An Exploratory Case Study to Consider the Distinctive Contribution of Educational Psychologists as Trainers within Children’s Services

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

2013

Jenny Dutton

School of Education
# Table of Contents

Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. 2
List of Figures and Tables ................................................................................................. 8
Abstract ............................................................................................................................... 9
Declaration ............................................................................................................................ 10
Copyright Statement ........................................................................................................... 11
Acknowledgements ............................................................................................................ 12
List of Acronyms ................................................................................................................ 13

1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .................................................................................. 14
   1.1 Research Context and Rationale ............................................................................. 14

2 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW ..................................................................... 16
   2.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................... 16
       2.1.1 Review Strategy .............................................................................................. 16
   2.2 Definition of Key Terms ......................................................................................... 17
   2.3 National Reforms .................................................................................................... 18
       2.3.1 Children’s Services Reform ........................................................................... 18
       2.3.2 Current Political Context .............................................................................. 19
       2.3.3 Educational Reform ....................................................................................... 19
       2.3.4 Support and Aspiration ................................................................................ 21
   2.4 Schools as Organisations ......................................................................................... 21
       2.4.1 Culture of Change within Schools .................................................................. 22
       2.4.2 Composition of School Workforce ................................................................ 23
   2.5 Professional Development and Training ................................................................. 25
       2.5.1 The History of In-Service Training ................................................................. 26
       2.5.2 The Effectiveness of INSET ........................................................................... 27
2.5.3 Evaluating Impact ................................................................. 30

2.6 Effective Training .................................................................... 32
  2.6.1 Theories of Learning ......................................................... 35
  2.6.2 Motivation to Learn .......................................................... 36
  2.6.3 Training Needs ................................................................. 37
  2.6.4 Content versus Process ..................................................... 37

2.7 The Role of the Educational Psychologist ............................... 38
  2.7.1 The Role at the Organisational Level .................................. 39
  2.7.2 Approaches to Organisational Practice ............................... 42
  2.7.3 The Educational Psychologist’s Role as Trainer ................. 43

2.8 Summary of Literature Review and Research Questions .......... 47

2.9 Research Questions .................................................................. 49

2.10 Contribution to Knowledge .................................................... 49

3 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY ........................................ 50

3.1 Introduction ............................................................................. 50

3.2 Philosophical Considerations ............................................... 50
  3.2.1 Ontological Considerations ............................................. 51
  3.2.2 Epistemological Position ................................................ 51
  3.2.3 Social Constructionism ..................................................... 52
  3.2.4 Axiological Considerations ............................................. 52
  3.2.5 Role of Researcher .......................................................... 53
  3.2.6 Real World Research ....................................................... 55

3.4 Research Design ..................................................................... 56
  3.4.1 Exploration of Methodology .......................................... 56
  3.4.2 Overview and Rationale for Case Study Design ................. 57

3.5 Process of Study ..................................................................... 65

3.6 Data Gathering ....................................................................... 66
  3.6.1 PEP Interview ................................................................. 66
  3.6.2 Inclusion of Training Events ............................................. 66
3.6.3 Identification of Training Events and Participant Recruitment ...... 67
3.6.4 Observation of Training Event .................................................. 68
3.6.5 Semi-Structured Interviews ....................................................... 69
3.6.6 Focus Group ........................................................................... 71
3.6.7 Documentary Analysis ................................................................. 75
3.7 Time-Scale for Research ................................................................. 75
3.8 Unforeseen Difficulties ................................................................. 76
  3.8.1 Identifying Training Events ......................................................... 76
  3.8.2 Focus Group and Interviews ....................................................... 77
  3.8.3 Recruitment of Participants ....................................................... 77
  3.8.4 Collection of Training Data ....................................................... 79
3.9 Data Analysis Procedure ............................................................... 80
  3.9.1 Exploration of Data Analysis Methods ........................................ 80
  3.9.2 Inductive and Explicit Thematic Analysis .................................... 82
  3.9.3 Thematic Analysis Procedure ................................................... 83
  3.9.4 Documentary Analyses .............................................................. 85
3.10 Trustworthiness of the Research ................................................... 86
3.11 Ethical Considerations ................................................................. 88

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS .................................................................. 92
  4.1 Introduction .................................................................................. 92
  4.2 Case Description .......................................................................... 94
  4.3 Training Vignettes ....................................................................... 95
    4.3.1 Training Event A: Precision Teaching Training ......................... 95
    4.3.2 Training Event B: Early Years Training .................................... 95
    4.3.3 Training Event C: Working Memory Training ............................ 95
  4.4 Research Question One .................................................................. 96
    4.4.1 Theme One: Building Capacity ............................................... 96
    4.4.2 Theme Two: EPs’ Valuable Contribution ................................... 98
    4.4.3 Theme Three: Local Knowledge .............................................. 99
    4.4.4 Theme Four: Centralised versus Bespoke Training ................... 102
    4.4.5 Theme Five: Holistic View of Training .................................... 105
4.5 Research Question Two ......................................................................... 110
  4.5.1 Theme One: Application of Psychological Knowledge .................... 110
    4.5.1.1 Sub Theme One: Enriching a Response ................................ 112
    4.5.1.2 Sub Theme Two: Shaping Training ..................................... 113
    4.5.1.3 Sub Theme Three: Theoretical Underpinnings ..................... 114
    4.5.1.4 Sub Theme Four: Researcher-Practitioner .......................... 115
    4.5.1.5 Sub Theme Five: Linking to Education ............................... 116
    4.5.1.6 Sub Theme Six: Psychological Paradigms ........................... 117
    4.5.1.7 Sub Theme Seven: Effective Communication .................... 118
    4.5.1.8 Sub Theme Eight: Consultation Skills ............................... 118
  4.5.2 Theme Two: Local Knowledge ..................................................... 120
  4.5.3 Theme Three: Relationships ...................................................... 122
  4.5.4 Theme Four: Responding to Needs ........................................... 124
  4.5.5 Theme Five: Identifying the Impetus for Change ........................ 127
  4.5.6 Theme Six: Wider View of Training ......................................... 128
  4.5.7 Theme Seven: Instilling Confidence ......................................... 130
  4.5.8 Theme Eight: SEN Knowledge ................................................. 132
  4.5.9 Theme Nine: The Value of Teaching Experience ........................ 133
4.6 Research Question Three ...................................................................... 134
  4.6.1 Theme One: Theoretical Underpinnings .................................... 134
  4.6.2 Theme Two: EPs’ Knowledge, Experience and Skills ................... 137
  4.6.3 Theme Three: EP-School Relationship ...................................... 139
  4.6.4 Theme Four: Linking with Practice .......................................... 142
  4.6.5 Theme Five: Consultation Skills ............................................. 143
  4.6.6 Theme Six: Instilling Confidence ............................................ 144
  4.6.7 Theme Seven: Training Delivery ............................................. 146
  4.6.8 Theme Eight: The EP’s Strategic Position .................................. 149
  4.6.9 Theme Nine: Interpersonal and Communication Skills ............... 150
  4.6.10 Theme Ten: Outcomes and Impact ....................................... 152
4.7 Summary of Results ........................................................................... 157
4.7.1 Research Question 1 ................................................................. 157
4.7.2 Research Question 2 ................................................................. 158
4.7.3 Research Question 3 ................................................................. 160

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ...................... 162

5.1 Introduction .................................................................................. 162

5.2 Research Question One.................................................................... 163
  5.2.1 Context for EPs’ Role in Training.................................................. 163
  5.2.2 Current Economic Climate and Commercialisation of EP Services  165

5.3 Overview of Research Question Two................................................. 168

5.4 Overview of Research Question Three............................................. 169

5.5 RQ 2 and RQ 3: Similarities and Differences................................. 169
  5.5.1 Psychological Knowledge and Skills............................................. 169
  5.5.2 Key Features of Effective Training............................................. 170
  5.5.3 Enriching Responses................................................................. 171
  5.5.4 Theoretical Knowledge............................................................... 171
  5.5.5 Responding to Needs................................................................. 172
  5.5.6 Linking Training to Practice....................................................... 172
  5.5.7 Local Knowledge................................................................. 174
  5.5.8 Special Educational Needs....................................................... 175
  5.5.9 EPs’ Process Skills................................................................. 175
  5.5.10 Wider View of Training......................................................... 176

5.6 Impact of Research on Practice..................................................... 177

5.7 Contribution to Knowledge............................................................. 178

5.8 Limitations of the Research............................................................ 178
  5.8.1 Transferability of Findings....................................................... 178
  5.8.2 Self Selection................................................................. 179

5.9 Considerations for Future Research............................................... 179

5.10 Implications for Practice............................................................... 180
  5.10.1 Ethical Implications of Training within a Traded Services Model  180
  5.10.2 Implications for Delivering Training........................................... 183
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION .......................................................... 186

REFERENCES ............................................................................. 187

APPENDICES ............................................................................. 205
  Appendix A Recruitment Letter to Commissioners ..................... 205
  Appendix B Recruitment Letter to Recipients ......................... 207
  Appendix C Recruitment Letter to EPs ..................................... 209
  Appendix D Information Sheet for the Focus Group .................. 211
  Appendix E Training Observation Notes ................................. 212
  Appendix F PEP Interview Schedule ....................................... 214
  Appendix G Commissioners Interview Schedule ........................ 215
  Appendix H EP Interview Schedule ........................................ 216
  Appendix I Recipient Interview and Focus Group Schedule ....... 217
  Appendix J Consent Form ....................................................... 218
  Appendix K 15 Point Checklist ................................................ 219
  Appendix L Exemplar of Coding Phase of Analysis .................. 220
  Appendix M Photographs of Thematic Analysis Process .......... 222
  Appendix N Letter of Ethical Approval .................................... 224
  Appendix O Operational Risk Analysis ................................... 225

Word Count: 53,967
List of Figures and Tables

Figures

Figure 2.1 INSET Planning Model................................................................................................................. 30
Figure 3.1 Single Case Study Design with Embedded Units of Analysis....................................................... 64
Figure 3.2 Research Design.......................................................................................................................... 65
Figure 4.1 Thematic Mindmap for RQ 1.......................................................................................................... 97
Figure 4.2 Thematic Mindmap for RQ 2......................................................................................................... 111
Figure 4.3 Thematic Mindmap for RQ 3......................................................................................................... 135

Tables

Table 3.1 Case Study Protocol......................................................................................................................... 61
Table 3.2 Data Gathering Methods used to address each Research Question.............................................. 66
Table 3.3 Recipient Participation for Each Training Event.............................................................................. 68
Table 3.4 Time Scale of Research................................................................................................................... 75
Table 3.5 Overview of Data Collected............................................................................................................. 78
Table 3.6 Six Phases of Thematic Analysis.................................................................................................... 84
Table 4.1 Participant Key................................................................................................................................ 93
Table 5.1 Guidelines for Delivering Training............................................................................................... 181
Abstract

**Background:** Due to a change in service delivery, the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in which the researcher works now has an income-generated target which represents 20% of the full cost of the service. An increasing amount of this traded work is delivered in the form of training. Whilst training is perceived to be an important role of an Educational Psychologist (EP), there is a dearth of published literature about the role of the EP as a trainer. It was therefore felt that it would be useful to establish a more in-depth understanding of the EP’s role as a trainer, its distinctive and valuable contribution and the content and process elements of effective EP training.

**Participants:** Sixteen participants in total took part within the study. This included the Principal Educational Psychologist of a Central England Metropolitan Local Authority, three EPs who delivered three separate training events, the three commissioners of the EP training events, and nine recipients of the EP training events.

**Methods:** The study uses an exploratory single case study design, using a combination of semi-structured interviews and a focus group with additional data from a training observation, documentary analysis of training materials and training evaluation data. The interviews and focus group were analysed using inductive, explicit thematic analysis.

**Findings:** A wide range of themes were identified about the distinct and valued contribution of EPs as trainers. Some of these included: EPs’ psychological knowledge and skills; EPs’ local knowledge of schools and other services; EPs’ wider view of training. Further findings identified the competing demands for Educational Psychology Services in delivering effective training and the commercialisation of EP services within the current financial climate.

