the information they had been provided with was important and necessary. Within schools B and C this was in response to questions relating to what they had learnt whilst in school A this was in response to a question relating to the strength of the
programme. This supports previous research which indicates that children and young people want to learn about DA (Mullender, 2000).

The only research finding which was apparent in just one school, school A, was that of an increased understanding about safe relationships. However, arguably learning about alternative ways of dealing with anger is an important aspect of safe relationships.

4.3.1 Overview
Thus it is possible to summarise that across all of the schools the main areas of increased understanding were about:

- Abuse
  - Nature and frequency
  - Definition

- Anger
  - Different solutions
  - Violence is not always the best way.

- Ways of seeking help
  - Talking to someone
  - Phone numbers

- The value of the information they had been provided with.

4.4. Research Question Three
3-What were staff and pupils’ views about the involvement of an EP in the delivery?

4.4.1 Pupils
Across the three schools the results indicated that pupils thought there were pros and cons to the involvement of an external professional such as myself.

Anxiety about teaching staff: Within all three schools the results indicated that the pupils experienced a degree of anxiety discussing a sensitive topic
such as DA with their teacher and that their presence may restrict the discussions. This was further highlighted within schools B and C where there was a basic theme relating to confidentiality and a concern that teachers may not respect this agreement in the same way as someone external to the school. Within school A the results indicated that the presence of someone external also brought a more realistic and specialist outlook on the topic which was valued.

These findings suggest that pupils have a relatively poor perception of teaching staff. Specifically, the findings highlight that pupils had very little confidence in their teachers' knowledge and skills in relation to confidentiality. This has interesting implications for the teaching of all sensitive subjects. Furthermore, it is likely that this perception will influence the relationships which exist between teacher and pupil.

This is therefore an area that needs addressed within the schools that the research was carried out and potentially on a larger scale. Teachers understanding of and adherence to a principle such as confidentiality relates to their understanding of their ethical duty. Campbell (1996) argues that teaching should be viewed in terms of the potentially moral and ethical impact, both formally and informally, as opposed to simply in evaluative or technical terms. However, Shapira-Lischinsky (2011) identifies that at present insufficient attention is paid to ethical understanding as a necessary component of their professional knowledge within teacher education. Furthermore, research suggests that teachers are often unaware of the ethical ramifications of their practice (Tirri, 1999 and Jackson, Boostrom & Hansen, 1993).

In research by Tirri (1999) and Shapira-Lischinsky (2011) it was found that teachers were most uncomfortable with ethical dilemmas centred around confidentiality specifically where sensitive matters were concerned. This point was further emphasised when pupils were sharing information with teachers rather than their parents as for some teachers this created a paradox due to the fact they judged parents as the customers of the educational system (Klaassen, 2002).
Thus, this an area that teachers experience anxiety about but do not receive support or training in relation to. Within other professions where individuals may face ethical dilemmas focus is placed on education in relation to this and supervision, for example, psychologists (Health Professions Council, 2009; British Psychological Society, 2005), counsellors (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy, 2010) and social workers (Workers, 2008). Hence, talking to colleagues may be the only forum where anxieties can be discussed and teachers may not fully understand the possible ramifications of this.

Thus, schools have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate support structures are in place for teachers to discuss potential ethical dilemmas. Furthermore, school staff need to be made aware of the ethical ramifications of informal discussions as illustrated by this research. At a more systemic level this research suggests that there currently exists a gap within teacher’s knowledge which could potentially be reduced through more extensive coverage of this topic within teacher training routes.

As this research relates to pupil perceptions it is arguable that these perceptions may not reflect teachers knowledge and skills in this area. It is therefore important that the topic of confidentiality and the role of teachers is explicitly discussed with pupils. This is supported by the findings of this research which indicate that pupils valued the fact that throughout the programme explicit reference was made to confidentiality. This topic could be covered within PSHE or SEAL curricula.

**Anxiety about external professional:** Within all three schools the results also indicated an anxiety about the involvement of someone that the pupils didn’t know. There was a contrast of opinions in all of the schools with some pupils suggesting that they felt an initial anxiety which reduced over time whilst others stating that this existed throughout. Furthermore, within school C the results indicate further reflection about the fact that an external professional is independent as they discussed the value of someone delivering the programme having knowledge of their family. Again, there was mixed views about whether this was an advantage or disadvantage.
Although this theme appeared in all of the schools it is not possible to draw conclusions due to the diversity of views.

The lack of clarity regarding pupil views about the involvement of external professionals has not been found in previous research. Douglas, Warwick, Kemp, Whitty and Aggleton (2001) found that pupils positively evaluated a programme delivered by an external professional focusing on sexual orientation. However, pupils were not specifically asked for their views or preferences about the role of the external professional and thus it is possible their positive evaluation was not linked to who delivered it. Furthermore, this research took place within a secondary school and thus it is probable that the pupils had more experience of lessons being delivered by a variety of individuals both from within and external to the school. In comparison, due to their age the individuals in this research may have only experienced up to five different teachers across their whole school career. There may also be differences between the schools regarding the degree of involvement from external sources Thus, it is possible that the variety of views expressed can be accounted for due to individual preferences and experiences.

Within school C one of the findings was that pupils valued the involvement of family support workers due to their role in school. They were perceived as different to teachers but had the advantage of knowing the children well. Within this school the role of the family support workers is cited on the school's website as including: helping parents to fill in forms, providing housing advice, healthcare referrals, parental activities and engagement and providing DA support. Thus, the individuals employed in this role have a much more pastoral role than teachers or TAs which may explain why pupils appeared to have a different view about their involvement. However, TAs are much more common within schools than family support workers as evidenced by the DCSF (2009b) which stated that in 2009 the highest number of support staff were teaching assistants. A literature search for journals dated 1990 onwards was conducted using PsychInfo, British Education Index, ERIC and EBSCO in order to establish whether literature existed about the role of family support workers in schools. The search terms
'family support worker' and 'schools' were used. This search identified no research in this field and thus further research needs to be conducted.

**Gender:** The results showed an additional theme within school A that was not evident in schools B or C, that of gender. Pupils within this school discussed the fact that they thought it may be beneficial to have both a male and female member of staff and that it was particularly useful for me to be present during session three because of the potentially embarrassing content. However, within both of these themes reference was made to the fact that the class teacher was male. Thus, arguably these findings were related to the gender of the class teacher as opposed to the presence of an external professional. It is of note that gender only seemed to be a concern in the school with a male teacher whilst the boys in other schools did not express a preference for a man in the delivery of the programme. This may be due to the fact that there is a higher percentage of female staff within primary schools and thus boys are more used to discussing a range of topics with them.

**4.4.2 Overview**

In summary the main views across the three schools about the involvement of an educational psychologist in the delivery were:

- Pupils valued the fact that they could discuss things they may feel uncomfortable talking to a teacher about. They also knew it would be kept confidential.
- There was a high degree of variance in pupil's level of anxiety about the involvement of someone they did not know.
- In the school with a male teacher the pupils valued the involvement of a female external professional.

**4.4.3 Staff**

The results indicated a greater variance amongst staff views. However, like the pupils, staff identified favourable aspects of the involvement of an educational psychologist and areas of concern.
Learning Opportunity: The only finding which was consistent across all of the schools related to the fact that my involvement provided a learning opportunity. Across all of the schools the findings indicated that staff would have experienced a degree of anxiety if they had been asked to deliver this programme without support. The involvement of myself provided the opportunity to observe and thus helped increase their confidence about delivering their programme in the future. All staff interviewed reported that they would be confident to deliver the programme the following year. This is supported by previous research which indicates that school staff value involvement of external professionals particularly in more specialist areas (Smith, Roberts, Nutbeam & MacDonald, 1992) and that their involvement can support them in the development of ideas (Douglas, Warwick, Kemp, Whitty and Aggleton, 2001).

Teacher involvement: Within schools A and C the findings show that staff thought it important that a member of staff from the school was present. The fact that school staff knew the children and vice versa was highlighted as important. Reference was also made to this aspect within school B, however, the member of staff within this school also stated that the children may find it easier to talk to someone they did not know. Furthermore, the results indicated that this may be beneficial in particular sessions such as those nearer the end where the subject matter was 'heavier'.

Expert: Within school A one of the basic themes was that of an EP being perceived as an 'expert'. Within this theme the results indicated that the fact that I was involved made the pupils think the work we were doing was 'special' and that they had a different attitude. This links closely with the finding in school C of the organising theme 'different'. Staff in school C discussed valuing the fact that the sessions were different to normal activities. Within this reference was made to the informality of the delivery which could be partially attributed to my personal characteristics. This aspect was also cited in school A where staff discussed the fact that the success of the programme would be more attributable to the personal skills of the individuals delivering than the role or status of the person delivering. This aspect was not found in the results for school B. Furthermore, within school
B there were less themes identified. This may have been due to the fact that for schools A and C the thematic network was created using textual data from two members of staff whilst in school B only one member of staff was involved.

**Support:** The role of the EP as providing support was identified in both schools A and C. Within school A staff discussed feeling more comfortable dealing with a sensitive topic which may have repercussions when supported by someone they perceived as being knowledgeable about the topic. Within school C staff talked specifically about pupils making disclosures and the value of having an EP present.

These findings all relate to valuing the involvement of an external professional due to their increased knowledge or expertise in this field. The findings suggest that due to the sensitivity of the topic this was felt to be particularly important. This supports the findings of research conducted by the Home Office (2005) which concluded that whilst schools are recommended to tackle issues relating to sex education as part of Personal, Health and Citizenship education (PHSE, 1999b) there is a lack of adequate support and guidance in relation to specific issues such as violence against women.

**Identify correct person:** Within school C there was a basic theme which was apparent only within this school. The staff discussed the importance of ensuring that the right member of staff was made aware of the programme, as if this did not happen the programme would not be run. It is possible that due to the nature of the role of these members of staff they were particularly aware of the importance of work in this area and the difficulties that can sometimes be encountered within schools. This is supported by data from my research diary which indicated that staff within this school were very keen to be involved in this type of work. Furthermore, this is supported by the basic theme of pride about their involvement which was found only in school C. In contrast staff in schools A and B were happy to be involved but did not share the same 'passion' which was apparent in school C.
4.4.4 Overview
Thus in summary the results indicate that the views about the involvement of an EP were:

- It is important that a teacher is present due to their knowledge of the children.
- It can be valuable for the children to work with someone they do not know particularly when tackling sensitive topics.
- The involvement of someone external supported the pupils in thinking the programme was different and 'special'.
- Individual skills of the person delivering are important.
- The involvement of an EP helped reduce anxiety about the subject matter and increase confidence about delivering it in the future.

These views identify the fact that there are advantages and disadvantages to both the involvement of a member of staff the pupils know (often a teacher) or the involvement of an external professional.

4.5 Summary of findings
The findings of this research indicate that both staff and pupils thought the programme provided valuable information.

The results indicate that there was a greater variance between the views of staff across the three schools than pupils. It is hypothesised that this may have been due to the role of the individuals from the school and their feelings about their perceived level of responsibility.

In summary the main strengths of the programme as identified by pupils related to the content and ethos that the programme was delivered within. The weaknesses identified related to gender issues and practical concerns such as timing.

The content of the programme was also identified as being a strength by staff. Arguably, the ethos of the programme was also identified as the pace of the programme and the way the topic was presented was considered a
strength. In addition a strength identified by staff was that through the implementation of the programme they learnt new information about the pupils.

It is not possible to summarise staff views of the weaknesses of the programme as identified by this research as there was too high a level of variance in views. One school was not able to identify any weaknesses.

In response to research question two this research suggests that the pupil’s knowledge and awareness did increase. This research suggests that pupils perceived they had a better understanding of abuse, anger and help-seeking strategies as a result of the implementation of the programme.

Lastly, a summary of staff and pupils perceptions of the involvement of an EP can be provided. Pupils identified strengths and weaknesses about the involvement of someone they did not know. Some pupils felt more comfortable talking about sensitive materials with someone who was not a teacher. However, in contrast some pupils expressed anxiety about talking to someone they did not know. Many of the pupils also expressed a lack of confidence in teacher’s understanding and skills in relation to confidentiality.

The research suggests that staff valued the involvement of an EP in the initial delivery of the programme as this helped reduce their anxiety and increase their confidence. Staff identified that it was sometimes easier for pupils to discuss sensitive topics with someone they did not know but that it was important that a member of staff was present. The findings also suggest that staff believed that the individual skills of the person delivering were more important than their role. The research suggests that staff felt the involvement of an EP made the sessions seem special and that this was beneficial for the pupils. Lastly, staff highlighted the role of EPs in providing support.

4.6 Evaluation- Was the programme effective?

‘An evaluation is a systematic investigation of the merit and/or worth of a program, project or service...in order to guide decision making, support
accountability, disseminate effective practices, and increase understanding of the involved phenomena' (Stufflebeam, 2000, p280).

This research focused on evaluating a DA awareness raising programme. The findings suggest that there were many aspects of the programme that both staff and pupils rated positively, for example, the activities. Furthermore, there exists tentative findings from this research which suggests that the programme was effective. There is evidence that pupils developed a better understanding of DA, for example, pupils developed a better knowledge of types of abuse. Specific aspects of the programme, such as being provided with information about support services, were evaluated positively. Furthermore, the results suggest that pupils developed an understanding of some of the skills which would support non-abusive relationships, for example, many students discussed an increased awareness of ways of controlling their anger.

This research also suggests that staff became more confident in dealing with the topic of DA and delivering materials related to it through the involvement of an EP.

Caution must be taken before drawing conclusions about the effectiveness of this programme based on the research findings. Within previous research increased knowledge of dating violence was cited as a occurring as a result of the programmes (Avery-Leaf et al., 1997; Meyer and Stein, 2001; Macgowan, 1997). However, Meyer and Stein (2001) argued that this did not necessarily equate to a change in behaviour. This was of particular concern because of the quantitative nature of their research which meant it was difficult to establish the reasons for the positive results. In contrast this research obtained qualitative data and thus it was possible to obtain information about the context of this increased knowledge, for example, in relation to increased knowledge about possible alternatives to anger pupils discussed situations they had been in where they had behaved differently. However, as no data was collected which focused on pupils’ behaviour before and after the intervention it can only be hypothesised that an increased knowledge led to a change in behaviour.
Hence, conclusions about the effectiveness of this programme are beyond the scope of this research and thus further research would need to be conducted (see section 4.11).

Whilst this research was primarily a pilot to evaluate whether the programme could be effective within the local context the research highlighted a number of factors which may be relevant to future implementation of the programme. Durlak and DuPre (2008) found that results from over 500 studies offered strong evidence that the level of implementation affects the promotion and prevention outcomes. Furthermore, Rogers (2003) states that regardless of their initial success relatively few programmes are sustained over time. The next section will therefore briefly consider aspects of the findings which are relevant to implementation.

4.7. Implementation

Durlak and DuPre (2008) reviewed 581 studies and found that 23 contextual factors influence implementation. They categorise these factors into variables related to communities, providers and innovations, and aspects of the prevention delivery system and the prevention support system.

'Community factors' include elements such as current research, policy and funding. This is important within this research. As stated within the literature review it is noticeable that a larger body of research, which focuses on prevention programmes, exists in Canada and the USA. Hague et al. (2001) argue that in Canada there is clearer policy and funding available for schools which can be used in the development of teachers as well as directly supporting teachers. Furthermore, learning resources are provided free of charge to schools. In contrast within the UK there is a lack of guidance around DA (Home Office, 2005) and work is dependent on local enthusiasm and fund-raising (Bell and Stanley, 2005). As previously stated this research highlighted the fact that across the schools different individuals with different roles took responsibility for the initial planning and delivery of the programme. Furthermore, it was evident that this was due to circumstance
as opposed to clear roles. Thus it was unclear who would normally have responsibility for work related to DA.

This links closely to, what is described by Durlak and DuPre (2008) as, 'prevention delivery system factors'. They highlight the importance of leadership and programme champions to ensure effective and sustained implementation. It is possible that without my involvement staff may have been unclear who had the time and responsibility to look into/deliver the programme and thus it may have been left on a shelf. This problem was specifically acknowledged within school C.

Another key finding from this research relates to the individuals delivering the programme. As discussed there was a high degree of variance between the staff views. Due to the small sample size it is not possible to draw conclusions but it is hypothesised that this may have been due to the staff members perceived level of skills and confidence. Durlak and DuPre (2008) state that skill proficiency and self-efficacy are closely linked with implementation. This is further supported by the Home Office (2005) who state that staff should be confident in using DA materials. It is therefore important that decisions about who should deliver the programme are carefully considered. This research also highlights the importance of pupil's perceptions of these skills, for example, in relation to confidentiality.

In order to ensure staff have the appropriate skills and feel confident in delivering the programme it is important that they are provided with support and training. Durlak and DuPre (2008) refer to these factors as 'prevention support system'. This research suggests that staff valued the involvement of an EP as it provided a learning opportunity and ensured that they were supported. This is further supported by the Home Office (2005) who state that teachers should feel supported via local education and multi agency links. Therefore, in order to support the implementation of the programme it is arguable that the LA should continue to provide this support. This could be made available through small group sessions with relevant staff where concerns/anxieties could be raised, in-depth training for school staff or more directly through co-delivering the programme or parts of the programme.
As this research involved only three schools it is not possible to draw conclusions about implementation and thus a thorough implementation evaluation which considered these factors would be beneficial.

4.8 Reflections and Methodological limitations of the current study

This section will attempt to identify the strengths and limitations of this study. The sampling technique and research methods used will be considered. The role of the researcher and the research process will also be considered.

The greatest constraint within this research was working within the timescales and model of delivery of the local authority. As the initial launch date of the programme was delayed a number of times it became evident that recruiting my sample at this event may not be feasible due to the time pressures this would create. As a result an alternative sampling method had to be used. Furthermore, at the time the research was conducted EPs did not have 'link' schools within the authority. If this had been the case it may have been possible to introduce the research as part of EPs' planning meetings within schools. Thus, a decision was made to approach specific schools whom a colleague already had an established relationship with and who it was thought may be interested. This introduced an element of sampling bias as the staff within these schools may have had a more positive attitude to EPs. Cohen et al. (2007) state that opportunistic sampling is commonly used in a case study or series of case-studies. They argue that whilst this practice can provide interesting information caution must be made when drawing conclusions as the sample does not represent the wider population.

However, arguably a bias would still have existed if schools had volunteered to take part in the research at the launch event. Although simple random sampling (Cohen et al., 2007) would have been employed to establish the sample used the initial population would have been one interested in the topic of DA and thus may have been biased. One way of reducing this sampling bias may have been to randomly select schools and to request their involvement in the research. Lee (1993) suggests that offering
participants some sort of service in return for their participation may increase the likelihood of recruitment. Within, this context the fact that I would be involved in running the programme in the school may be perceived as a benefit.