**Conclusions:** The exploratory nature of the study allowed for distinct and valued contributions of EPs’ as trainers to be identified. This resulted in a number of implications and recommendations for future practice.
Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
Copyright Statement

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns certain copyright or related rights in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Manchester certain rights to use such Copyright, including for administrative purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts and whether in hard or electronic copy, may be made only in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended) and regulations issued under it or, where appropriate, in accordance with licensing agreements which the University has from time to time. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of certain Copyright, patents, designs, trademarks and other intellectual property (the “Intellectual Property”) and any reproductions of copyright works in the thesis, for example graphs and tables (“Reproductions”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions.

iv. Further information on the conditions under which disclosure, publication and commercialisation of this thesis, the Copyright and any Intellectual Property and/or Reproductions described in it may take place is available in the University IP Policy (see http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=487), in any relevant Thesis restriction declarations deposited in the University Library, The University Library’s regulations (see http://www.manchester.ac.uk/library/aboutus/regulations) and in The University’s policy on Presentation of Theses.
**Acknowledgements**

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my partner Drew. His amazing optimism and unimaginable support in everything I have done over the past three years, has meant I have been able to pursue the profession I am passionate about. Drew - thank you for being you.

Huge heartfelt thanks to the nine other trainees who I made this journey with. Thank you for all the support, laughter and an amazing fuddles we’ve shared. You’ve made the last three years a pleasure.

Thanks to my sister Rachel who ensured the homework fairies helped along the way and my wonderful sister-in-law Mazza who proof read my thesis and pretended to be interested in my epistemological position. I would like to say thank you to my mom and dad for their unflagging belief in me.

I am extremely grateful to all the people who gave up their time to take part in the study. Without their involvement, I could have not completed this thesis.

I would also like to thank all of the staff associated with the Manchester University Educational & Child Psychology Doctoral course for all their support and guidance along the way, with particular thanks to Cathy Atkinson and Kevin Woods who supervised me throughout the course.

Finally a big thank you to Dr Del Horno, the constant source of motivation and laughter you have provided me and many others with has helped immensely over the last three years!!
## List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS</td>
<td>British Psychological Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMHS</td>
<td>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Continued Professional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DES</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfE</td>
<td>Department for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfES</td>
<td>Department for Education and Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECM</td>
<td>Every Child Matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS</td>
<td>Educational Psychology Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EY</td>
<td>Early Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSET</td>
<td>In-Service Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC</td>
<td>Health Professions Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Looked After Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office of Standards in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PATH</td>
<td>Planning for Alternative Tomorrows with Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEP</td>
<td>Principal Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RADIO</td>
<td>Research and Development in Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Restorative Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEAL</td>
<td>Social Emotional Aspects of Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEED</td>
<td>Scottish Executive Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEN</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENCo</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>Senior Management Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSI</td>
<td>Systems Supplied Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDA</td>
<td>Training and Development Agency for Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEP</td>
<td>Trainee Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TES</td>
<td>Times Educational Supplement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UoA</td>
<td>Units of Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOT</td>
<td>Youth Offending Teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Research Context and Rationale

“The Educational Psychology Service promotes learning, attainment and the healthy emotional development of children and young people aged 0–19, through the application of psychology, by working with early years settings, schools (and other education providers), children and their families, other local authority officers, practitioners, and other agencies” (DfEE, 2000, p. 1).

Although a fundamental role of Educational Psychologists (EPs) within Local Authorities (LAs) is to undertake statutory work relating to the identification and assessment of children with special educational needs (SEN), EPs take on a much broader role, such as providing consultation, individual casework, early years (EY) work, training and research (Farrell et al., 2006). Please refer to section 2.3 for a detailed description of the role of the EP.

Due to the change in service delivery, the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in which the researcher works now has an income generated target which represents approximately twenty percent of the full cost of the service. An increasing amount of such work is delivered in the form of training. The service in which this research was undertaken emphasises the importance of the inclusion of children with SEN within their local mainstream school and sees EPs as well placed to promote such inclusion. An approach which is adopted and encouraged within the service is consultation and collaboration to work with colleagues in a multi-agency setting to support and build capacity of professionals who work with children and young people and their families. An increasingly used tool within the service has been in-service training.

The researcher has had previous experience of delivering training and because of the change in service delivery has increasing opportunities to develop and deliver training with a variety of clients such as foster carers, school staff, parents and social workers. Predominantly the training opportunities have been within schools, specifically primary schools and whilst it is perceived from Government documents (Farrell et al., 2006), academic literature (e.g. Imich, 1999; Norwich, 2000) and anecdotal evidence from service colleagues to be an important role of an EP, there is a dearth of published
literature about the role of the EP as a trainer. It was therefore felt that it would be useful to establish a more in-depth understanding of the EP role as a trainer, its distinctive contribution and the content and process of effective EP training.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The objective of this review is to show the exploration of previous literature which demonstrates the rationale for the current study. Reforms necessitate a degree of change, in terms of what services are delivered and how. It will be important to explore national reforms to contextualise EP service delivery. Therefore the historic and recent changes and reforms within Children’s Services and education and how these influence and are influenced by political agendas will therefore be discussed. As a significant amount of EP training is delivered to educational professionals, therefore the school as an organisation will also be discussed. Educational reforms influence the composition of the school workforce and therefore will be explored further as this may have an impact upon the training undertaken by EPs and to whom it is delivered to. A review of the literature in relation to the historical context of in-service training within education and the current literature around professional development for educational professionals, its impact and effectiveness will be carried out.

This is followed by a section that considers what training and development is and how it will be defined for the purposes of this study. The review also draws on literature relating to the role and functions of the educational psychologist, in order to give an overview of the range and breadth of areas the EP works in, with a particular focus on the EP’s role as a trainer.

The chapter will conclude with a summary of the literature reviewed, the development of the research questions, research questions and the expected contribution to knowledge of the current study.

2.1.1 Review Strategy

Peer-reviewed journals were considered using PSYCINFO, ASSIA (ILLUMINA), ERIC and SCIENCE DIRECT databases. The search was undertaken in two stages. The first stage was a generic search of literature relating to training and professional development. Using the terms: training; in-service training; INSET; professional development; CPD.

The second stage was a more focused search relating to EPs delivering training. Using the terms: Educational Psychologist; EP; Educational Psychology Service. These were
combined with: training; in-service training; INSET; professional development; training; CPD, using the Boolean operator ‘AND’. These terms were also searched in combination with further terms which included: organisational change; intervention; implement*; organisational psychology; systemic; systems.

Through an abstract review the author included papers that were considered related to EPs delivering training or supporting professional development and if they were written in English. It was a UK based review, although some international papers were reviewed as a result of sourcing references from selected papers.

Back copies of a number of individual journals were also hand searched, these included Educational & Child Psychology, Educational Psychology in Practice and The British Journal of Educational Psychology. The references for all selected papers were also reviewed which lead to consideration of a number of related papers, some of which were non-peer reviewed journals and were felt to be pertinent to the literature. Google Scholar was also used as a database for non-reviewed journals. Information and relevant documents were also sourced from colleagues and seminars attended. Government documents and legislation were also reviewed. The LA’s website was searched and key documents pertinent to the topic were examined.

2.2 Definition of Key Terms

The following are definitions of the key terms used within this study (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.):

**Strategic Factors:** Strategic decisions could be considered as over-arching to an organisation’s or service’s long term planning and objectives.

**Operational Factors:** Operational planning is in relation to how the strategic plans will be translated into practice.

**Content Elements:** The content that is incorporated as part of the training.

**Process Elements:** How the training is delivered.
2.3 National Reforms

2.3.1 Children’s Services Reform

Reforms within Children’s Services necessitate a level of change, whether it is structural or organisational, service priorities, staff composition or changes within the roles staff undertake. These changes will impact upon the services EPs deliver, and how they deliver them. It will potentially influence what training EPs deliver and to whom. It was therefore considered important to contextualise the development and reforms from a national perspective.

An inquiry into Victoria Climbié’s death, led to a national reform of how local authorities delivered services for children and young people. This was led by the Every Child Matters (ECM): Change for children legislation (DfES, 2004) which called for a more integrated children’s service. The agenda emphasised the importance of supporting parents and carers, early intervention and prevention, integration of services and increased accountability across all services.

The Children’s Services reform outlined in ECM: Change for Children (DfES, 2004) also provided the basis for the Children’s Workforce Strategy (DfES, 2005), which aimed to develop the workforce in order to improve outcomes for children. The Government advocated that to ensure children and young people achieve the five ECM outcomes, it was crucial to have a quality and skilful children’s workforce (DfES, 2004), and as suggested within the Children’s Workforce Strategy (DfES, 2005), vital to the success of such reforms is developing a confident and competence workforce. In order to ensure that professionals within Children’s Services are skilled and competent, a level of training and development needs to take place. Professionals from within the private and public sector deliver training to organisations such as schools, Social Care and Early Years (EY) provisions in order to develop an effective, skilled children’s workforce.

In light of such strategic developments, the past decade has seen an unprecedented growth in many services, one being EY provisions (Wolfendale & Robinson, 2004). The interest and growth of such an area led to a flurry of initiatives such as Sure Start Children Centres, early excellence centres and incorporating such provision within the Office of Standards in Education (OFSTED) remit. The launch of the Extended Schools Initiative (DFES, 2003) which formed part of the Every Child Matters: Change for
children (DfES, 2004) agenda aimed to support the development of schools being able to provide comprehensive services to its community (Cummings et al., 2006), highlighting further developments that have grown out of recent Children Services reforms.

2.3.2 Current Political Context

It is important to consider the current political context in relation to the EP role as trainer as each reform means a different agenda for workforces to respond to, and changes to implement. Whilst there remains a drive for multi-agency working within Children’s Services and beyond (DfE, 2011), it could be seen that the financial challenges faced by Government are exacerbating the difficulties inherent in inter-agency working. Government budgets cuts have meant that many LAs have had to move to a more business type model and trade their services in order to generate income. However, many services have withdrawn from multi-agency ways of working due to the constraints that traded services have placed on them. Compounded by the shift in political focus away from ECM, it could be argued that the concept of integrated services and the ECM objectives are becoming increasingly difficult to uphold within these financially uncertain times.

Whilst there are national on-going fears of budget cuts for services, such as youth services, Connexions, behaviour support, school improvement and educational psychology and financial challenges faced by many local authorities; the public, Government and quality assurance such as OFSTED expect the quality of these provisions to remain. Striking the right balance between saving money and providing quality provision will continue to be at the forefront of political agendas and public concern for some time to come.

2.3.3 Educational Reform

The government reports that educational reform needs to accelerate even further over the next decade to ensure schools meet the demands of the changing workforce requirements. It has been suggested that the effects of economic globalisation during the 1980s have resulted in a postmodern restructuring of workplace organisation (Lawn, 1996; Robertson, 1996; Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid & Shacklock, 2000) and
highlighted by Day and Smethen (2009) this appears to be echoed within the educational system.

As suggested by Day and Smethen (2009) the education workforce is being continually ‘reformed’, ‘remodeled’, ‘modernised’. Within the past two decades, educational reform continues to be at the height of political and public debate and successive Governments seem determined to make their mark on the modernisation of education within the UK. As suggested by Day and Smethen (2009) educational change itself is not a new phenomenon, but the manner in which change is being observed has taken on new intensity and pace (Fullan, 2001; PricewaterhouseCooper, 2001; Sikes, 1992).

At the forefront of many reforms and reviews appears to be achievement, accountability, raising standards, and performance of pupils, teachers and schools (for example, DfES, 2004; DfE, 2010; DfE, 2011).

Day (2002) suggests that although educational reforms are different in every country, that they have five common factors:

- ‘They are proposed because governments believe that by intervening to change the conditions under which students learn, they can accelerate improvements, raise standards of achievement and somehow increase economic competitiveness.
- They address implicit worries of governments concerning a perceived fragmentation of personal and social values in society.
- They challenge teachers’ existing practices.
- They result in an increased workload for teachers.
- They do not always pay attention to teachers’ identities—arguably central to motivation efficacy, commitment, job satisfaction and effectiveness.’ (Day, 2002, p. 679)

One of the most recent of proposed reforms ‘The Importance of Teaching’ (DfE, 2010), sets out to “radically” reform (p. 4) schools. The Coalition Government hopes are centred on learning from “world class education systems” (p. 3) in order to undertake “whole system reforms” (p. 7) within schools. It not only highlights the customary
support and focus for high quality teaching and the importance of raising standards, it also recognises the need to raise the status of teachers.

2.3.4 Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to SEN and Disability
The introduction of the Coalition Government’s Green Paper, ‘Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability’ (DfE, 2011), will see several changes to the way in which children with SEN are supported. The impact upon schools and wider a field is uncertain and continues to be debated. Published in March 2011, the Green Paper set out major reforms to: the way in which children with SEN are assessed; develop the expertise and knowledge of the wider school workforce; and teacher training and professional development. However the report does not contain much detail on how these policies will be actually developed or implemented.

Government funding is to be allocated to training provisions in relation to workforce development. These are in key areas such as early years work, educational psychology, speech and language and further education.