Within this study the units of analysis were the participants experiences of the programme and its delivery Yin (2003) argues that multiple case-study design should be seen as a replication as opposed to multiple respondents in a survey. This enables the research to be more robust and generalisable. However, within this study the units of analysis varied greatly across the three schools due to the nature of the sample. This means it is difficult to draw conclusions as it may be that differences occurred due to the process of delivery or because of individual differences between those involved in the research. Thus in order to make the research more robust it would be beneficial for the programme to have been implemented in exactly the same way. However, as this research occurred within ‘real-life’ schools it would have been very unlikely that differences would not have occurred. It is likely that this programme will be delivered within schools by a variety of individuals in slightly different ways and thus this research provides relevant information. Furthermore, as a consequence factors concerning implementation have also arisen. As argued by Durlak and DuPre (2008) implementation is interwoven with programme outcomes.

One of the limitations of this study was the logistical issues around setting up and running the focus groups and interviews. There was a large difference between the numbers of pupils who took part in the focus groups across the three schools with the smallest group consisting of only four participants. Kennedy et al. (2001) argues that focus groups with young, aged between four to six, children should consist of no more than four whilst when working with older children up to eight participants work well.

This difference was due to the number of consent forms obtained. Specifically, the number of consent forms returned within school C was much lower than in A or B. It is possible that the involvement of an individual linked directly to the class enabled pupils to be reminded about the forms and
informal questions from parents to be asked. It is possible that some parents were reluctant for their children to take part in the research because of the sensitive topic area being discussed. I attempted to reduce this anxiety by detailing within the information form supplied (appendix four) that pupils would only be discussing their views of the programme. I further stressed this point when explaining the purpose of my research to pupils.

Within school C during the interviews the member of staff stated that her only criticism was in relation to the consent form which she felt was too complicated. This was felt to be particularly significant due to the high number of parents for whom English is not a first language within this school. However, due to the requirements of the ethics committee it was not possible to provide a consent form with less information. However, it may have been beneficial to provide the consent form in a number of different languages to ensure all parents had understood the information provided. In order to attempt to increase the number of consent forms returned it may have been beneficial for parents to have been provided with an opportunity to hear about the research, meet myself and ask any questions. However, due to time constraints this was not felt to be possible.

The role that staff play within the school is also significant. Cohen et al. (2007) stress the importance of 'gatekeepers' who control access. Miller and Bell (2002) argue that gatekeepers play a significant role in research. Within this research the staff directly involved with the pupils arguably played a 'gatekeeping' role as they were in a position to choose whether to promote the research or not. Within one of the schools the teacher chose to reward children who had returned their consent forms by providing them with a 'merit'. Whilst rewarding participants may be appropriate (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003) the fact that only those who agreed to take part were rewarded raises ethical concerns. On reflection to ensure that consent forms were sent home and seen by parents/carers it may have been beneficial to ask for forms to be returned regardless of whether the individuals were happy to take part in the research or not. A suitable reward could then have been provided for returning the form. This would reduce the ethical concerns related to rewarding those who agreed to take part in the research.
The focus groups with pupils allowed me to gain a large amount of information in a short space of time as suggested by Robinson (1999). It was also possible through this method of data gathering to explore the different perceptions of participants. I was mindful that data gathered using focus groups can be biased due to dominant members of the group (Robinson, 1999). However, within the groups all pupils seemed comfortable to express their views and often there was a large amount of debate and different views expressed. It is possible that as the participants already had knowledge and experience of each other they felt comfortable within this forum. Brown (1999) argues that having a homogenous group with a shared background facilitates communication and gives a feeling of safety in expressing concerns. However, Brown (1999) cautions that this can lead to 'groupthink'. However, within the focus groups there was a mixture of views expressed and thus this criticism does not seem relevant within this research. Through the implementation of the programme pupils had been encouraged to take part in discussions and thus they were familiar with this style of working. This was encouraged by considering recommendations by Gibson (2007) regarding timing and location of the focus group. I also tried to ensure that the views of everyone had been heard by summarising the main points on a large piece of paper and checking back with the participants that they were happy with this summary. Lewis and Ritchie (2003) describe this as mapping emergent issues and argue that it can be a useful tool for the group to see what ideas have been generated, take ownership and move forward.

There was a sense of excitement at being involved in the focus group. Pupils wanted to share their views about the programme as well as being keen to be part of research. This meant at times the pupils spoke over each other and it became difficult to hear all the views expressed. Lewis and Ritchie (2003) state that due to the nature of focus groups simultaneous dialogue can occur. This was of particular significance in schools A and B where there were more participants. At times in order to ensure all views were captured by the recording I had to take a more directive approach with the pupils as suggested by Ritchie and Lewis (2003). Sim (1998) states that the skills and attributes of the moderator can heavily influence the data gathered. Thus, it
is possible that using a more directive approach may have influenced the findings as this meant I may have had more control over the discussion within these two schools.

Within one of the focus groups the discussion took part in the classroom and as a result we were interrupted a number of times by staff members collecting things from the room. This was distracting for the pupils and may have affected the discussion particularly with regard to their views about who was delivering the programme. Lewis and Ritchie (2003) state that considerations must be made about the venue including the privacy and ambience of the room. On reflection it would have been better if the focus group had taken place in a different room or if I had requested that staff did not come into the room during the recording. During the delivery of the programme it was apparent that this aspect of the research had not been planned for and thus arrangements regarding the room were made with the member of staff involved in co-delivering the programme. It would have been better to make these arrangements during the initial planning meeting. This is supported by Morgan (1995) who argues that early planning including elements such as timing and location need to be considered. Furthermore, Patton (2002) states that having a single point of contact within the organisation avoids gaps in communication.

It is possible that my role as both researcher and deliverer may have biased the pupils' responses particularly with regard to Research Question Three. Sim (1998) states that the researcher is in a difficult position as they have to promote discussion without biasing respondents in any way. This could have been avoided by asking a colleague to run the focus groups however within this research that was not a viable option. In order to attempt to reduce any bias and make the pupils feel as comfortable as possible I started the focus group by stating, 'I am going to ask you some questions but there are no right and wrong answers I just want to know what your views are. I would really like to hear from all of you but do not worry if you do not have anything to say for a particular question.'
On reflection it may have been useful to identify the participants within the transcription in order to detail more thoroughly the views. However, Sim (1998) argues that focus group data explores collective phenomena and thus caution should be taken when attempts are made to infer to individual views. Furthermore, the process of transcribing the data was time-consuming without adding this additional element.

It is possible that the pupils involved in the focus groups were not representative of either the school or general population as I did not record information about the characteristics of the sample. In order to ensure that the sample was representative factors such as gender and ethnic group of the participants could have been considered during selection for the focus groups. This would have highlighted if certain groups had a particularly low return rate for the consent forms and appropriate actions to be considered, for example, if parents for whom English is an additional language did not return the forms they may need to be translated.

The interviews with members of staff were very informative and I felt staff felt comfortable sharing their views with myself. However, as suggested by Cohen et al. (2007) interviews can be seen as transactions which inevitably have bias. It is possible that staff felt uncomfortable sharing negative views due to my involvement in the delivery and Cohen et al. (2007) would argue I too had biases in my interview approach. Thus it may have been beneficial if an independent person or range of interviewers had carried out the interviews. Within one of the schools the interview had to be conducted during the member of staff's lunch break. This was not the ideal situation and on reflection I should have ensured the school had set aside time for the interview to take place.

In order to overcome some of the logistical weaknesses identified, on reflection, it may have been beneficial to carry out pilot focus groups and interviews. Robson (2007) states that piloting any form of interview can be a useful tool. Furthermore, Robinson (1999) and Sim (1998) both argue that the skills of the moderator/interviewer play an important role. Thus, running
pilot interviews and focus groups would have enabled me to develop my skills within this role.

Keeping a research diary throughout the process of delivering and data-gathering allowed me to reflect on my involvement in the research. As suggested by Robson (2007), writing the diary encouraged me to reflect on the differences between the experience of delivering in the three schools. Specific differences between schools related to the member of staffs' level of involvement and general attitude to the programme. Within school B my reflections within the diary suggested that the staff member's level of involvement was to a lesser degree as was her interest in the subject area. In contrast in school C my reflections indicated that the staff involved were highly enthusiastic about the programme. This supports the findings of the research.

I had not anticipated that I would require as high a level of support and supervision as was needed. Supervision is an entitlement for all EPs and is described by the BPS(2002) as, 'providing an opportunity to explore and learn from elements of their practice' (p19). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of psychologists to ensure that any potentially controversial issues or those with ethical connotations are presented for supervision (BPS,2002). In the national review of the contribution of EPs to outcomes for children the DfES (2006) identify that through their application of psychological skills and knowledge within the supervision of others EPs make an indirect contribution to outcomes. Carrington (2004) states that supervision plays a key role in promoting a culture of development and learning. Thus, supervision can be seen as being particularly important when in the role of trainee EP.

When planning the research I had not considered that I would be required to deliver to a whole class and that this may provide unique challenges which I do not encounter regularly in my current role. Completing the research diary supported me as I was able to reflect on previous sessions. Throughout the delivery of the programme and during the focus groups, pupils shared personal stories that were often emotive. Staff also shared personal
experiences with me which were moving. Informal peer supervision as well as more formal supervision allowed me to discuss and reflect on these experiences and the influence that my own personal reactions may have on the research.

4.9 Implications
The possible implications will be considered in the context of the school, the local authority and nationally.

4.9.1 Nationally
Possible implementation implications:

- Ensure that policy exists relating to DA.
- Ensure funding in this area continues.
- Ensure the topic of DA is covered as part of teacher training

In addition this research suggests that the pupils had a poor perception of their teachers understanding in relation to confidentiality. It would therefore be beneficial for teacher training to include aspects of the moral and ethical impact of teaching.

4.9.2 Local authority
The local authority's children and young people's strategic plan (*** City Council, 2010b, p4) states that;

"we want...every child and young person achieving their full potential...This means children and young people having the self-confidence, skills and awareness and aspiration for a happy, safe and fulfilling childhood that stands them in good stead for a successful and fruitful adult life."

The literature review within this research highlights that children living in households where DA is occurring have significant barriers to achieving their full potential. The findings of this research further indicate that the pupils felt this programme provided them with the tools they may require if they needed support due to abuse.
Within the city's Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Strategy (*** City Council 2010c, p10) reference is made to awareness raising in schools,

"Working with children is key to changing the next generation's attitudes to and experiences of domestic abuse"

Thus the authority recognises that in order for children to lead a successful and fruitful life as ascribed to within the plan it is important that they learn about sensitive topics such as domestic abuse. The research findings indicate that pupils valued being provided with information and opportunities for discussion of this topic. Thus the authority has a responsibility to ensure that all pupils are provided with this.

The local authority details the children and young people's strategic plan in relation to the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters Agenda (DfES, 2003) and hence I will consider the findings of this research within the five outcomes.

Table 8-4.1 Implications of the research considered within ECM (DfES, 2003)

| Being Healthy:          | Children discussed having a better understanding about safe relationships.  
                        | Pupils identified having a better understanding about anger and alternative ways of dealing with anger. This relates closely to being healthy as many methods of dealing with anger are unhealthy, for example, drug and alcohol abuse. |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Staying Safe:          | Pupils explicitly discussed help-seeking strategies, for example, details of support services.  
                        | Pupils discussed having a better understanding about safe relationships.                                                                                                                            |
| Enjoying and achieving:| Staff and pupils highlighted that elements of the programme had been enjoyable.  
                        | Data from pupils suggested that this programme provided information which could support them in ensuring they continued to enjoy and achieve ; "you can get your life  
References
back on track.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making a positive contribution:</th>
<th>Staff thought the programme was child friendly and inclusive. Thus, every child regardless of their ability was able to contribute in a meaningful way to the sessions. Pupils discussed valuing the opportunity for discussion and sharing their views.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achieving economic well being:</td>
<td>The programme includes information about financial abuse. However, this was not something the pupils discussed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the findings cited within table 4.1 relate to pupil and staff perceptions about their understanding. Thus, further research needs to be conducted in order to establish whether their perceptions equate to actual change. In order to do so there is a need for the development of standardised measures (see section 4.11). Furthermore, with regard to ‘Achieving economic well-being’ there appears to be little evidence of the programmes impact on this outcome and thus this area may need more development. It is possible that the programme promoted the development of key skills needed in later life, for example, listening skills. However, again this needs to be more systematically evaluated before conclusions can be made.

A very specific implication of this research relates to the availability of contact details for support services. The research findings indicate that pupils felt a strength of the programme was being provided with this information. As a result I have fed this information back to the DA co-ordinator for the city and it has been arranged that schools will be provided with child-friendly credit card sized information cards with the details of two support services.

In addition, to promote implementation, this research has the following implications for the LA.

- Ensure that policy exists which makes specific reference to DA
- Ensure communication and multi-agency working around DA. Within the LA, this is promoted through the identification of a DA co-ordinator. Funding for this role should therefore continue.
- Continue to promote awareness of DA for example through its safeguarding materials
- Ensure initial training is provided to schools
- Provide opportunities for support through small group sessions where problems can be discussed.
- Provide emotional support and advice to staff on the topic of DA.
- Provide continued opportunities for training on the programme.
- Share research findings with schools within the LA.

4.9.3 Schools
Possible implementation implications:

- Ensure that policy exists within the school relating to DA.
- Ensure that there is a whole-school awareness of DA and the programme for example through inset opportunities.
- Identify a link person who has responsibility for matters relating to DA.
- Provide appropriate time and emotional support to staff delivering the programme.

The programme highlighted gaps in pupil knowledge which staff intended to focus on in the future, for example, sexist beliefs. The value of discussion as a learning medium was highlighted by this research and is thus a medium which schools could make more use of. The use of drama was also evaluated positively and thus one implication for schools is that this medium of learning could be used more.

The research also suggest that school staff should consider practical elements such as timing and interruptions. Furthermore, pupils valued the fact that the sessions were different to normal lessons. The focus on confidentiality helped support this and thus schools should ensure that this is highlighted when delivering the programme. It is plausible that this could be generalised to the teaching of other sensitive topics.
4.10. The Role of Educational Psychologists

4.10.1 Reflections for my own practice

This research has implications for both myself and more generally for EP practice. On a practical level the following actions will take place as a result of this research:

- The findings will be shared within the educational psychology service team.
- The findings will be shared with staff and pupils from the schools the research took place in.
- I will continue to raise awareness about domestic abuse through consultation with school staff.
- The possibility of more tailored support for schools will be discussed with the lead psychologist and business team. This may relate to the possibility of an EP being involved in the delivery of specific parts of the programme.

On a personal level this research has made me more mindful about the existence of DA and the effects that it can have and thus is a hypothesis that is considered within all my case work.

Furthermore, this research has highlighted to me the fact that anxieties exist about sensitive topics such as this which can lead to an apprehension about openly discussing them. This is detrimental and further encourages the topic to remain taboo. Thus, in discussions with parents I attempt to address this topic directly in a sensitive manner.

4.10.2 Implications for other Educational Psychologists

Within the professional practice guidelines outlined by the British Psychological Society (2002) the primary focus of child and educational psychologists is described as supporting positive outcomes for young people. Furthermore, it stipulates that EPs, 'have a responsibility for the proper development of all young people, not just those with whom they are specifically involved.' (BPS, 2002, p4). The literature review within this research highlights the risks associated with growing up in an environment where DA is occurring (e.g. Dodd, 2009; Goddard and Beddi, 2010).

Furthermore, the importance of educating pupils about DA in order to provide
both support in the short term and to hopefully change pupils' understanding in relation to DA in the long term is arguably essential in order to promote positive outcomes (Poole and Sterne, 2010) and thus can be seen as part of the role of EPs.

The British Psychological Society (2007) identify that psychologists have a role in contributing to the further understanding of prevention of abuse. Furthermore, a review of existing literature conducted by Woods, Bond, Farrell, Humphrey and Tyldesly (2009) suggests that the role of EPs in 'safeguarding' children has moved to a much broader view incorporating preventative work. Furthermore, one of the key principles of the work of safeguarding includes focusing on the outcomes for children and having a holistic approach (DCSF, 2010b), thus it is important that EPs use a range of skills and knowledge to support children and schools with regard to the topic of DA.

EPs have direct contact with schools and thus are well placed to increase staff awareness about DA and to promote the use of the programme which schools have been provided with. Furthermore, EPs could offer support to staff during the delivery of the programme whether this be direct involvement or opportunity for supervision before/after the sessions. In order to further increase awareness amongst staff, EPs could offer whole school training.

EPs could also be involved in more systemic work in schools around the topic of DA. DA is a topic that overlaps many areas of responsibility within schools including safeguarding, behaviour and special educational needs. It is therefore important that schools identify who is responsible for this area and that appropriate support is provided to them. This can be generalised to other sensitive topics.

EPs are also well equipped to support pupils and parents who have been affected by DA due to their counselling skills. EPs are trained in therapeutic skills such as Rogerian principles of unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957). Furthermore, they have access to further training in areas such as Motivational Interviewing, Human Givens and Personal Construct Psychology. EPs are in a unique position due to the fact that they encounter
children and parents within a school setting. Arguably, individuals may feel more comfortable talking about DA within a school environment than other settings. Thus, EPs are well placed to provide non-judgemental support and advice to individuals affected by DA.

In order to effectively carry out the above suggestions EPs may require further training on the topic of DA. It is also their responsibility to ensure they are up to date with both local authority initiatives and national strategies that relate to DA. It was evident during my research that some EPs within the authority were not aware that this programme had been made available to schools. Thus the EPS has a responsibility to ensure all staff are made aware of new initiatives. The allocation of this role to an identified EP or group of EPs who could provide feedback to the rest of the team may be beneficial in order to reduce work overlap and time. If provided with this knowledge EPs are well placed to support programme implementation due to their knowledge of school systems and their availability to offer training (DfEE, 2000).

This type of work is similar to EP’s involvement in relation to child abuse. Peake (1988) argued that due to EPs’ skills in working with schools and knowledge of child development they were well placed to work in a multi-disciplinary way in relation to suspected abuse. Furthermore, she argued that they had a role in contributing to the delivery and evaluation of prevention programmes. This links closely with EPs as practitioners whose work is evidence based. Evidence based practice was a concept developed in a health context but which over the last five to ten years social policy including education has placed an emphasis on (Frederickson, 2002). An important contribution that EPs can make is both in ensuring that they use and recommend empirically validated interventions and tools and also in developing the research evidence on intervention efficacy and effectiveness (Frederickson, 2002).
4.11 Methodological implications and future research

4.11.1 Methodological implications

Whilst research into the impact of DA on children has seen an increase in the past decade (Goddard and Beddi, 2010) the impact of preventative programmes such as the one examined in this research is still in its infancy (Bell and Stanley, 2006).