2.4 Schools as Organisations
It could be seen as important to understand schools as organisations to be able to provide training which promotes effective practice. Stoker (2000) highlights the need to understand the complexity of organisations such as schools if we are to help children and young people. This growing recognition of the importance of understanding and exploring systems such as schools can be seen in the work of Gillham (1978) and Burden (1978). This generated increasing interest in organisational work at the end of the last century (Fox, 2009; Leyden, 1999; Stoker, 2000; Stratford, 2000; Sutoris, 2000), although Fox (2009) notes that since the year 2000 articles relating to such work has considerably diminished.

The thinking behind systems theory was initially developed in the 1940s and was predominantly based on the mechanistic view of systems (Korzybsky, 1942). A more biological concept of organisational systems was introduced a decade later (von Bertalanffy, 1950). Fox (2009) discussed the differences of systems within schools and how both mechanistic and biological systems are in place within schools. Systems theory provides a means for understanding schools as dynamic environments that have multi-faceted interactions with other system levels such as pupils, communities
(Bowen, Rose & Ware, 2006) and external agencies. This also has close links with Lewin’s model of change (1951) and Bronfenbrenner’s ecological framework (1979).

2.4.1 Culture of Change within Schools

In relation to organisational development it is also important to consider the culture of change and how schools can respond to such challenges (Fullan, 2004; Hargreaves, 1995; Roffey, 2000; Stoll & Fink, 1995). Hargreaves (1995) considered school culture in two dimensions, social control and social cohesion and suggests particular attention be paid to both these dimensions within the organisation as a whole and within subcultures. It is suggested that subcultures can be significant barriers to whole-school cohesiveness (Hargreaves, 1995). The activity within the subcultures should not be undermined, especially if this is where the implementation of change is focused or perhaps where resistance is present. Roffey (2000) proposes that the systematic analysis of cultural and political factors will facilitate this process and may help identify the following:

- the extent to which prerequisite conditions are in place
- possibilities for working on the development of those prerequisites
- the parameters for active development
- appropriate entry points
- the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation which determine process

Further to this, Roffey (2000) suggests that rather than concentrating predominantly on the aims and objectives, the focus needs to be on aspects such as leadership, the organisation of tasks, relationships and communications and sees the values and attitudes of the stakeholders as key in the facilitation process. This, she acknowledges, can be a lengthy process which requires a high level of knowledge and skill. Similarly Guskey (2000) notes that “changes in education require time for adaptation, adjustment and refinement” (p. 9).

Stoker (1992) suggests an effective way of achieving change for a child or young person is to effect change through the organisations a child is part of. School could be seen as a fundamental organisation a child is part of therefore if change is to be effected for children, understanding the school as an organisation could facilitate this process.
Bowen, Rose and Ware (2006) explored the concept of organisational learning in schools. It is noted that the culture, practices and possibly the ethos within a school can impact upon its performance. They refer to schools that have open and collaborative cultures and discourse “as evidencing the conditions and processes associated with learning organisations” (p. 97). Hiat-Michael (2001) describes schools as a “learning community in which all members acquire new ideas and accept responsibility for developing and maintaining the organisation” (p. 115). Building on this definition, Bowen, Rose and Ware (2006) assert that it is not only the members of the organisation that influence it but the pupils and community stakeholders who have a significant role to play. In addition to Hiat-Michael (2001), Bowen, Rose and Ware (2006) purported:

‘Learning organisations are associated with a core set of conditions and processes that support the ability of an organisation to value, acquire, and use information and tacit knowledge acquired from employees and stakeholders to successfully plan, implement, and evaluate strategies.’ (p. 98)

As Roffey (2000) suggests, schools have to respond to many influences and features of such an organisation such as perception of shared goals, interactions within and between systems, values, power and politics that occur within each subsystem form part of the school. It is these features that should not be underemphasised. As Stoker (1992) and Stobie (2002) note, to effect change in one system, will impact another. Therefore developing an understanding and awareness of the multi-faceted influences and complex systems that make up a school could be paramount, which Roffey (2000) suggests is “critical as the underlying generators of culture and organisational development” (p. 10).

2.4.2 Composition of School Workforce

As discussed within section 2.4, there have been significant reforms within education system in the UK which have subsequently led to a “dramatic change in the composition of the workforce of schools” (Edmond & Price, 2009, p. 1). Government initiatives focused on agendas such as inclusion, teacher workloads and the restructuring of Children’s Services have resulted in a diversification of roles within schools. It is important to consider this, as the composition of the workforce within
schools changes so do the staff training and development needs, which may potentially impact upon the service delivery of EPs and who they deliver training to.

In light of such reforms, there has been an unprecedented increase in the number of teaching assistants (TAs) working in mainstream schools which Farrell, Balshaw and Polat (1999) relate to the increased numbers of children with statements of SEN being placed in mainstream schools. Factors for such an increase in the number of TAs have included, teacher workload (School Teachers’ Review Body, 2001), increased capacity of schools to meet objectives set out within the ECM agenda (DfES, 2003) and recent Government Initiatives. Government documentation, made clear their intentions to increase the number of teaching assistants in schools and in 2009 figures suggest that there were more than 358,000 full-time equivalent support staff in schools in England and Wales (TES, 2009), compared with 60,600 teaching assistants (TAs) in 1997 (DfES, 2007).

As highlighted by Edmond and Price (2009) this has not only seen a growth in the amount of TAs within schools but also a development of their pedagogical role. It is suggested that TAs have had a key role in the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, providing cover for teachers to undertake planning, preparation and assessment, and delivering the curriculum. Not only has there been an increase in the amount of time spent within a pedagogical role but their remit has also extended to a pastoral role as well. Concerningly it has been argued that the TA’s contribution within the classroom has not been acknowledged (Hancock & Eyres, 2004) and the way in which TAs are currently deployed has not had the impact upon pupils’ attainment as initially envisaged (Blatchford et al., 2006) and that TAs do not have enough training for their roles (Russell et al., 2005).

Not only have TAs seen their role widening within schools, following Government initiatives, recent years have witnessed the creation of new roles such as higher level teaching assistants, cover supervisors, learning mentors and parent support workers (Edmond & Price, 2009). The extended schools agenda has also seen services such as counsellors, mental health workers and social workers brought into schools. According to OFSTED (2008), the “substantial expansion of the wider workforce at all levels was allowing schools to extend the curriculum, provide more care, guidance and support
for pupils... and teachers’ time and work were focused more directly on teaching and learning” (p. 5). The broader workforce within schools necessitates for a broader spectrum of training and development.

With the introduction of the Coalition Government’s Green Paper, ‘Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability’ (DfE, 2011), sees an “ambitious programme of reform” (p. 5) of establishing a single assessment process in place of the statutory Special Educational Needs (SEN) assessment procedure. The removal of the “bias towards inclusion” (p. 17) may see a significant change in how staff within mainstream schools are deployed, with the possibility of more specialist provisions being created to reportedly afford parents a “real choice” (p. 51) in their child’s education and preferred school.

Even with the increased level of responsibility that is now placed upon TAs, there is no national requirement for support staff within schools to have a qualification, leaving some questioning the quality of teaching pupils are being provided with. Promisingly, a recent Government initiative ‘SEN support scholarship programme’ (DfE, 2012) has acknowledged the significant role TAs play in supporting children and young people with SEN and are providing funding for TAs to undertake degree level specialist training to support their practice.

Many departments that oversee workforce reforms and implement and regulate strategic initiatives are either being abolished or reformed themselves and the impact the current reforms and budgetary cuts will have upon Children’s Services and Educational Provisions within Britain is unknown.

2.5 Professional Development and Training

In reviewing the literature in relation to Children’s Services professionals, there appears to be a paucity of literature in relation to how Children’s Services professionals are trained, the impact this has on the service provided and ultimately the outcomes for children and young people. Whilst there is a notable gap in this area of the literature, there is a wealth of information in relation to teachers’ professional development. Aspects of professional development of teachers will be addressed and
explored in more detail, as it could be seen that a significant amount of training undertaken by EPs is with school-based staff and other educational professionals.

The importance of professional development of EY professionals is also acknowledged. Blatchford, Bassett, Brown and Webster (2006) assert that whilst the knowledge of child development and pedagogy is fundamental for EY practitioners, this knowledge is often weak among EY staff. This gap in knowledge could be reduced through initial training and continuous professional development.

“Professional development consists of reflective activity designed to improve an individual's attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. It supports individual needs and improves professional practice” (Training and Development Agency [TDA] website, n.d, para. 1). In relation to education, Day (1999) defines Continued Professional Development as:

“…..all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which constitute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom” (Day, 1999, p. 225).

Major models of professional development are described in the research of Sparks and Loucks-Horsely (1989) and Drago-Severson (1994) and conclude that the main models are: training; observation/assessment; involvement in a development group; study groups; action research; individual guided learning activities; mentoring.

2.5.1 The History of In-Service Training

For decades an ongoing belief was that teaching staff should regularly update their skills to ensure they are adequately skilled to meet the demands of the teaching profession. In the early 1970s the need for INSET was officially recognised and began to be voluntarily implemented (DES, 1972), although it was not until the 1988 Education Act that INSET days were formally introduced within all schools within England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The 1988 Education Act (DES, 1988) resulted in schools rather than local authorities being more accountable through assessment, and subsequently an increased focus of the development of the school as an organisation was observed (Roffey, 2000). This perhaps consequently increased the drive towards
whole school in-service education and training days, in what is commonly known as INSET days.

In light of societal changes and educational reforms such as policy changes, SEN reforms, curriculum restructuring, there appeared to be strong support of the establishment of a formal INSET (Chadwick, 1982; Dowling, 1988; James, 1973). It was argued that INSET were crucial to the evolving role of teaching (Chadwick, 1982). Four decades on and the functions of INSETs appear to be similar: increase children’s life chances; increase quality of teaching; CPD for school-based professionals (OFSTED, 2006).

2.5.2 The Effectiveness of INSET

After the slow and informal introduction of INSET within the England, Wales and Northern Ireland it was not long before the lack of coherent policy, insufficient allocated funding, inconsistent structure of INSET and need for evaluation was brought to the forefront (Bolam, 1979; Chadwick, 1982; Dowling, 1988; Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Henderson, 1978). A frequent criticism of INSET is the belief that, while it may increase participants’ knowledge, it does not change their practice in schools. As Fullan and Pomfret (1977) suggested, INSET had not led to a significant change in classroom practices and whilst staff who undertook the INSET training perceived it as valuable, once back within the classroom, the impact it had on their practice was questionable.

It should be noted that INSET is not specifically for teachers and all staff within schools should benefit from such training. It is suggested that “INSET for support staff should reflect the needs of the school, the pupils and the TAs themselves, with the ultimate goal of increasing and improving inclusive practices” (Moran & Abbott, 2002 p. 170). However, Farrell et al. (1999) suggests that the INSET is aimed more so at teachers rather than TAs. However the paper purports that TAs valued training and considered linking the training to their practice to be an important element of the training.

Even now the effectiveness and efficiency of its use remains debatable (Guskey, 2000) as on-going research continues to evaluate its systematic application across schools (OFSTED, 2006). In corroboration with Fullan and Pomfret (1977), Guskey (2000) adds that training and development programmes have been top down, too isolated from
school realities so that it has little impact. Furthermore, it is precisely those practitioners who are less likely to be reached by training that ideally are the target of training initiatives.

Guskey (2000) suggests that “never before within the history of education has greater importance been attached to professional development within the educational profession. Every proposal for education reform and every plan for school improvement emphasises the need for high quality development and teaching” (p. 3). Whilst this is related to American reform this could be placed within the current UK context. Following the recent coalition Government initiatives, ‘The Importance of Teaching’ (DfES, 2010) there appear to be new plans to invest in the continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers. Stated within the Coalition Government’s White Paper (DfE, 2010) two thirds felt professional development was ‘passive learning’ meaning that it involved sitting and listening to presentation and highlighted that there is dearth of literature relating to the effective practice of teacher development.

The implementation of the national workforce agreement (DfES, 2003) saw a considerable increase in the amount of support staff in schools and, consequently, in the range of training and development needs within schools. In 2005, the TDA assumed responsibility from the DfES for coordinating CPD for all school staff nationally. In recent years there have been evaluations in relation to the development and nature of CPD within schools. It was identified that although many senior management teams systemically identified whole schools needs, they frequently omitted to adequately identify individual needs and as a result, the planning for such development was often inadequate (OFSTED, 2006).