This research indicates that this type of programme is valued by both staff and pupils, however, there is a need to provide a stronger evidence base for programmes such as this. Due to the sometimes nebulous nature of the aims of the programme it can be difficult to provide a thorough evaluation.

As this research consisted of only three schools it would be beneficial for further case study work to be conducted which could further explore and possibly confirm the findings of this research. These findings could then be used to develop a standardised tool which would enable outcomes to be measured. An evaluation of programmes such as this could then be completed on a much wider scale. Furthermore, it is likely that a standardised tool could be easily adapted for the evaluation of programmes with a focus on other sensitive areas.

This research has also highlighted that implementation factors play a key role in a programmes outcomes. Furthermore, this research has highlighted the high degree of variance that exists between schools in the implementation of the same programme. There is therefore the need for a more detailed implementation evaluation, including factors that have supported and hindered implementation, in order to establish suitable best practice. Furthermore, quantitative data such as the number of schools delivering the programme over time would be beneficial.

4.11.2 Other areas for future research

This study has only obtained qualitative information about the short-term effectiveness of the programme. No quantitative or longitudinal data has been collected as part of this study. It is possible that pupils' increased knowledge in certain areas may have been due to the programme's recency
and thus longitudinal data would establish whether this increased knowledge disappeared over time.

As the aim of this programme is to increase awareness of DA, with the purpose of preventing further cases, it would be interesting to investigate the incidents of DA over time as programmes such as this become more embedded in school curricula.

This research has also identified a gap in knowledge relating to the role of family support workers in schools and thus research identifying the role and possible worth of this position would be valuable.

4.12 Concluding comments

This small scale exploratory case study has provided detailed information about the contextual authenticity of a domestic abuse awareness raising programme as well as an insight into implementation factors that may affect outcomes.

The literature review has highlighted the possible risks associated with experiencing domestic abuse both directly and indirectly. The role of schools in both supporting those affected by domestic abuse and changing attitudes has been identified.

The research findings highlight the fact that children found valuable being provided with an opportunity to learn about and discuss domestic abuse. Furthermore, the findings suggest that programmes such as this can play a part in increasing children’s knowledge and attitudes about domestic abuse as well as providing a forum for the development of skills which may promote healthy relationships in the future.

The findings further suggest that due to the sensitive nature of the topic it is an area that adults often experience anxiety discussing. This research has identified that providing school staff with support increases their confidence in delivering the materials. EPs are well placed to offer this support due to their knowledge of child development and school systems. Furthermore, due
to their role as evidence based practitioners they have responsibility for ensuring that programmes such as this are evaluated.
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Appendix One: Programme overview

Week One: Respectful relationships

Objectives

- To give children the opportunity to explore their own personal qualities and the qualities they value in others.
- To explore the qualities of good friendships.
- To show that partners are friends too.
- To recognise the difference between good and bad secrets.

Week Two: Consequences of being violent

Objectives

- To show that violence is never acceptable or legal.
- To explore how children view violence and its acceptability.
- To explore alternatives to violence.
- To allow children to experiment with strategies for dealing with feeling angry.

Week Three: Gender Inequality (full session overview provided below)

Objectives

- To explore children's experiences of how they are socialised.
- To identify masculine and feminine roles and behaviour.
- To identify gender inequalities

Week Four: Conflict Management

Objectives

- To understand the meaning of terms such as conflict, negotiation and sensitive.
- To identify alternative strategies to dealing with aggression.
Appendix One: Programme Overview (continued)

- To learn how to negotiate effectively
- To recognise that domestic violence is about power and control.

**Week Five: Children's experiences of Domestic Violence**

Objective

- To show how Domestic Violence can affect children.
- To explore myths and stereotypes that are commonly held around Domestic Violence.
- To identify support agencies.

**Week Six: Help-seeking**

Objectives

- To identify trusted adults that children can go to for support.
- To give information around the roles of support agencies.
- To encourage young people to approach and talk to trusted friends about their problem.
- To show that sharing a problem with a trusted friend can help sort the problem out.
- To enable children to develop skills in helping others with their problems.
Appendix One: Programme Overview (continued)

Detailed information: Session Three

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**Programme One**

for children aged 7 to 10 years

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### Week three

**Gender inequality**

**Objectives:**
- To explore children’s experiences of how they are socialised
- To identify masculine and feminine roles and behaviour
- To identify gender inequalities

**Activity A**

For this activity you will need:
- Flip chart paper, marker pens, blue tape, Activity Sheets 11 & 12

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**Because I am a boy/girl**

- Read out the confidentiality policy and ensure children understand
- Split the class into small same gender groups
- Give half the girls groups a piece of flipchart paper entitled “because I am a girl I can...” and the other half a piece of flipchart paper entitled “because I am a girl I can’t...”
- Repeat for the boys groups replacing the word girl with boy
- Ask each group to present their work to the rest of the class, providing explanations where necessary

**Facilitators’ notes**

Give each group an example to start them off. You will find examples of the sorts of responses you can expect in Activity Sheets 11 and 12.

Promote discussion of some of the points made and encourage the group to debate with each other. Some useful questions to use to explore this may be:
- Why do you think that?
- Is that something you have learned/observed?
- Is that the law?
- Have you read that anywhere?
Appendix One: Programme Overview (continued)

Detailed information: Session Three

Programme One for children aged 7 to 10 years

Points to consider

This is a fun and lively exercise which promotes a lot of interesting discussion around what limitations society puts on us because of our gender. It is important to encourage the group to see that a lot of the things they believe that they can and cannot do are as a result of gender stereotyping, socialisation, and tradition. For example, boys cannot cry in public, girls can't comb their own hair.

A single gender class could be split into small groups and some of the groups asked to consider the questions from the opposite gender's point of view.

Key learning points

- The world we live in expects us to behave in certain ways because we are girls or boys. Sometimes this means we cannot always do what we want to.
- We can do whatever we want to do as long as we do not hurt people in the process.

I knew that I could go to the police station because the workers had told us we could if we were scared of someone at home."

(Boy, 10)

"Since the awareness raising programme started in the school I have noticed an improvement in the children's behaviour."

(Class Teacher)

Programme One for children aged 7 to 10 years

Activity B

For this activity you will need:

- Activity Sheet 13, flip chart paper, maker pens, blue tac

The life of a baby

- Read out the confidentiality policy and ensure children understand.
- Split the children into small same-gender groups and give each group a large piece of flip chart paper.
- Ask the boys to draw a picture of a boy and the girls to draw a picture of a girl.
- Give out Activity Sheet 13 and ask the group to answer the questions about the girl or boy they have drawn.
- Bring the groups back together and compare their drawings and answers to the questions.

Facilitators' notes

Facilitate a discussion around the life that the group have mapped out for the girl and boy. This can be an interesting exercise for drawing out and challenging gender stereotypes.

Look at what the girl and boy have achieved in their lives, whether they are successful or not, whether they are happy.

Compare the drawings of the girl and boy and facilitate a discussion around this.

Points to consider

This can be an interesting exercise to look at how limitations by society can determine our expectations for different genders.

It is important to challenge any stereotypical attitudes that the children have.

Key learning points

- We have different expectations of people depending on the gender.
- The world we live in expects us to behave in certain ways because we are girls or boys. Sometimes this makes it difficult for us to achieve what we want to in life.
Appendix Two: Data Analysis Process

Picture 1: Initial codes collated on post-it notes

Picture 2: Codes are organised into potential themes
Appendix Two: Data Analysis Process (continued)

Picture 3: Example of potential basic theme derived from initial codes.

Picture 4: Example of potential basic theme derived from initial codes.
Appendix Two: Data Analysis Process (continued)

Picture 5: Initial thematic networks

Picture 6: Initial thematic networks cont
Appendix Two: Data Analysis Process (continued)

Picture 7: Revised thematic networks
Appendix Three: Axiology

- I believe in the right to freedom of speech.
- I believe it is important to obtain the views of children when evaluating material designed for them.
- I believe that all children have the right to feel safe and loved.
- I believe that children should not be discriminated against for any reason.
- I believe that all individuals should be protected from physical, emotional, psychological and sexual harm.
- I believe that the topic of DA may be a sensitive issue for people of all ages and genders.
- I believe that some teaching staff may be reluctant to deliver material about DA.
- I believe that parents and families who have experienced DA should be supported.
- I believe that research can be a useful tool in informing evidence-based practice.
Appendix Four: Consent Information

Information Sheet for pupils (sent on university headed paper)

Your son/daughter is being invited to take part in a research study. The research is being conducted as part of my doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology and aims to evaluate the programme being run in your son/daughter’s school. Before you decide whether you wish your child to be involved it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information with your child and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to allow your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Lynne Higgins- Trainee Child and Educational Psychologist

Title of the research

Evaluating a Primary School Programme Aimed at Increasing Awareness of Domestic Abuse.

What is the aim of the research?

As programmes such as this become part of the curriculum it is essential to obtain children's views. The research therefore aims to:

1. Identify whether children’s understanding and awareness of Domestic Abuse change as a result of the programme
2. Obtain children’s views about the programme and the involvement of professionals from outside of school.

Why have I/my child been chosen?
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

All pupils in year 5 who have received the programme will be invited to take part in the research.

What would my son/daughter be asked to do if they took part?
Your child may be asked to take part in a small group discussion where they would be given an opportunity to talk about their *experiences of the programme*. If you or your child felt uncomfortable at any stage in the research appropriate support would be provided.

What happens to the data collected?
The data collected will be kept in a secure location.

How is confidentiality maintained?
Confidentiality will be ensured during all stages of research with the exception of information relating to child protection concerns. The discussions will be recorded and then transcribed. Once the transcription is complete the recordings will be destroyed. All transcripts will be anonymised. The name of your child and the school they attend will remain anonymous in the write up of the research.

What happens if I/my child do not want to take part or if they/I change my mind?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. You and your child have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself or child.

What is the duration of the research?
The discussion group is expected to last approximately 45 minutes.

Where will the research be conducted?
All research will take place within the school grounds.
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

Will the outcomes of the research be published?
The outcomes of the research will be compiled in my doctoral thesis. This will be available from *** university library.

Criminal Records Check
I have enhanced clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This certificate will be available to inspect on request.

Contact for further information
I can be contacted via the schools secretary on *** or directly at ***

What if something goes wrong?
If you or your child requires support please contact myself. If you or your child wishes to make a formal complaint about the conduct of research you can contact the Head of the Research Office.

Thank you for your time and co-operation
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

Letter of Consent (sent on university headed paper)

Dear parent/carer,

I am a Trainee Child and Educational Psychologist working for *** Educational Psychology Service and studying at the University of ***. As part of my doctorate I am required to undertake some research.

As you will be aware your son/daughter’s school is choosing to run a Domestic Abuse awareness raising programme in year 5. I am interested in children’s views about this programme and whether it has an effect on their understanding and awareness about Domestic Abuse. In order to obtain information about this I would like some of the children to be involved in a small group discussion where their views could be obtained. The children involved in this discussion would be chosen randomly.

The project has been approved by the ethics committee of the University of ***. Involvement in this research is entirely voluntary and your child can change their mind at any stage.

The attached information sheet will provide you with more detail about the research. If you are happy for your child to take part then please fill in the attached form and return it to name of contact by insert date.

If you or name of pupil would like any more information please feel free to contact name of contact who can put me in touch with you.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours faithfully,

Lynne Higgins

Trainee Educational Psychologist
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

Consent form for pupils

If you are happy for your son/daughter to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Please initial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that my child's participation in the study is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to any treatment/service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree to the use of anonymous quotes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I agree to allow my son/daughter part in the above project

Name of participant ____________________________

Date_________________________

Signature__________________________________________
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

Information Sheet for Staff

You are being invited to take part in a research study. The research is being conducted as part of my doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology and aims to evaluate the programme being run in the school you work in. Before you decide whether you wish to be involved it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Lynne Higgins- Trainee Child and Educational Psychologist

Title of the research

Evaluating a Programme Within Primary Schools Aimed at Increasing Awareness of Domestic Abuse.

What is the aim of the research?

As programmes such as this become part of the curriculum it is essential to obtain the views of school staff and children. The research therefore aims to:

1. Identify whether children’s understanding and awareness of Domestic Abuse change as a result of the programme
2. Obtain staff and children’s views about the programme and the involvement of professionals from outside of school.

Why have I been chosen?

All staff members who are involved in the delivery of the programme will be invited to take part in the research.
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

What would I be asked to do if I take part?
You will be requested to take part in an interview with myself where you will be asked questions concerning your *thoughts and feelings towards the programme*. including the involvement of external professionals. If you felt uncomfortable at any stage in the research appropriate support would be provided.

What happens to the data collected?
The data collected will be kept in a secure location.

How is confidentiality maintained?
Confidentiality will be ensured during all stages of research with the exception of information relating to child protection concerns. The discussions will be recorded and then transcribed. Once the transcription is complete the recordings will be destroyed. All transcripts will be anonymised. The name of your child and the school they attend will remain anonymous in the write up of the research.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if they/I change my mind?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. You have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself.

What is the duration of the research?
The interview is expected to last approximately 45 minutes.

Where will the research be conducted?
All research will take place within the school grounds.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?
The outcomes of the research will be compiled in my doctoral thesis. This will be available from Manchester university library.
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

Criminal Records Check
I have enhanced clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This certificate will be available to inspect on request.

Contact for further information
I can be contacted via the schools secretary on ***.

What if something goes wrong?
If you require support please contact myself. If you wish to make a formal complaint about the conduct of research you can contact the Head of the Research Office ***.

Thank you for your time and co-operation
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

Staff Consent form

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

| I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above project and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions. |
| Please initial |
| I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to any treatment/service. |
| I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded |
| I agree to the use of anonymous quotes |
| I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers |

I agree to participate in the above project

Name of participant ____________________________

Date_________________________

Signature__________________________________________
Appendix Four: Consent Information (continued)

'School' consent form

If you are happy for my research to be undertaken within this school please give your consent as indicated below.

I have been fully informed about the research which will be undertaken within this school and am happy for it to continue.

Name..................................................................................................................

..............

Position with school............................................................................................

..............

Signature.............................................................................................................

..............

School.............................................................................................................

..............

Date...................................................................................................................

..............

Name of person taking consent...........................................................................

Signature.............................................................................................................

..............

Date...................................................................................................................

..............
Appendix Five: Focus group structure and script.

Equipment:

- Digital recorder
- Focus group schedule
- Large pieces of paper and pens

Welcome:

Thanks for agreeing to take part in this group discussion your views are really important. We are going to spend about one hour talking about the programme we have all been involved with over the last six weeks. I am going to ask you some questions but there are no right and wrong answers I just want to know what your views are. I would really like to hear from all of you but do not worry if you do not have anything to say for a particular question.

Purpose:

The purpose of this discussion is to find out about your views of the programme so that we can decide whether it should be delivered to other children. I also want to know if there was anything you particularly liked or disliked so that, if needed, we can make changes to the programme. The main questions we will be discussing are written on the white board.

I will note down any key points during the discussion and at the end of each question we can use this to check that that everything you all wanted to say has been noted.

Guidelines:

Just like in the sessions in class there are a few guidelines I would like you to follow. The ones you created in class were excellent.

1. You do not have to speak in any particular order. When you want to say something please do.
Appendix Five: Focus group structure and script.
(continued)

2. Please listen to each other and try not to interrupt anyone. You were all very good at that in class.
3. Try to give everyone in the group chance to speak.
4. Just like in class it is important that we respect everyone’s point of view.

I will be recording the discussion but you will not be named in my research. Once I have made a written copy of the recording I will destroy the recording. Is everyone happy with that? Does anyone have any questions?

If you decide you do not want to be part of the discussion at any stage you are free to leave the room but you will not be able to change your mind once you have left.

Are you ready to start?

Main Questions:

- Can you tell me a little bit about the programme we have been running for the last six weeks?
- What parts of the programme did you enjoy and why?
- What parts of the programme did you enjoy the least? Why?
- Do you think it is important to learn about domestic abuse?
- Do you think this programme has taught you anything? Can you tell me what?
- Do you think your views/beliefs/attitudes have changed in any way? Can you give me examples?
- If you could change anything about the programme what would it be and why?
- How do you feel about the fact that I came into the school to talk to you and you didn’t know me?
- Do you think the fact that you didn’t know me made it easier or harder to talk?
Appendix Five: Focus group structure and script. (continued)

Are there any parts of the programme which you feel would be best run by someone who works in the school?

Are there any parts of the programme which you feel would be best run by someone who does not work in the school?

Format:

- Attention drawn to the questions which would be discussed as written on white board.
  For each question:
  1-Opportunity for whole group discussion.
  2-Overview of consensus for each question and generation of conclusions and further points. Main points noted on 'spider diagram'.

- Opportunity to check that everyone agreed with conclusions and opportunity to correct or add any further information.

Closing:

Group thanked for their involvement. Any questions? I will be around for the next hour or so if anyone wants to ask me anything?
Appendix Six: Interview structure and script

Introduction:

- Rapport building.- How are you today? etc.
- Thank you for agreeing to take part in the research.
- Ensure participant has read 'Participant Information leaflet' and signed consent form.
- Are there any questions about the forms?
- Reiterate that name and school will be kept anonymous.

Main Questions:

- What do you think about the programme that we have been running for the last six weeks?
- Are there any elements of the programme that you think have been particularly good? If yes what and why?
- Is there anything about the programme that you felt has not worked? What and why?
- Is there anything about the programme that you would change?
- Would you be confident to deliver this programme without external support next year?
- If yes do you think having support this year has increased your confidence?
- If no would you be confident to deliver the programme alongside an external professional?
- Are there any elements of the programme that you feel would be best delivered by someone who is not a member of the school staff?
- Do you think this is something that Educational Psychologists should be involved with?
- How did you feel about working with an EP in this way?

Closing:

- Reminder that audio recording will be transcribed and then destroyed.
- Do you have any questions?
Appendix Six: Interview structure and script (continued)

- Is there anything else that I have not asked you today which you think is important?
- Thank you for talking to me today.
Appendix Seven: Decisions within Thematic Analysis

Rich description or detailed account of one aspect?

Braun and Clarke (2006) state that it is important to make explicit: whether the research is aiming to provide a rich picture of the entire data set in order to ensure a sense of predominant or important themes; or whether the aim is to provide a more detailed account of one particular theme or group of themes. Within this research specific research questions existed and thus data about a specific aspect of the programme was gathered. However, I aimed to analyse the data in a flexible manner and as all data was coded I was mindful of emerging themes which may be important even if they were not relating directly to the research questions.

Theoretical or Inductive?