In contrast to this, Fullan (2004) suggests CPD could be seen as an ‘individualistic’ strategy in terms of focusing on individual development rather than whole-school development. Whilst the skills and knowledge of a teacher is important, Newmann, King and Youngs (2000) assert that this alone is not sufficient. Instead, a culture of school-wide professional learning communities should be developed in order to create a whole school capacity to meet the needs and increase the achievement of all children. Newmann, King and Youngs (2000) also emphasise the importance of:
organisational integration of the curriculum, meaning that a school’s educational programme for pupils is clearly focused on learning outcomes; access to resources; and quality leadership. They consider these factors along with teacher skills and professional communities to be crucial for a school to be able to build their capacity. Therefore it could be argued that understanding organisational and individual components that can enhance school’s effectiveness and support the development of a school’s capacity is fundamental when supporting whole-school development.

Dutton (2010) explored the experiences of an infant school on the extended application of Social Stories as a behaviour management strategy. This study highlighted implications that professionals delivering training within schools need to consider that, “In order for any kind of strategy to be implemented, embedded and maintained it is important to consider process factors” (Dutton, 2010, p. 38). A factor elicited from the study was the importance of communication relating to the success of in-service training and communicative challenges that further impacted on the implementation and sustainability of the intervention. Similarly Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) found within their study that negotiation was a key factor for the success of in-service training. The negotiation conducted prior to the implementation of a programme facilitated the response to issues at a systems level.

In agreement with the importance of such communication, Monsen, Graham, Frederickson and Cameron (1998) strongly advocate the need for full negotiation of roles in order to clarify expectations and possibly to be able to consider systemic issues that may impact upon the training. McGrath (2001) found that subsequent to training, participants experienced difficulty implementing changes in their practice, highlighting a strong need for communication between agencies about the practicalities of implementing a new set of skills within practice.

As Fullan (2001) simply notes, implementation is whether or not a given practice, concept or intervention gets ‘put in place’. In relation to teaching and learning, Fullan (2001) suggests that implementation consists of: using new materials; engaging in new behaviours and practices; incorporating new beliefs. However it can be argued that one of the main difficulties with any new idea is its successful implementation.
Wright (1990) explored the contribution psychology can make to INSET planning, delivery and evaluation. An INSET planning model was developed for use on a training course at University College London, which is presented in Figure 2.1. It should be noted that there does not appear to be research into the extent to which this is a successful tool for planning INSET, although it seems to give an awareness of factors which may contribute to a successful training event.

**Figure 2.1: INSET Planning Model**

### 2.5.3 Evaluating Impact

Evaluation methods often lack detail about the content and application of their use (Clayton et al, 1990), which impacts upon the ability to make informed decisions about the most effective evaluation tools. Guskey (2000) suggests that evaluation of impact takes place at five different levels: participant reaction; participant learning; organisational support and change; participant use of new knowledge and skills; pupil learning outcomes. The DfES project (Goodall et al., 2005) investigated the range of evaluative practices for CPD in use in schools against the model proposed by Guskey (2000). It found that few schools surveyed, evaluated the impact of CPD on teaching and learning successfully and that the vast majority of evaluation practice remains at the level of participant reaction and learning. Further to this, OFSTED (2008) undertook a survey of the deployment, training and development of the wider school workforce and concluded that “access to training continued to rely on the extent to which individual members of staff identified and requested professional development for themselves” (OFSTED, 2008, p. 18), following on from this, in 2009, the TDA introduced
a three-year strategy for the professional development of the children’s workforce in schools. Following recent government restructuring in April 2012, the Teaching Agency subsumed the key functions and responsibilities of the TDA. The Department has five medium-term strategic aims, which include raising standards of educational achievement; reforming the schools system; and supporting all children and young people, particularly the disadvantaged. It remains to be seen what further developments or strategic reforms will be introduced to support educational professionals’ initial training and continued development.

Whole school in-service training days are regularly organised by EPs but unless consideration is given to the organisation’s structures, the impact of the training and envisaged change is argued to have minimal impact (Roffey, 2000). Indeed Roffey (2000) provided a framework to evaluate a school’s readiness to take on changes and develop projects, in this instance an anti-bullying initiative and as discussed earlier Guskey (2000) proposed a model for the evaluation of CPD.

The impact of training remains debatable and evaluations of training and professional development programmes have not been conclusive (Clark, 2001; Guskey, 2000). Clark (2001) claims that despite an increase in training for CPD, the methodology to evaluate its quality and impact vary significantly whilst Guskey (2000) suggests that evaluators rarely consider the impact of training on more important indicators of success such as the participant’s knowledge or practice. Rarer still is a consideration of the impact upon pupils. Gemmell, King, Randall and Sutherland (2003) looked at training delivered by a Scottish EPS and found that the training evaluation generally centred around how the presenter/s were perceived and how enjoyable the sessions were, rather than on any increased knowledge, changes in perceptions or actual behaviour of participants.

“Unfortunately, a great deal of staff development evaluation begins and ends with the assessment of individuals’ reactions to workshops and courses. We learn little, if anything, from these assessments about the acquisition by teachers of new knowledge and skills and how that learning affects their daily practice.” (Guskey, 2000, p. xii)

Guskey (2000) highlights the importance of the consistency and continuity of staff development which is supported by systemic changes, however measuring
participants’/learners’ satisfaction of the training has little indication of the actual impact the training has on future practice. Even the very notion of quantifying ‘impact’ also has its difficulties. Most, if not all practitioners undertaking training hope that the training is enjoyable and useful. Whilst the idealistic outcome may be to apply the newly learnt skills within practice, the reality is the impact may not be felt across the wider context.

2.6 Effective Training

According to the Cambridge dictionary, training is defined as “the process of learning the skills you need to do a particular job or activity” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d). This definition will be used for the purpose of this study.

Guskey (2000) suggests that training is synonymous with professional development and that it is the most common form of such development.

‘Training is an educational process. People can learn new information, re-learn and reinforce existing knowledge and skills, and most importantly have time to think and consider what new options can help them improve their effectiveness at work. Effective training conveys relevant and useful information that inform participants and develop skills and behaviours that can be transferred back to the workplace.’ (Montana & Charnov, 2000, p. 1)

Training comes in the form of a variety of formats, which include: large group presentation; discussion; workshops; seminars; demonstrations; role play; simulation; micro teaching (Joyce & Showers, 1995). Whilst there is debate about the most appropriate adult training methods (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007), there is a wealth of literature into the effectiveness of training. This will be discussed in detail within this section.

Guskey (2000) suggests that effective training generally includes an exploration of theory, modelling of skills, simulated practice, feedback about performance and coaching in the workplace. Similarly, it is suggested that training over time, as opposed to standalone training courses is more likely to influence practice (Hawley & Valli, 1999).
Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman and Wallace (2005) suggest in contrast with a more linear didactic approach, the practice of new skills is multidimensional and dynamic. Kealey, Peterson, Gaul and Dinh (2000) found that training which included presentation of theory, description of skills, modelling of new skills and methods, coaching and practice with feedback increased teacher preparedness and confidence and in a meta analysis relating to the implementation evaluation in educational settings, results showed that implementation occurred primarily when coaching was incorporated into the training (Joyce & Showers, 2002). A study by Higgins (2009) suggested the iterative process of training was considered an important element of effective training.

Most organisations spend money on developing and training their workforce, but many find the notion of sharing best practice and imparting tacit and new knowledge difficult to execute successfully. It could be seen that training is an essential part of developing the capacity of any organisation; yet ensuring that the skills learnt within a training event are applied and sustained is a complex and nonlinear process. Therefore it is important to understand the key factors that impact upon the effectiveness of training, how the effectiveness is defined and how the information imparted is transferred into application.

A consistent finding across health and education settings is that some of the most ineffective methods of producing behaviour change amongst staff are single-exposure training or the simple dissemination of information (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman & Wallace, 2005; Grimshaw et al., 2001; Guskey, 2000; Hoge & Morris, 2004; Joyce & Showers, 2002; Speck, 1996). These have been widely used methods of training delivery (Joyce & Showers, 2002) and can rely heavily on a didactic format. Although didactic approaches can be effective for the dissemination of information (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman & Wallace, 2005), the extent to which it produces sustained behaviour change is questionable (Beidas & Kendall, 2010; Miller, Yahne, Moyers, Marinez, & Pirritano, 2004; Sholomskas et al., 2005). Although there is no one approach to ensure effective training and sustained changes (Oxman, Thompson, Davis & Haynes, 1995), Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006, p. 239) examined published and non-published papers and found the following to be key features of effective training:
‘Negotiation and planning of training event (Gemmell, King, Randall & Sutherland, 2003; Rouse & Balshaw, 1991).

Training needs are identified through analysis (Monsen, Graham, Frederickson & Cameron, 1998).

Differing learning styles are considered (Gemmell, King, Randall & Sutherland, 2003).

Consideration of political context (McCarthy, 1992).

Training arises from a need, is relevant to practice and involves the whole school (McCarthy, 1992; Rouse, 1991; Wright, 1990).

It develops a coherent theoretical approach into changes in practice (McCarthy, 1992).

Adult learners are used as an active resource (Wright, 1990).

There are opportunities for experiential learning through coaching, modelling and scaffolding (Gemmell, King, Randall & Sutherland, 2003; Joyce & Showers, 1993; McCarthy, 1992).

Encourages independence in the participants (Rouse, 1991; Wade, 1985).

Post training follow-up (Gemmell, King, Randall & Sutherland; 2003).

Support and feedback on practice is offered (Leach & Conto, 1999)’.

Lyon, Stirman, Kerns and Bruns’ (2011) paper draws literature from a variety of disciplines, including medical training, adult education, and teacher training, to identify useful training approaches that may be applied to mental health training. Research that was reviewed highlighted the importance of ongoing support and follow-up training sessions, congruence between the training content and existing knowledge and experiences of the participants, and consideration of participant motivational factors.

A further factor that could be seen as important for the implementation and sustainability of change that was not evident within the literature examined by Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) was self-efficacy. Self-efficacy refers to whether a person feels confident that they have the ability to perform a specific task (Bandura, 2001). Contributing factors to the occurrence of behaviour change is whether a person is interested in something and whether they have the confidence in their own ability.
Research suggests that self-efficacy is positively related to motivation and is a powerful predictor of performance and execution of desired behaviours. Understanding and giving attention to people’s self efficacy throughout the training process could be seen a fundamental to its success (Haccoun & Saks, 1998).

In relation to training, the following sections will now explore the following: theories of learning; training needs; the motivation to learn; and content versus process elements of training.

2.6.1 Theories of Learning
Joyce and Showers (2002) highlighted the importance of on-going contact throughout training and suggests that in order for the training to be successfully implemented, training sessions must be extended, appropriately spaced and supplemented with additional follow-up activities and feedback on performance. Building on this, learning theories and concepts described by Haring, Lovitt, Eaton & Hansen (1978) and Meverach (1995) can lend themselves to the importance of on-going contact and feedback. Haring, Lovitt, Eaton & Hansen (1978) described the learning process as a learning hierarchy in which a learner has to advance through four stages of learning: acquisition; fluency; generalisation; adaptation. Throughout the stages the skills must be acquired and learnt until the skill is mastered and can be adapted within new contexts. As suggested by Bandura (2001), mastery experiences are considered to be an effective way to foster an increased sense of self-efficacy.

Meverach (1995) suggests that learning can be seen as a process from being in a ‘survival phase’ through to a stage in which skills are mastered and new knowledge is successfully applied and assimilated. The ‘survival phase’ is characterised by practitioners questioning new techniques, feelings of ambivalence in its use and requiring a high degree of support. Meverach (1995) suggests that new information competes with old information, consequently leading to an initial decline in performance. This may suggest that on-going support is crucial for the integration of new skills, as if on-going support and feedback is not given; practitioners attempting to assimilate new skills may be more likely to disengage before the skills are mastered.
As highlighted earlier, Wright (1990) discussed the implications of EPs undertaking training and what may be factors to consider when undertaking training within schools. Wright (1990) incorporated views from a number of perspectives when considering EPs’ potential contribution to training. Wright (1990) suggests that when considering training, EPs have the opportunity to draw from several areas of psychology which focuses on learners. In particular, it was the humanistic, constructivist and motivation perspectives that Wright (1990) considered to be relevant when considering learners and the implications of these for how EPs deliver training and what they deliver.

2.6.2 Motivation to Learn

Rooted in humanistic approaches, Knowles (1984) suggested that in order to optimise adult learning it is crucial to focus directly on what the learners want. A constructivist perspective would possibly argue that the focus should be on integration of new information to build on what learners already know and support them in actively applying these skills and reflecting on its use. Wright (1990) considers that motivation underpins these theories. Ryan and Deci (2000) noted that “to be motivated means to be moved to do something” (p. 1), and made an important distinction between being intrinsically motivated or extrinsically motivated to do something (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

It was suggested that people require a degree of choice in order to promote intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Self-concordance refers to whether a plan reflects a person’s own interests and is considered important for implementing change (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). This appears to be related to intrinsic motivation referred to by Deci and Ryan. In relation to learning, if people feel they have little or no choice about what is being learnt or an element of extrinsic pressure is placed on the learner, it may reduce the intrinsic motivation to engage in the learning activity or process.