The type of analysis conducted within this research can be described as theoretical as it was driven by my own interest in a specific area. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that when analysis is conducted with a specific research question in mind this equates to a theoretical approach. When the research questions arise as a result of the analysis this can be described as an inductive approach. Theoretical analysis can be criticised for not producing a rich description of the entire data set, however, it enables the researcher to provide a very detailed and rich picture of the aspect they are focusing on. Furthermore, as stated, all data was coded and thus it was hoped that themes which did not directly relate to the research questions would not be discounted.

Semantic or latent?

This distinction refers to whether the research is aiming to provide a description of the explicit surface meanings (semantic themes) of the data or whether they aim to identify the underlying assumptions and conceptualisations that are believed to inform the semantic content (latent themes) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analysis was conducted at the semantic level and thus does not attempt to identify the ideology underlying the semantic content. Research that attempts to do so is most commonly
Appendix Seven: Decisions within Thematic Analysis (continued)

found within the constructionist paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2006) which is not the stance taken within this research.

Epistemology

As previously argued the epistemology of research has a strong influence on the focus and outcomes of the research. As stated within the methodology, thematic analysis does not have to be conducted within a pre-existing theoretical framework. However, Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that it is important that the theoretical position is stated.

This research was conducted from a critical realist stance and thus data was analysed within this framework. This framework acknowledges the way that individuals make meaning of their experiences and the impact that social context has on these meanings whilst also acknowledging the existence of 'reality'. Furthermore, my own assumptions and beliefs will influence how the analysis is conducted and findings reported and thus the 'reality' that is reported within this research.
Appendix Eight: Method of Thematic Analysis

As stated the method of thematic analysis I have chosen to employ is described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Attirde-Stirling (2001). This method follows seven sequential steps which are outlined below with relation to this research:

Analysis of each case-study school was conducted independently with data gathered from pupils and staff also being analysed separately.

1- Familiarise yourself with the data: I listened to and transcribed the focus groups and interviews. I then read and re-read the transcript and noted down any initial ideas.

2-Gather initial codes: I coded interesting features of the data with the research questions in mind although interesting or repeated features were also coded. Boyatzis (1998, p63) describes a code as, 'the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon'. I conducted coding by reading the text and systematically noting important or interesting elements on post-it notes.

3-Searching for themes: After all coding had been completed I began to look for themes. This was done by arranging and re-arranging the post-it notes into meaningful groups. The relevant data extracts for each theme were collated.

4- Reviewing themes: I then reviewed and where necessary refined the themes. The criteria proposed by Patton (2002) were considered which states that within a theme data should cohere meaningfully whilst between themes there should be clear and identifiable differences. I re-read the entire data set to ensure the validity of individual themes in relation to the data set.

5- Thematic networks created: I then created thematic networks as described by Attirde-Stirling (2001). The themes which were derived from the text were used as basic themes. These themes were then clustered to form larger, shared issues. These issues were re-named and became organising themes. Global themes were then deduced which reflect the main ideas from the basic and organising themes. I created a thematic network diagram for each global theme and then re-read to ensure that all themes reflected the data.

6-Describe and explore the thematic network: This step elaborates the analysis and provides a level of interpretation. Within chapter three each network is described in turn using text segments to support the description.
Appendix Eight: Method of Thematic Analysis (continued)

7-Summarise and interpret the thematic networks: Lastly, I made a summary of the main themes and the patterns characterising them. The patterns emerging in the exploration are made explicit and each thematic network is considered with regard to the original research questions. This stage will be discussed within chapter four.
Appendix Nine: Contextual Information

School A

Liaison about the programme was conducted with the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). She identified and approached the members of staff about their involvement after which I was introduced. The programme was then delivered by myself, a newly qualified male teacher and an experienced female teaching assistant. The programme was delivered on Wednesdays in the Year Five's classroom (see photo) during the final hour of the school day. The class consisted of 32 pupils with a 50% gender split and who were from a diverse range of cultures. The staff were not provided with any training prior to the programme implementation. The newly qualified teacher had no previous experience of delivering intervention programmes. The teaching assistant had experience of delivering small group intervention work aimed at improving levels of literacy and numeracy. Her role within school involved delivering these programmes across all age ranges. She also provided in-class support to a Year Three group. Both of these members of staff were interviewed. Eight pupils from the class, four male and four female, were involved in the focus group. They were chosen using convenience sampling as only eight pupils returned their forms.

School B

Liaison about the programme was conducted with the head teacher of school B. After an initial meeting outlining the programme and research element the
Appendix Nine: Contextual Information (continued)

head teacher approached the relevant staff member and requested her involvement. The programme was then delivered by myself and a female teaching assistant to all Year Five pupils. The Year Five class was small, consisting of only 15 pupils, nine female and six male, who were from a diverse range of backgrounds. The programme was delivered during the last hour of the school day on Thursdays in their classroom (see photo). Eight pupils, three boys and five girls, were involved in the focus group in this school. All fifteen pupils returned their consent forms and the sample was chosen using simple random sampling (SRS).

The teaching assistant who co-delivered the programme did not have any prior training in the programme. She had experience of delivering small group interventions such as ‘wave two’ literacy and numeracy programmes. Her role in school involved supporting the Year Five class. She was the only member of staff interviewed.

School C

Initial liaison about the programme was conducted with the head teacher. In contrast to School A and B the relevant members of staff were asked by the head teacher to attend a preliminary meeting where the programme and research elements could be discussed. The members of staff he identified were two female family support workers within the school. They were both
Appendix Nine: Contextual Information (continued)

keen to be involved in running the programme and hence the programme was delivered by myself and them. The family support workers had received no prior training about the programme although one of them had previously attended a Women’s Aid training day which focused on DA. Both members of staff had experience of delivering interventions and they had recently been involved in a 'growing and changing' topic which covered aspects of sex education.

The programme was delivered on Tuesday afternoons after lunch. The programme was delivered within the Year Five classroom (see photo) to 26 pupils with an approximately 50% gender split. As within school A and B the pupils were from diverse backgrounds. Within this school only four pupils, three boys and one girl, returned their consent forms and thus these were the four participants who took part in the focus group.

In all of the focus groups there was a large range of ethnicity groups and religious views which were representative of schools within the locality.
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes

3.5.1.a Basic Theme Important Info

"I liked that we learnt about different things."

"You'll need to learn about it when you're older anyway."

3.5.1.b Basic Theme-Drama

"The acting out was fun"

3.5.1.c Basic Theme-Phone numbers

"It was good being told the numbers so we could get help"

3.5.1.d Basic Theme- Restrictions

"Someone from the police or Child line could come in".

3.5.1.e Basic Theme- Upsetting

"The stories made me sad"

"I just wanted to go home and get my expressions out...like I was a part of the family"

3.5.2 a Basic Theme- Rules

"I liked it when in the first session we made up the rules because everybody listened"

3.5.2.b Basic Theme- Confidentiality

"Liked the fact that we could keep it secret"

3.5.2.c Basic Theme- Open Discussion

"We got to answer the questions in our own perspective...to see how you would feel...everyone got to have their own point."

3.5.3.a Basic Theme- Composition

"It was fine that the girls were there too"

"I didn't like it because I think it should have been in like girls and boys private"
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

3.5.3.b Basic Theme- Session 3

"I didn't like the bit where you were talking about what boys and girls can do"

3.7.1.a Basic Theme- Interest

"I mean the facts and figures you came up with..god that's massive..you don't really expect that and you realise"

3.7.1.b Basic Theme- Necessity

"Sometimes you just need to embrace the fact that it is a difficult or delicate topic"

3.7.2.a Basic Theme- Attitude

"The children took it really sensibly and responded really well"

3.7.2.b Basic Theme- Discussion

"The children listened to each other"

3.7.3.a Basic Theme- Introduction

" It was a really good way to introduce...a really good build up..to introduce the children not only to the subject matter, but also the children to you as well"

3.7.3.b Basic Theme- Inclusive

" the children were involved right from the start

3.7.3.c Basic Theme- Kinesthetic element

" I think the drama worked really well"

3.7.3.d Wider range of mediums

" I would make more use of multimedia"

3.7.4.a Basic Theme- Activities

" There was lots of discussion which I think the girls like more than the boys"

3.7.4.b Basic Theme- Definition
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"It would be better with an explicit example where a man was abused"

3.7.4.c Basic Theme- Session 3

"I think the relevance of that perhaps wasn't the most explicit"

"...answers that revolved around anatomy and the issue of puberty...some of the sentences on the sheet led the children down that path"

3.9.1.a Basic Theme- Definition

"You can have different types not just hitting"

3.9.1.b Basic Theme- Nature of abuse

"Sometimes it can be the other way round as well....Like girls abusing boys"

3.9.2.a Basic Theme- Role of teachers

"You should tell a teacher"

3.9.2.b Basic Theme- Knowing what to do

"I'd know I could call one of those numbers"

3.9.2.c Basic Theme- Anger

"We learnt that there are always options"

3.9.2.d Basic Theme-Safe Relationships

"You need to know a bit about the person before you become their friend"

3.11.1.a Basic theme- Not a teacher

"It was good because we don't know you"

3.11.1.b Basic Theme- More realistic

"Teachers don't talk about that kind of stuff"

3.11.1.c Basic Theme- Specialist Knowledge
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"You know about these kinds of things"

3.11.2.a Basic Theme- Male and Female adults present

"I think you needed to be there for the boys and girls bit because our teacher is a man.."