Specifically focusing on adult learners, Wright (1990) asserts there are significant differences between young learners and adult learners. Knowles (1984) referred to the concept of andragogy, in contrast with pedagogy, where learners are traditionally directed by teachers. It sees adult learners as having increasing responsibility and self-motivation for their own learning. However if we are to consider the concept of motivation in relation to adult learning within in-service training (INSET) or continued
professional development (CPD), could it be that without the appropriate needs analysis and consideration of each individual's perspective within a whole school or organisation system, there may be a danger that adult learning within this context may well be seen as more directed and extrinsically pressured?

2.6.3 Training Needs
As evident within the literature pertaining to effective training, a needs analysis was considered an important element of the process. However what was not clear within the literature was whose ‘needs’ should be considered. Wright (1990) points out the need to distinguish the different definitions of ‘needs’. She considered there to be three prime definitions: real needs, which are defined as a gap between a desired performance and actual performance; felt needs, which are the needs felt by the learners themselves; perceived needs which could come in the form of other professionals, such as: headteachers; Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo); EPs; recommendations from an OFSTED inspection; Local Government agendas. All of these may have different perspectives of what a person needs in relation to training, and all could subsequently determine what training takes place.

Therefore striking the right balance between the needs of individuals, groups and whole organisations within the context of changing national legislation could be seen as a difficult area to navigate. However unless trainers have an understanding of the complexities involved in undertaking training, it may bring the eventual effectiveness of the training into question.

2.6.4 Content versus Process
Another important factor that could impact upon the effectiveness of training (Fullan, 2004) considers that focusing on the information rather than its use and how it is applied within a particular context, can be counterproductive. This means that if we do not consider other impeding factors such as social-cultural factors, individual and group values, beliefs, existing knowledge and experience and indeed the very notion of change itself, the training that one intends to deliver may not be as effective as hoped. “Information is not pertinent until people decide what it means and why it matters” (Fullan, 2004, p. 121), this is corroborated by Frederickson (1988), who asserts that focus should be more on the process of the training rather than content.
2.7 The Role of the Educational Psychologist

The role of the EP is well documented (e.g. Cameron, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Scottish Executive Education Department [SEED], 2002). A review of the EP role in Scotland (SEED, 2002) identified EPs’ core functions as consultation, assessment, intervention, research and training, and suggested EPs use these functions at three different levels.

1. The individual child/young person. 2. The group. 3. The organisation. Similarly, within England and Wales, Fallon, Woods and Rooney (2010) provide a useful description of the EP’s role:

‘EPs are fundamentally scientist practitioners who utilise, for the benefit of children and young people, psychological skills, knowledge and understanding through the functions of consultation, assessment, intervention, research and training, at organisational, group and individual level across educational, care and community settings, with a variety of role partners.’ (p. 4)

These core functions are discussed in the National Occupational Standards for EPs (British Psychological Society, BPS; 2007) which are categorised as six key generic roles, these are:

- Develop, implement and maintain personal and professional standards and ethical practice.
- Apply psychological and related methods, concepts, models, theories and knowledge derived from reproducible research findings.
- Research and develop new and existing psychological methods, concepts, models, theories and instruments in psychology.
- Communicate psychological knowledge, principles, methods, needs and policy requirements.
- Develop and train the application of psychological skills, knowledge, practices and procedures.
- Manage the provision of psychological systems, services and resources.

Similar to the Currie Report (SEED, 2002), Curran, Gersch and Wolfendale (2003) suggest a service delivery model which potentially offers EPs three levels at which they can operate at; the individual, the organisation and the system. Promisingly for the EP profession, the Green paper Support and Aspiration (DES, 2011) appeared to support
the role of the EP in supporting children, young people and their families. “The Review of EP training focussed on the design of future initial training arrangements to equip trainees to work within EP services of the future, deliver the developing EP role, are sustainable and fit with our wider approach to workforce development” (DES, 2011; p.3). It was reported that EPs can make a significant contribution to the lives of children and young people and undertake a broad range activities.

The distinctive contribution of the EP role has been considered at length (Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006). Interestingly whilst Farrell et al., (2006) reported a range of distinctive contributions of the EP, they also noted that alternative providers were able to undertake elements of the role. Findings suggested that a range of professionals, such as clinical psychologists and specialist teachers could undertake similar training as an EP.

Ashton and Roberts (2006) explored the valuable and unique role of the EP within one LA and found that SENCo’s themselves valued the ‘traditional’ role of an EP, such as individual assessments and advice giving, whilst EPs saw their role was to offer schools a wider range of services. In contrast Farrell, Jimerson, Kalambouka and Benoit (2005) study found that teachers would prefer a consultation framework for EP practice, although the nature of the EP’s work within this study appeared to focus on individual assessments.

The literature suggests that the supportive function that EPs offer could be seen in supporting children and young people with SEN, their families and schools, through a range of activities such as consultation, assessment, intervention, and training (e.g. Bickford-Smith, Wijayatilake, & Woods, 2005; Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Leadbetter, 2006). Farrell et al.’s (2006) review explored the literature in relation to the contribution EPs make in supporting a wide range of children and young people, and included direct work with children, families, schools and other professionals and delivery of training.

2.7.1 The Role at the Organisational Level
As discussed within section 2.3 there is evidence to suggest EPs work at an organisational level. Despite wider support for systemic work and emphasis on the
important contributions EPs can make on an organisational level (Ellins & Porter, 2005; Sutoris, 2000; Wolfendale & Robinson, 2001), a decade ago there was evidence to suggest that EPs did not work at this level frequently (Leyden, 1999; Stratford, 2000). Promisingly Farrell et al’s (2006) research into the distinctive contribution of EPs reported that EPs undertake a significant amount of work at the systemic level to build the capacity of schools and other organisations.

Osborne, Norgate and Traill (2009) conducted research into EPs’ work with looked after children (LAC) and suggested that EPs could have an important role to play with LAC that goes beyond their traditional focus towards education and found that one of the core roles of EPs was training and support.

It is however important to consider that the research undertaken in relation to the EP’s role and functions and the views stated within the research were all elicited from EP professionals. Methodological considerations and implications needed to be considered in relation to these studies. Furthermore there is little research conducted on the EP role by people with a critical distance from the profession.

Fallon, Woods and Rooney (2010) envisage that the development of EPs will move in two directions, one being that schools and other groups will commission the services of external agencies, resulting in more EPs having to market and sell their services. This may have significant implications for EPs delivering training within an increasingly competitive market. As Kelly and Gray (2000) suggest, it might be useful to ‘market’ what services EPSs can provide to ensure that school, parents and communities are aware of the varied work they undertake.

To meet the new demands the profession is seeing in terms of working within a traded service, it will be important for EPs to work ethically and within their professional competence (Woods, 2011). EPs endeavour to serve the public and in doing so observe and adhere to the Health Professions Council (HPC) Standards of Proficiency (HPC, 2009) and the Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (HPC, 2008). Whilst it is recognised that EPs should “be able to plan, design and deliver teaching and training which takes into account the needs and goals of participants” (HPC, 2009, 1b.3), these standards also highlight the importance of working within the scope of the EP’s
practice and acting within the limits of their knowledge, skills and experience (HPC, 2008, p. 6).

Throughout the literature there appears to be evidence to suggest that EPs are well placed to undertake training due to their understanding of not only psychological aspects of learning and child development but because they are proponents of systemic change (Burden, 1982; Fox, 2009; Frederickson, 1990; Fullan, 2004; Gillham, 1978; Leadbetter, 2005; Noell & Gansle, 2009; Roffey, 2000; Stoker, 2000; Sutoris, 2000; Visser, 2004), which are entwined with the difficulties encountered integrating new knowledge within organisations such as schools. Advocates of “systemic changes in education commonly encounter ethical, theoretical, and pragmatic challenges in moving from possibility to implementation of their vision of change” (Noell & Gansle, 2009, p. 1), but understanding these challenges and having an awareness and understanding that these difficulties exist can facilitate the change process.

As highlighted earlier, change does not occur in a vacuum, but within and between systems, such as organisations, communities, families. “Systems theory is a key building block for EPs working at the level of organisation and effective practice cannot occur without some understanding of it” (Stoker, 1992, p. 15). Topping (1979) considers work in relation to organisational change as fitting together with in-service training and organisational psychology in education. It should be noted that Frederickson (1990) suggests a significant amount of systems work undertaken by EPs has been in relation to individual work with specific pupils.

EPs can draw upon their understanding of theoretical bases in order to help organisations understand change and to support them through the change process. Whilst Stobie (2002) agrees with this in part, she suggests that although EPs have an understanding that many problems are created within systems and solutions are required to take effect within and by this system, EPs have had a difficult task embedding these concepts within the systems that they work with. Similarly Roffey (2000) and Fox (2009) suggest that whilst EPs are integrating systems thinking and systemic frameworks within their practice, their ability to effect change at a whole school level appears limited (Roffey, 2000) and slow moving (Gersch, 1996). EPs can be seen to regularly organise training days for whole schools, yet there is a fear that
unless these are embedded within the organisational structures and care is taken to understand the systems in which change is being implemented they may have limited impact. As Noell and Gansle (2009) notes “it is easier to talk about change than to accomplish it” (p. 1).

2.7.2 Approaches to Organisational Practice

In order to support their practice, EPs have specifically developed approaches to facilitate organisational change; one approach being soft systems methodology. This was based on the work of Checkland (1981), which was developed for use for EPs working in schools by Frederickson (1990).

A further concept used for organisational work was ‘Systems Supplied Information’ (SSI). SSI was developed by Myers et al. (1989) in response to the difficulties experienced both by themselves and the organisations they worked in, in implementing and sustaining new approaches. They highlighted a common difficulty experienced by many EPs that an intervention implemented is not maintained in succeeding years and that the principles are not generalised to other, similar, situations.

Myers et al. (1989) suggested that the reasons behind this may not be necessarily always related to poorly thought out plans or inadequate materials. They proposed that the following factors may contribute to the difficulties faced:

- Intervention may not meet the needs of the stakeholders
- Lack of consultation with stakeholders
- Strategies ineffectively communicated to all involved
- Lack of evaluation and clarity of objectives
- Cost/benefit analysis not considered

Incorporating the problems that may impede interventions from being embedded, Myers et al. (1989) developed a systematic process for organisations to assess their own needs. Involving the members in the change process at all stages was considered a fundamental process.
Following on from SSI, the Research and Development in Organisations (RADIO) model was initially developed to support trainee EPs with school improvement work, with its use later being extended within the qualified EP’s practice. Timmins, Shepherd and Kelly (2003) suggest the model provides a framework for negotiating school development, supports the identification and planning for such development, such as training and mentoring support, and increases a school’s capacity to manage their own future development work.

In light of new reforms it has been suggested that EPs have been well placed to undertake some of the newly developed roles in relation to supporting EY provision and education at an LA level (Wolfendale & Robinson, 2004). In relation to Portage, EPs have been involved in co-ordination, supervision and training of portage staff. This extended and developing EP role is currently in place within the author’s place of work. Within the context of EPs delivering work within an EY setting, Dennis (2004) considers the potential contribution of EPs within this setting and identifies five key elements of EY work, which included: empowering staff; training; and systemic work. Imich (2004) describes a range of work undertaken with Sure Start by an EPS which also includes developing training. Whilst there is evidence to suggest that EPs do work within multi-agency teams in EY through services such as Sure Start and Portage (Farrell et al., 2006), there is lack of information regarding the frequency and nature of the work undertaken.

2.7.3 The EP’s Role as Trainer

EPs are concerned in supporting and promoting the development of children and young people (BPS, 1999). In doing so, they work not just directly with young people and their families but work more broadly to support organisations such as schools and EY provisions. As discussed earlier, training is considered to be one of the main roles within EP practice (DfES, 2005; Farrell et al., 2006). EPs are considered well placed professionals to undertake training and are central to contributing to the meeting the ECM’s five outcomes (Baxter & Frederickson; 2005). Kelly & Gray (2000) found that predominantly EPs’ knowledge and skills were highly regarded by other professionals and more training from EPs was wanted to enhance the clients own knowledge base.
Farrell et al’s (2006) report suggested that EPs undertake a wide range of training, this included: A variety of training programmes for parents; training school-based staff to use techniques such as social stories, precision teaching, learning styles, challenging behaviour. EPs were also considered to have a key facilitative role within group consultations.