3.13.1.a Basic Theme- Sensitive Topic

"I think they're more comfortable talking to someone they don't know about sensitive things"

"it can be a minefield....you don't want to insult parents"

3.13.1.b Basic Theme- Special

"It felt like they were doing something special because you were here"

3.13.1.c Basic Theme- Participants attitudes

"They trusted you because you know what you are talking about"

3.13.1.d Basic theme- Individual skills

"More about the individual than the qualification or the, you know the status of their title"

"I think I would probably say that that has nothing to do in my opinion whether it is an Educational Psychologist. The name Educational Psychologist...comes a distant second behind whether the person themselves is actually mentally equipped to go into a classroom and stand in front of 30 children that don’t necessarily want to listen to them."

3.13.2.a Basic theme- Anxiety

"I was surprised..I thought it would be more intense"

3.13.2.b Basic Theme- Confidence

"It is always beneficial to see someone teach anything"

"...when you have gone on courses, if shown sessions you think oh yes, or you can adapt that to do it your way or whatever, but if you are just given a manual to go off and deliver it and then you go ooh,"
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

3.13.3.a Basic Theme- Pressures

"it can be difficult when there is so much to do"

"It is something that should be promoted but I have limited time"

3.13.3.b Basic Theme- Presence

"It was really important that I was there too"

3.13.3.c Basic Theme- Knowledge

"I know the children"

3.15.1.a Basic Theme- Confidentiality

"You could relate to people ...you trusted them and knew it would be private"

"I could trust you because you told us about the word confidential and every week the first thing you mentioned was confidentiality."

3.15.1.b Basic Theme- No teacher

"When the teacher is there you sometimes feel like you can't say what you want to"

3.15.1.c Basic Theme- Open discussion

"It was really good to share ideas with everyone"

3.15.2.a Basic Theme- Valuable information

"It keeps you aware of things that can really happen"

"It was good it was different and relates to life, not like our normal lessons"

3.15.2.b Basic Theme- Phone Numbers

"It is good to have the phone numbers to hold onto"

3.15.2.c Basic Theme- Drama

"I liked the activities like acting"
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"...when we had to act out the scenes...that was fun"

**3.15.3.a Basic Theme- Interruptions**

"I didn't like it when people walked in..."

**3.17.1.a Basic Theme- Child friendly Programme Content**

"The sessions were on the whole really good...I liked the fact that there was some light hearted sessions"

**3.17.1.b Basic Theme- Signposting for staff**

"...there have been a couple of issues and the process, you know the processes of what you were saying, you tell somebody, you tell this person, that person will do this and then there’s like a chain reaction and it’s actually happened and for one of these kids who has some issues in their life"

**3.17.1.c Basic Theme- Awareness Raising**

".. I think it’s been good for the children to have an awareness about how they can protect themselves"

"give them the tools that allows them to do something about it, and I do think that’s really really valuable"

**3.17.2.a Basic Theme- Misinterpret information**

"and that’s what was bothering me, that they could use that information to sort of like, maybe cause a bit more friction in their lives than needs to be"

"...sometimes I’ve worried that they don’t interpret it the way that it’s meant.. there are a couple of children in here that could very easily manipulate that smacking thing and phone police in an unnecessary way and that’s what was bothering"

**3.17.2.b Basic Theme- Control**
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

" because that kind of wasn't what we were talking about and we'd lead on into that so I felt that maybe, if we were talking about that specifically then you and I would have been more prepared for that.

3.17.2.c Basic Theme- Different cultures

"because we do have children from lots of different cultures here and for quite a group of them discipline can be quite harsh at time and not acceptable maybe by our standards, but we are working, you know it’s getting across that line of the cultural, you know that kind of stuff and that kind of bothered me"

3.19.1.a Basic Theme- Parents

" ..And don’t always listen to your parents"

3.19.1.b Basic Theme- Thought provoking

" it gets me thinking and everything now, and like when I’m in trouble it gets me thinking what I should do"

3.19.1.c Basic Theme- Different solutions

" I've learnt that you shouldn't always do the same thing..it depends on the situation.."

3.19.2.a Basic Theme- Types

" ..name calling can be abusive"

" I didn't know a man could be hit by a woman"

3.19.2.b Basic Theme- Frequency

" I thought it was rare before"

3.19.2.c Basic Theme- Empathy

" It makes you realise that other people might have bad things happen to them"

" People realise that their not on their own"

3.19.3.a Basic Theme-Important
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"It is important that we learn about these kinds of things"

"It is good to know about this...it's important"

3.19.3.b Basic Theme- Help Seeking strategy

"It helps you know what to do.."

"It could help you when you become old"

3.21.1.a Basic Theme- Restricted

"I felt like the teacher was keeping an eye on things so I felt I couldn't just talk"

3.21.1.b Basic Theme- Confidentiality

"They might go and phone your parents"

3.21.2.a Basic Theme- Initial anxieties

"After a few sessions I felt I could talk about anything"

3.23.1.a Basic Theme- Unnecessary apprehension

"I was surprised at the level at which it’s pitched, you know I expected it would be a lot heavier..

3.23.2.a Basic Theme- Do not know the children

"Maybe knowing the children would change how you deliver the programme.....I don’t know how though"

3.25.1.a Basic Theme- Helpline

"You told us about Child line"

"Having the numbers was good..we might need them when we're older"

3.25.1.b Basic Theme- Real-life content

"I liked the video because it was real stories"

3.25.1.c Basic Theme-Drama
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"It was dramatic and *** (pupils name) was the best one because he’s an actor. It was fun."

"I liked acting it out"

3.25.1.d Basic Theme- Respectful discussion.

"I liked listening to other people and hearing their story"

3.27.1.a Basic Theme- Non-intrusive

"I liked that at first it wasn’t directly linked to DA...we built up to it"

3.27.1.b Basic Theme- Inclusive

"...there are a lot of children in that group that have got special educational needs and every single one of them was able to cope with the sheets, to do the tasks that were involved, and for me the fact that it was so inclusive was another really good thing."

"the activities were really child friendly"

3.27.2.a Basic Theme- Structured

"...it was really simple, it was just like there’s the worksheet for that session and that’s it"

"...you could literally have grabbed it five minutes before, read through it, you know, that to me is good work, you know is good planning work, is a good project that you can just pick up and do and it’s got so many benefits."

3.27.3.a Basic Theme Positive Images

"But I was really proud of and really happy about was how proud the girls are, how much self esteem they have, how they have completely challenged those ideas throughout all of the lessons and even girls that I wouldn’t have expected it of, girls that have come from quite traditional backgrounds and not always encouraged to have their own opinions"

3.27.3.b Basic Theme Length

"I liked the fact that it was just an hour every week and that was it."

3.27.4.a Basic Theme- Open discussion
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"there was a lot of talking as well and I think that that is a good thing"

3.27.5.a Basic Theme- Important

"It's really important that children learn about this"

3.27.5.b Basic Theme Pride

"The biggest challenge we face now is about trying to end that circle of violence because children grow up with it, they become immune and it almost becomes that it’s acceptable so then it continues and if we can do something to challenge that then you know that’s something I want to be part of and I’d be proud to be part of really."

3.29.1.a Basic Theme- Cyclical

"it works like if you hurt somebody they hurt you back"

3.29.1.b Basic Theme- Blame

"In the video, the guys, the father blamed the child"

3.29.2.b Basic Theme- Tell someone

"If you’re getting hurt by anyone you should really tell one of your friends or anything so they can even try sorting it out and you can tell someone bigger than you, they can try sorting it out."

"You could tell your teacher"

"I know it’s a bit disrespectful but I just don’t listen to them because they might have the wrong decision.....They’re just putting themselves into danger."

3.29.2.c. Basic Theme- Websites/Phone numbers

"And it taught us about the Child line"

"The web sites."

3.29.3.a
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"People should do this programme...all round the globe, because loads of people get hit by their parents and ...Or they get child abuse and stuff like that...and they’re scared to tell because they get threatened by the parents."

3.29.3. b Basic Theme- Opportunity

"I enjoyed it because we learned about, we learned new things."

3.31.1.b. Basic Theme- Stranger

"I get shy with people I don't know"

3.31.2.a Basic Theme- Anxieties regarding confidentiality.

"if it is a teacher I could not put up with it, I would not say anything..."

3.31.2.b Basic Theme- Family support officers

"I would like to talk to a family, what is they called?....Yeah, Family Support ..."

3.33.1.a Basic Theme- School staff present

"the fact that one of us being in that session would have been there to deal with that had anybody come and complained and we could have explained the context that it was delivered in and what was discussed."

3.33.1.b Basic Theme- Identifying who is most appropriate

"It’s knowing who is the right person isn’t it? "

3.33.2.a Basic Theme- Informal

"I think you came across as a really warm and nice person for those children. I could not imagine someone doing this here who was like a bit snooty or removed"

3.33.3.a Basic Theme- Increases confidence

"But having you there for that support might have helped people that were kind of less together about it than we were."
Appendix Ten: Illustrative Quotes (continued)

"I can think of several other TA’s or people that it could have been aimed at in here and the fact that it said domestic abuse would completely freak them out. But actually having seen the course and delivering the course, nobody says does your mum batter you? Do you know, but that word conjures up all sorts of things."

3.33.3.b Basic Theme-Professional support

"I think that with our continual training and our continual awareness we’ll get more able to deal with any disclosures"

"I think that to have the support of an educational psychologist in terms of when you get a disclosure or if you have got children that are going through that, because it might not be that I can think of several children that aren’t, they don’t show signs of behavioural difficulties or anything like that but they could do with talking to somebody about what’s going on and a professional that you know that does know. Someone that can talk to us about what the long term effects of that, and short term effects of domestic abuse is. We all know that of course it affects children but you know how and to have that professional support."