Dennis (2003) highlighted an opportunity for EPs to move beyond the traditional role of assessment and intervention, towards consultation and training with a particular focus on SEN. Similarly Wolfendale and Robinson (2001) suggest that EPs can have an important role to play at an organisational level and can provide training and interventions that promote child development and learning. Shannon and Posada (2007) also note that organisational and development work is an important area for all EPs to undertake. Whilst some literature suggests that EPs have been restricted to working within the SEN remit, Solity (2000) suggests that relating psychological theories to classroom practice, through activities such as training and advising teachers on the psychological principles of teaching will improve the outcome for more children rather than just a small proportion of individual children with SEN.

Solity (2000) offered a model of in-service training and support to schools which combined plenary sessions within the school day, twilight sessions after school, follow-up school visits and training for parents and TAs. The evidence suggested that utilising the in-service training approach for a whole-school reading intervention had a significant impact on learning outcomes for all children.

Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) developed a coach-consult method for undertaking training and project work within four schools across a Local Authority and incorporated elements of soft systems methodology (Frederickson, 1990), problem analysis approach (Monsen, Graham, Frederickson & Cameron, 1998) and consultation (Wagner, 2000). The coach-consult approach differed from usual ways of working with school staff, such as consultation and in-service training, yet Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) suggest it managed to incorporate the successful components of such approaches within the coach-consult model.
This project was a long term approach to whole-school development across four schools and funding was available for this project. The schools involved committed to 10 sessions of training. The project consisted of a tier approach and had three aims, which were: 1. Direct effects on children’s play experiences; 2. Training effects in relation to building the capacity of the staff; 3. General effects of whole-school development. One of the project’s main objectives was to develop the skills of school staff in managing sustainable and embedded change through not only training staff in new skills in relation to the playgroup interventions, but also training them in skills required for project work and problem solving approaches. Each school designated a teacher to be a project manager who oversaw the project and attended 10 sessions led by the EP. The sessions covered a range of aspects including needs analysis, consultation time, preparation time. A range of play interventions were then developed by each school, for example in one school pupils learnt and taught games skills to other pupils, whilst another school identified playground monitors.

The evaluation was conducted post intervention and seven months follow up. Limited information was given in the actual implementation of each stage of the project and no information was given of the evaluation criteria for each school and follow-up interviews. The findings from the interviews, questionnaires and the school’s own measures of their interventions, suggest that there were a range of positive outcomes from the project. These included more positive play experiences for children, reduction of break time incidents, increased confidence in playtime supervisors. From the results it appears there was a range of interventions implemented at the same time within each school, it is therefore difficult to ascertain a direct correlation between cause and effect.

The project reported short term and long term positive outcomes, and it would be interesting to explore how the interventions were embedded one or two years post intervention. A further outcome was that all project managers seven months follow up reported they felt more confident in planning and undertaking project work, however it was not clear as to how these skills had been generalised within other areas of their work or whether different projects had been developed subsequently.
A main aim of the project was to improve play experiences for children and as highlighted by Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) engaging children within the process of change is important. If we were perhaps evaluating children’s behaviour it may be appropriate to elicit views of teachers and other staff within school. However because the focus of the project was centred around children’s play experiences it may have been particularly important to gain children’s perceptions as well. Key features of effective training were also identified within the paper, however it is not clear as to how these were all incorporated within the actual project.

On the basis of the positive outcomes of the project Balchin, Randall and Turner suggest the coach-consult model could be considered by EPSs when reviewing methods of service delivery. “Training in the real world will be a compromise between a psychological expedient design and the resources imposed or available for this purpose” (Patrick, 1992; p. 113). Highlighted by the authors of the paper, the project was expensive, therefore a cost-benefit analysis would be useful in the consideration of its overall effectiveness and economical viability. The model was costly, used an atypical model of professional development and didn’t use a fully consistent and comprehensive range of outcome measures. In order for confident consideration of its wider application within other services the coach-consult models needs further evaluation. The EPS who were commissioned to run the project also evaluated its outcome and therefore further independent evaluation would be beneficial in order to account for social desirability bias. It is acknowledged by the authors that it was a small-scale evaluation and therefore generalisibility would be difficult.

Areas of training undertaken by EPs which are documented in academic literature have included EY and Inclusion (Dennis, 2004), Restorative Justice (Newton & Mahaffey, 2008), Child Development (Wolfendale & Robinson, 2001), Play Projects (Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006), Curriculum Interventions (Chiesa & Robertson, 2000; Solity, 2000), ASD Training (Medhurst & Beresford, 2007), Social Stories (Chan & O’Reilly, 2008), Parenting Programmes (Hutchings, Lane, Owen & Gwyn, 2004), Stress Management (Murphy & Claridge, 2000), Management Training for Headteachers (Howard & Thatcher, 1990) and Transition (Ashton, 2009). It could be argued that this
reflects a core aim of EPs, who are keen to act as key agents of change (Greenway, 2002).

2.8 Summary of Literary Review and Research Questions

The literature reviewed was undertaken for the purpose of considering the EP’s role as a trainer. From the reviewed literature, it appears this is the first qualitative research specifically focusing on this area and this therefore led the author to consider the breadth of literature with regards to: national educational and Children’s Services reforms; the school as an organisation; the EP’s role; and effective training.

The UK has been embroiled in significant reforms in recent years, one being the restructuring of Children’s Services (DFES, 2004). The Government has advocated that it in order for such reforms to be successful it is essential to have a skilful and competent children’s workforce and in order to ensure that the workforce is of such a standard, a level of training and development needs to take place (DFES, 2005).

In order to provide training that promotes effective practice, it is important to understand schools as an organisation (Stoker, 2000). The need to understand the complexity of organisations such as schools was considered important to enable effective support to be provided for children and young people. The literature appears to suggest that psychological theories have enabled professionals to understand schools as interactive and dynamic environments and how the culture of such an environment would need to be considered in relation to implementing change.

Training could be seen as synonymous with professional development and it is suggested that it is the most common form of such development (Guskey, 2000). A range of professionals deliver training to develop the children’s workforce and the general features of effective training have been identified (Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006).

The literature indicates the EP’s core functions are research, training, application and communication of psychological knowledge and skills and management. The literature also suggests that EPs are well positioned to deliver training (Burden, 1982; Fox, 2009; Frederickson, 1990; Fullan, 2004; Gillham, 1978; Leadbetter, 2005; Noell & Gansle, 2009; Roffey, 2000; Stoker, 2000; Sutoris, 2000; Visser, 2004).
EPs carry out training as part of their role and schools are seen to be increasingly commissioning from EPs and other providers to provide training and development. As a consequence of this, EPs can be seen to be increasingly in competition with other providers to provide training to schools and other services. It is possible to identify some of the range of training EPs undertake (Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006; Cheisa & Robertson, 2001; Dennis, 2004; Hutchings, Lane, Owen & Gwyn, 2004; Newton & Mahaffey, 2008; Wolfendale & Robinson, 2001) and possible to identify alternative providers that can undertake similar training (Farrell et al., 2006).

The review revealed that whilst there has been on-going interest and research in the areas of both professional development and training and the EP’s role, there appears to be little research specifically on the EP’s distinctive role as trainer within the broader context of service delivery within a LA (cf Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006) and its value. The impetus for the research was initially the researcher’s own interest within the topic area. The change in the EPS’s service delivery where the researcher is employed, the increase in the amount of training that is being currently delivered within the service, and literature reviewed suggested training as a key role for EPs. This was therefore considered a clear rationale for the current study. The aim was to extend the understanding of the EPs distinctive role as a trainer within the strategic context of the LA and the EPS.

In relation to the specific aim of this piece of research, no papers were found to explore the distinctive role of the EP as trainer. As there was limited knowledge regarding the strategic and operational factors that a psychological service would need to consider in the planning and delivery of training especially within the context of traded services, it was intended that RQ1 would focus specifically on this systemic level. The researcher explored the views of the EPs role as trainer from multiple perspectives which is reflected within the development of the research questions. The literature reviewed a range of features of effective training and other key factors in implementing change, such as systemic considerations, culture of change and literature pertaining to adult learning and motivation. However these were not specific to the EP role and therefore RQ 2 and RQ 3 focused on the identification of the valued content and process elements of EP training from multiple levels. In relation to the
current Government review of EP training, it was also considered pertinent to explore the EP’s specific contribution to the role of trainer within Children’s Services. It was considered that the research would contribute to an improved understanding of why and how EPs can enhance professional development through training.

2.9 Research Questions

RQ1  What are the key operational and strategic factors for the EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in Children’s Services?

RQ2  What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?

RQ3  What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

2.10 Contribution to Knowledge

It is envisaged the research will contribute to the knowledge base in the following ways:

- Identifying the distinctive and valuable contribution of EPs as trainers.
- Identifying the distinct and valued content and process factors of EPs delivering training.
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

At the end of the last chapter the rationale for the current study was discussed and consequently three research questions were constructed to enable the researcher to explore the potential contributions that EPs can make to training, these were:

RQ1 What are the key operational and strategic factors for the EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in Children’s Services?

RQ2 What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?

RQ3 What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

This chapter will firstly consider the philosophical grounding of the research, specifically looking at the epistemological, ontological, and axiological positions of the researcher. It will then outline the aims and objectives of the study. The procedure of the study and details of how the training events were identified and the recruitment of the participants will then be addressed. It is an exploratory single case study involving semi-structured interviews and a focus group; consideration will be given to the inclusion of research methods and the rationale for the chosen methods, their strengths and limitations, and how the methods support the trustworthiness of the study. Details will be provided of how the data were analysed using thematic analysis. This will include the process of analysis and the coding method used to identify themes. This chapter will end by exploring the ethical considerations that guided the researcher throughout the study.

3.2 Philosophical Considerations

Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that the research paradigm should be explored prior to the consideration of research methods. This is because the paradigm in which the researcher positions themselves, defines how they view the world (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) and consequently makes up the foundations of the research and shapes the nature of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Denscombe, 2010). The choice of research methodology for the research will be guided by the research paradigm and
philosophical considerations; therefore it is important for the researcher to make their philosophical position clear (Denscombe, 2010).

3.2.1 Ontological Considerations
Ontology is the philosophy of the world view of reality (Heron & Reason, 1997). Whilst quantitative researchers consider reality to be singular and objective and separate from the researcher, qualitative researchers acknowledge that the world is a subjective experience, and influenced by both participants and researcher. The researcher is positioned within a social constructionist paradigm (Burr, 1995), believing that people’s experiences and their understanding of the world around them is shaped and constructed through social activity, and interaction, and is influenced by many factors (Willig, 2008). In relation to this study, by appreciating that each person will have their own experiences, perceptions and descriptions about the training event in which they were part of, including the researcher themselves, is a fundamental element of this research.

3.2.2 Epistemological Position
‘Whatever the nature of the world, there is no single array of words, graphs, or pictures that is uniquely suited to its portrayal. Further, each construction has both potentials and limits, both scientifically and in terms of societal values. Thus, in its efforts to abandon all voices save one, there is an enormous suppression of potential. And when it is the investigator’s voice that will finally reign supreme, the voices of all those under study are silenced’. (Green, 1999, p. 93)

Epistemology concerns how the knowledge about reality is understood. People experience the world with and through others, and interpret and construct the world which they experience through the mediation of culture, linguistics and history (Willig, 2008) and this will be equally true within this piece of real world research. One of the reasons as to why an exploratory study was chosen was because there was limited knowledge within the research topic and it was felt that it would be important to co-construct meanings about EPs as trainers with the participants. It is therefore felt that taking an interpretative and qualitative approach is congruent for this research topic. It
is acknowledged that the data collected will be highly subjective and context dependent and will highlight inconsistencies within and between participants.

3.2.3 Social Constructionism

Social Constructionism offers a useful paradigm in which the author will position herself within this research. The wealth of philosophical debates between empiricist and rationalist schools of thought that envelop social constructionism (Gergen, 1985) are too complex to include in this thesis and it is acknowledged that there is no agreed definition that can be used when gathering and interpreting the data. Authors such as Burr (1995) and McNamee and Gergen (1992) have described the theoretical model of social constructionism.

Social constructionism offers a useful paradigm in which the author will position herself within this research. Within a social constructionist framework a principle concern is how knowledge is constructed. It is suggested that all knowledge is socially constructed and that the primary emphasis is on discourse and how reality is co-constructed through interactions, where “meaning is regarded as a continually emerging outcome of interactional processes” (Macready, 1997, p. 131).

As touched upon earlier, language is an important aspect of socially construed knowledge, meaning that the same event can be described and understood in different ways (Willig, 2008). In relation to the current study, the researcher is therefore sensitive and mindful of the multiple and unique perspectives and experiences that will be shared throughout this study and vigilant about how these are interpreted and consequently reported.

3.2.4 Axiological Considerations

Axiology concerns with the role of values. It is important to acknowledge that the researcher’s own value base will influence the research topic choice and how the research is approached, interpreted and reported.

‘No person is a vacuum, going into a research situation with no cognitive models, views of the world, or a mediation of the meanings by the use of language. We all have schemata and frameworks to model the world around us’. (Jenner, 2004, p. 97)
It could therefore be seen as vital that the researcher reflected upon her values and was clear as to where her beliefs and values lie in relation to the research topic. Taking into account the values that were placed upon the research topic choice, prudence is taken in making judgments, interpreting and reporting findings and reaching conclusions.

A guiding principle which influenced the researcher’s thinking throughout the study was the belief that learning is of value to all and improves not just the individual’s life and experiences but those of others around them. Having experience as a deliverer and recipient of training, a main principle underpinning this research is belief that EPs are well placed to facilitate the development of staff who work with children and young people. A further belief is that training and development of a workforce needs to be considered at multiple levels and many important factors are often overlooked, consequently impacting upon the longevity and sustainability of the training and its overall purpose. As a trainee educational psychologist (TEP), the researcher values the importance of training and the potential impact it may have upon recipients of training, their organisation and the service they provide.

The researcher feels strongly about the role of the EP and the impact their involvement can have on children and young people, their families and the professionals that work with them. The awareness of how the researcher’s own values influenced the research enabled her to be responsive and reflective about decisions and actions and the implications. The researcher is therefore mindful that she may be more inclined to see positive messages about EP trainers, and will need to ensure that a balanced view of EPs as trainers is explored.

3.2.5 Role as Researcher

“The very act of a researcher entering into a research situation changes the relationships, discourses and environment of the situation to be investigated” (Jenner, 2004, p. 98). An appreciation of the researcher as an interactive part of the study is recognised. It was therefore appropriate that the implications of the active role of the researcher should be addressed.
When undertaking qualitative research, the researcher needs to be mindful of the impact they bring to the system they are researching. As described by Rousseau and Fried (2001) because of the very nature of the research, it becomes impossible to remain at ‘arms length’, and it is therefore acknowledged that not only the ontological and axiological position the researcher brings will impact upon the research, but the very presence of the researcher and the discourse they offer, will interact and influence, in varying degrees, with all the other elements of the research.

It could therefore be seen as fundamental for researchers to state their position within their research (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner & Steinmetz, 1991). The insider versus outsider researcher positionality has received much debate and could be seen to be relevant to all researchers incorporating a qualitative methodology (Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Within qualitative research, Corbin-Dwyer and Buckle (2009) suggest the researcher plays “a direct and intimate role in both data collection and analysis” (p. 2), whose research positioning could be seen as an ever-present feature of the research. Within this study the researcher will be seen as an insider when working with EP colleagues, and an outsider when evaluating training events. The researcher plays an active role in making sense of and interpreting the data, identifying patterns/themes and reporting them to the readers (Taylor & Ussher, 2001).

In relation to interviewing EPs, the role undertaken will be of both researcher and colleague. Therefore the possible implications should be considered in relation to the researcher’s positioning. As a TEP undertaking the research, several of the participants will be colleagues and therefore the researcher could be seen as someone who shares roles, identity, experiences with the participants (Asselin, 2003). As Corbin-Dwyer and Buckle (2009) suggests this may bring both limitations and benefits. One benefit being the potential for acceptance and openness from the participants. They suggest that being a member of the research group could afford access to the participants which may provide a degree of openness that may not be easily accessed by an ‘outsider’. It is suggested that participants may be more willing to share the views and experiences more readily. On the contrary it could be seen that participants who are familiar with the researcher may have a good understanding of the research and may express views that are seen to be more favourable with the researcher. Furthermore Barbour (2007)
suggested that if the researcher shares too many similar views with the participants, they are less likely to expose these to critical scrutiny.

It is suggested that a dual role, for example, being both colleague and researcher, can result in role confusion and conflict (Asselin, 2003; Brannick & Coghlan, 2007). Whilst role confusion can be present in any research, it can become further embedded when the participants are familiar to the researcher through a role other than that of a researcher (Asselin, 2003) and this may lead to the data being analysed from a colleague’s perspective rather than from a researcher’s perspective. Further conflict may also arise from this dual role, as Corbin-Dwyer and Buckle (2009) note, the participant may fail to expand on certain aspects of the topic due to the assumption of similarity and familiarity with the researcher and may not describe their own perspectives fully. Conversely this may also impact upon how the researcher responds to others’ experiences. It may be the case that the researcher may have difficulty separating their own experiences which may impact upon their understanding of the participants’ unique experience, resulting in the researcher shaping the interview and analysis of data from their own experiences instead of the participants.

It should be acknowledged that there is potential for a colleague to share sensitive information with the researcher. In relation to this study it may be the colleague giving an account of a particularly difficult training event. It is also acknowledged that there is potential for the researcher to gather views from the recipients or commissioners about their colleagues that may not be favourable, therefore the researcher has not just an ethical but professional responsibility to ensure that data and findings are treated confidentially and represented sensitively.

The awareness of such implications enabled the researcher to reflect upon these factors and ensure that she was responsive and reflective about research decisions and her actions.

3.2.6 Real World Research

Researching real-world phenomenon is about research that is grounded within a local context and is concerned with how research is applied to the real world. It is recognised that this type of research can be messy (Robson, 2002; Silverman, 2001). The complexity and multi-faceted nature of real world research posed a number of
challenges for the researcher. The lack of control researchers have within their research and the unforeseen difficulties that can occur can make data collection complicated and problematic. Experienced within this study, the researcher could not fully prepare for the interruptions and changes that occurred when undertaking this research within a real life setting. Changes and unforeseen difficulties that were faced throughout the study and how they were overcome are detailed within section 3.8.

3.4 Research Design

3.4.1 Exploration of Methodology

The research aims to provide an exploration into people’s experiences of EP training events to consider the contribution of EP as trainers within Children’s Services. It is recognised that it would be possible to explore the research area across a range of realist-relativist positions, conceptualizing the data at either a qualitative or quantitative level. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) suggest a number of methodologies that would be appropriate for educational research including ethnographic research, archival and documentary research, case studies, surveys, experiments and action research. It is important for the researcher to consider possible research designs in relation to this project and to be able to justify the choices made.

One possible approach could have been the use of a survey design. A survey could have been widespread and large in scale and could have enabled the researcher to reach a wider group of participants. This could have included sending a survey to EPSs throughout the UK in relation to EPs undertaking training, however the dearth of literature and limited knowledge within this area meant that it would be difficult to construct questionnaires that may elicit the information required to answer the research questions, and it was unlikely that this would provide the in-depth information that the researcher was seeking. Surveys may offer a useful approach for a second research phase within this area, when a more in-depth exploration had been undertaken.

Another approach that was considered was mixed methods. It may have been possible to undertake an interview with EPs to generate questions and themes that could have been used within a larger EP survey. Again, because the theory in this area had not been well enough defined, it necessitated a more in-depth approach to be used.
Appreciative Inquiry was considered as a methodological approach as it offered itself as strength based methodology to organisational change and change management (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). It was considered that this methodology could have been adapted to inquire about the contribution of EP trainers and consider what people appreciate and value about EPs’ training, however it was felt that the focus would heavily rely on the EPS prioritising training as an area for development and consequently did not fit with the service’s priorities and capacity to undertake a project around organisational change. The researcher did feel that elements of Appreciative Inquiry would be useful to incorporate within the study. Appreciative Inquiry offers a positive insight into what is going right within a particular organisation or group and how this can be built on. In keeping the well-being of all research members at the forefront, it was considered that undertaking a positive inquiry of the contribution EPs make as trainers would be an ethical position to take, in terms of being sensitive to the working relationships between the EP training deliverers and the commissioners and recipients (please refer to section 3.11). It was acknowledged that undertaking a positive inquiry would have positively skewed the data, which could have potential consequences on competing demands of the services. Meaning that if this study was to inform service delivery, it could direct resources away from other tasks EPs could be involved in, therefore a fundamental obligation of the research was to ensure that a balanced view of EPs as trainers was represented.

Initially, the exploration intended to use a multiple case study approach across three contrasting local authorities, exploring an EP training event in each LA. However it was considered that the ability to organise and manage a project across three LAs, with whom the researcher was unfamiliar with, would present a number of challenges. In considering the researcher’s realistic capacity to conduct research within three LAs across the UK and gain access to a sufficient amount of participants, it was felt that this would not be feasible within the given timeframe. A more detailed focus within the researcher’s current employment location was therefore adopted.

3.4.2 Overview and Rationale for Case Study Design

Following on from the consideration of a variety of methodological approaches for this research, an exploratory single case study design was adopted (Yin, 2009). The case
The study was a Local Authority in a large, metropolitan borough in Central England in which the researcher was employed as TEP. The data sources for this research were semi-structured interviews, focus groups, observation, field notes, and documentary analysis of training material. A description of how these sources were utilised is set out within the process of the study which is detailed within section 3.5.

Qualitative research offers researchers opportunities to explore the world of human experience. The researcher was interested in exploring this phenomenon in the hope of acquiring a deeper insight into people’s experiences of EPs delivering training in order to consider the EP’s valuable contribution as a trainer. The dearth of previous research in this area, compounded by the changing contexts described within chapter one, provided the rationale for an exploratory case study approach.

This research adopts an exploratory embedded single case study approach that enabled a mixture of qualitative research techniques to be incorporated into the overall research design. These included individual semi-structured interviews, a focus group, observation, field notes, and documentary analysis of training material, for further details of the research design. It was felt that gathering data via a mixture of methods facilitated the collection of a more holistic and rich data set than what could have been obtained through surveys or questionnaires, as the focus was more on quality and richness of information rather than quantity. The ability to triangulate data by using a mixture of methods is seen to be a main advantage (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) and can enhance the credibility of a study (Robson, 2011).

One possibility would have been a literal replication of the theoretical model developed by Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006). As discussed earlier in this chapter, the framework offered was not sufficiently robust and it would have been premature and limiting to extrapolate the framework to this piece of research. The cost implications of the original project would have impacted the extent to which the research could have been replicated within the current context, furthermore the time constraints placed on the researcher and EP colleagues meant no other EP would have been able to commit to such a lengthy project at that time. This research is therefore positioned as an exploratory case study which does not adopt a specific theoretical framework.
The researcher was interested in gaining experiences on multiple levels in relation to a range of EP training events and exploring the value of the EPs’ role as trainer. It was therefore considered that a single case study approach should be adopted as it connects with the research purpose of this study. The case study enabled the researcher to gain multiple perspectives of the EP’s role as a trainer at different levels, including a strategic overview of EP trainers and three EP training events which explored the experiences from the EP, commissioner and recipient perspective. This was to provide balance, breadth and depth to the study.

Within qualitative research an “overall goal is to collect the richest possible data” (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, p. 11), it is suggested that ‘rich data’ means the collection of a wide and varied information, from multiple perspectives that is relevant and pertinent to the specific case being researched (Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Richards, 1999). The specific case was chosen as the researcher worked within the service and had access to a range of training events, furthermore at the time the service had recently moved to a traded service model of delivery and there had been an increase in the amount of training being delivered within the service. This therefore appeared to be an appropriate and accessible case for the study. A case study approach provides ‘rich data’, as it offers the researcher insights into a range of perspectives and experiences within this particular context. As Denscombe (2010) suggests “when the questions concern matters such as emotions, feelings, attitudes and relationships, it might invite the use of in-depth case studies with qualitative data” (p. 165).

Yin (2009) defines a case study as “a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence” (p. 3). Rousseau and Fried (2001) describe the notion of contexts as being invisible, whereby the researcher is required to utilise their role as a researcher to contextualise an event or situation. This requires great attention to the research setting, which the researcher feels the case study methodology encapsulates.

Yin (2009) refers to five components of case study research design that are of particular importance, these are:
• **Research questions:** Within chapter one the rationale for the present study was discussed which led to the development of three research questions (please refer to section 3.1).

• **Propositions:** Yin (2009) suggests that an explorative study may not include propositions but a clear purpose should always be detailed. The purpose of this study was to illuminate the valued and perceived distinctive contributions EPs make as trainers. This was explored from EP, commissioner and recipient perspectives.

• **Units of analysis:** With consideration of the definition of the research questions, units of analysis (UoA) were then developed for each research question. Figure 3.1 provides a visual representation of how the UoA were aligned to the research questions.

• **The logic linking the data to the propositions:** As stipulated earlier the case study did not include propositions, although a clear purpose of the study has been detailed. Data collection and analysis methods were chosen in order to maximise the opportunity to detail a clearer picture of the EP’s role in relation to training. For further information regarding the data collection and analysis methods, please refer to section 3.6 and 3.9 respectively.

• **The criteria for interpreting the findings:** The central premise of the study is to critically consider the EP’s contribution to training. As suggested by Yin (2009), statistical analysis offers explicit criteria for interpreting findings; however because of the qualitative nature of the study this was not possible. The researcher was mindful of rival explanations of the data collected, as the responses elicited may be influenced by several factors: ensuring the maintenance of relationships with EPs; power imbalances; the role of the researcher; conflicts of interests could all have impinged on the participants representing a true and accurate picture. It was therefore important to consider the trustworthiness and ethical implications of the research and data that was analysed, this was discussed in detail in sections 3.10 and 3.11.
Yin (2009) recommended that a case-study protocol be adhered and should include the sections set out in table 3.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An overview of the project:</td>
<td>Including research purpose and objectives and sufficient background research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field procedures:</td>
<td>Emphasises the key considerations in data collection, which include gaining access to participants, making a data collection schedule with room for contingency and flexibility for unexpected changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Study Questions:</td>
<td>Considered at a variety of levels (see Yin, 2009, p. 87) and are pertinent throughout the whole study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A guide for the report:</td>
<td>Consideration of outline, audience and format of the report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Case Study Protocol

Yin (2009) asserts that a protocol increases the reliability of a case study and considers it essential for multi-case studies and desirable for single case studies. Brereton, Kitchenham, Budgen and Li (2008) suggest that Yin’s approach to case study conduct could be seen within a positivist paradigm, and whilst these elements are important for the researcher to consider, the thesis plan developed prior to commencing the research, which included these elements was considered to have sufficient procedural steps, guidelines and components for research design for this study. It was felt that a specific case study protocol would not enhance the structure of this study and the thesis plan itself would be considered an in-depth protocol which the researcher would adhere to.

Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis (1976) describe the use of case studies as having practical implications for the participants and their systems, in that the information gathered from such a study can help practitioners apply the information directly to their work. It is considered that a case study will offer an interactive environment to explore the EPs role as trainer. Edwards and Talbot (1999) assert that case studies offer an opportunity for participants to voice their opinions, as cited in Ali and Frederickson (2006), single case designs “allow individual uniqueness and complexity to be addressed......participants can serve as their own controls and variation can be examined as a potentially important factor, rather than a possible confound” (p. 359).
Tellis (1997) describes the following characteristic as a salient point that case studies possess:

‘Case studies are multi-perspectival analyses. This means that the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also of the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them’ (Tellis, 1997; p. 1)

Whilst a main strength of case study research is the capacity for in-depth study of social phenomenon in real-life context, allowing the researcher to retain the meaningful characteristics of real life events (Yin, 2009), the limitations of the methodology needs to be addressed. The case study researcher encounters a range of difficulties including, generation of a large range, and different types of data, the selective process of data collection and analysis (Robson, 2002) and the subjective nature of determining what to write-up, how to code and analyse data (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). All could make the study more vulnerable to researcher bias. It is therefore important for the researcher to justify and make explicit the decisions made throughout the collection, analysis and reporting of the data.

Whilst the credibility of single case designs, lack of rigour and the generalisibility of findings from single case designs have frequently been in question (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Robson, 2002; Sarantakos, 2005; Yin, 2009). It could be argued that case studies can provide opportunities for researchers to embrace and immerse themselves into complex systems, which can only be truly understood by such an interactive, qualitative means of research. The issues of trustworthiness within the research are discussed in detail in section 3.11.

Within the case study, embedded UoA were used for each research question, allowing the researcher to use a mixture of methods to gather data (Yin, 2009). A unit of analysis is the entity of what is to be analysed within a study and provides a focus for data gathering. Separate UoA were developed for each research question, as this helped answer each individual research question. Please refer to figure 3.1 on page 64 for a visual representation of the UoA.
Yin (2009) identified close links between a RQ and UoA. This link is maintained within the present study. The UoA for each RQs are as follows:

**RQ1** What are the key operational and strategic factors for the EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in Children’s Services?
   
   UoA: Strategic and operational overview of EP training

**RQ2** What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?
   
   Overarching UoA: Experiences of EP training

**RQ3** What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?
   
   Overarching UoA: Experiences of EP training

RQ 1 UoA was chosen in order to explore the factors that the EPS considered when planning and delivering training and related specifically to the two fundamental elements of RQ1.

As there was a dearth of literature within this area the UoA for RQ 2 and 3 was chosen in order to explore multiple perspectives of EP training events.

As suggested by Yin (2009) the research questions, along with each UoA were discussed with colleagues to ensure that they were defined appropriately for the study. The research questions and the embedded UoA also informed the development of the interview and focus group questions.
Case: Local Authority

Context: EP Training Events

RQ 1: What are the key operational and strategic factors for EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in children services?

RQ 2: What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?

RQ 3: What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

UoA 1
Strategic and Operational Overview of EP Training

UoA 2
Experiences of training

Figure 3.1: Single Case Study Design with Embedded Units of Analysis
3.5 Process of the Study

For a visual representation of the data gathering plan please refer to figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2: Research Design
### 3.6 Data Gathering

The use of multiple research methods, sources, or theories in order to consider the reliability of findings is known as triangulation (Flick, 1991; Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994). Through triangulation it is suggested that the quality and credibility of a study is enhanced (Knafl & Breitmayer, 1991). However caution should be taken with “mapping” (Silverman, 2001, p. 99) data sets, if social reality is to be treated as constructed in different ways in different contexts, then you cannot appeal to a single ‘phenomenon’ which all data apparently represents” (Silverman, 2009, p. 64).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Research Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **RQ 1** What are the key operational and strategic factors for EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in children services? | •  Semi structured interview with PEP  
•  Interview with EP trainers |
| **RQ 2** What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training? | •  Semi structured interviews with the PEP and EP training deliverers  
•  Documentary analysis of training material and evaluation data |
| **RQ 3** What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements? | •  Semi-structured interview with commissioners and recipients of the training  
•  Focus groups with recipients  
•  Documentary analysis of training material and evaluation data |

**Table 3.2: Data Gathering Methods used to address each Research Question**

The table above offers an overview of how the data gathering methods relate to the research questions.

#### 3.6.1 PEP Interview

In order to contextualise the EP’s position as a trainer and understand the wider strategic context of EPs as trainers, the PEP was interviewed. A semi-structured interview was chosen as an appropriate data gathering tool to elicit the views of the PEP in relation to their strategic and operational overview of EPs delivering training.

#### 3.6.2 Inclusion of Training Events

The inclusion criteria for the retrospective and contemporaneous training events were as follows:
• The training has been undertaken within the last six months, to increase the likelihood that recipients of the training can recall the training event.

• The training had over ten participants to ensure there would be a large enough pool of possible participants for the focus group.

• The training was a commissioned piece of work, as the experiences of the commissioner of the training event was a fundamental part of the research.

Ideally three current training events would have been used, however this was not feasible within the timeframe, therefore one contemporaneous and two retrospective training events were used. A contemporaneous training event was used as it gave the researcher an opportunity to review recipients’ experiences of EP training in context rather than retrospectively. The details of each training event will be described within section 4.2.

3.6.3 Identification of Training Events and Participant Recruitment

In order to identify suitable training events an overview of the research was presented to the EP team to advise them of the study and to give them an opportunity to highlight any potential training events that met or would meet the inclusion criteria set out in the previous section. The EP team agreed to contact the TEP if they had an interest in being part of the research project.

It is acknowledged that there are varying reasons why people may be more or less likely to volunteer for the research. In relation to this study reasons for EPs to volunteer may have included: helping a professional colleague; experience of delivering a positive training event; sharing good practice; topic interest; strong opinions of EP training. Reasons as to why EPs may not have suggested a training event may have included: time constraints of participating within research; experience of delivering a negative training event; apathetic of research topic. As highlighted earlier there may be a tendency for EPs to volunteer because they have had a positive training experience which could potentially produce a biased sample, however it was considered that self selection procedure would not affect the recruitment of training events because the EPs would inevitably decide as to whether they would participate within the research.
Following the identification of the three EP training events, an email was sent to the identified EP training deliverers to invite them to a semi-structured interview. The researcher then sent emails to the commissioners of the training detailing the research and to inviting them to be a contributor to the research. After each commissioner agreed to be part of the study, a letter was then sent to all recipients of the training events inviting them to contribute to the research, please refer to figure 3.2 for a representation of the research design.

All letters/emails detailed the nature and objectives of the research to ensure that there was informed consent, please refer to appendices A - D. The initial aim was to conduct recipient focus groups for each training event, however as detailed within section 3.5, this was not possible. The training recipients who agreed to take part in the research are presented within table 3.3 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Event</th>
<th>Training Recipient Who Participated in Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retrospective Training Event A:</td>
<td>Five participants agreed to take part in a focus group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Training Event B:</td>
<td>Two participants agreed to take part in a semi-structured interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrospective Training Event C:</td>
<td>Two participants agreed to take part in a semi-structured interview.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Recipient Participation for Each Training Event

3.6.4 Observation of Training Event

An observation of the live training event was also conducted to provide data triangulation and a further source of evidence. The data was aggregated with other data sets, as set out within section 4.

The observation was undertaken to observe a live process of the training and to consider the content and process elements of training delivery. The EP trainer introduced the researcher to the participants and explained her role and objective. The observation schedule was developed with consideration of the literature pertinent to effective training. Indicated within the literature review several elements were identified as being important for the effectiveness of training. Please refer to appendix E for the observation schedule and how the literature facilitated its development. The author was interested in observing both the content and process elements of the
training and was particularly interested in how the training was delivered, the process
skills utilised by the EP, the interactions between trainer and recipients and the
general features of the training. Field notes were recorded via the researcher diary
(please refer to appendix E for the observation schedule and field notes).

3.6.5 Semi Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews have been chosen as an appropriate data gathering tool for
eliciting case study members experiences in relation to the Units of Analysis presented in
figure 3.1. It is suggested that semi-structured interviews provide the rich data required
suggests that data contributed by those responsible for service delivery can help
enhance the contextual data relating to the area of research and therefore it was
deemed useful to conduct an interview with the PEP. Semi-structured interviews
enabled the researcher to gain the PEP’s strategic viewpoint of EPs delivering training;
the EPs’ views and experiences of negotiating, delivering and evaluating the impact of in-
service training; the commissioners of the training and their views and experiences of
commissioning, negotiating and evaluating the impact of in-service training. Data for the
training recipients was collected through use of both focus groups and individual
interviews.

The three EPs who delivered the training were interviewed in order to explore their
experiences of negotiating, delivering training and the contribution that they offered as a
trainer. Each training commissioner was also interviewed to explore their experiences of
the training, from negotiation through to evaluation stage, and their perspectives of the
EP’s contribution as trainer. For training events B and C, four recipients (two for each
training event) were interviewed to explore their experiences of the training and their
perspectives of the EPs contribution as a trainer.

It is felt that semi-structured interviews give participants the freedom to discuss their
views from their own perspective within a particular context. The researcher was
hopeful that having an opportunity to express their views and discuss their
experiences in relation to the topic area and to be listened to and valued by the
researcher would be a positive experience for the participants and that the
opportunity to consider the topics mentioned during the interviews would be useful for participants.

The primary objective of the interview and focus group schedule was to ensure the information being obtained from the interview questions corresponded to the research questions posed. The interview questions were aiming to explore possible relevant aspects of the RQs because it was an exploratory study. It was not the intention to seek specific answers to a definitive set of interview questions. Whilst the schedule gave a loose structure to the semi-structured interviews, the very nature of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher the option of modifying the questions depending upon what transpired within each interview, giving a degree of flexibility with what and how it was asked.

A variety of sources was used to guide the development of the interview schedule design (Burman, 1994; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Patton, 2002). Initially the research questions and units of analysis (see figure 3.1) were analysed in order to consider what information the researcher wanted to be elicited from the interviews and broad themes that were to be covered. Literature examined within section 2 also guided the formulation of the key questions. Please refer to appendices F - H for the interview schedules to see how the interviews questions related to the RQs. The different type of questions were also considered (Kvale, 1996), which included introducing, structured, probing, follow up and interpreting questions. All interviews began with introductory questions, which aimed to relax the interviewees and provide a context to the rest of the interview. These considerations were also pertinent to the development of the focus group schedule as discussed within the following section (section 3.6.6).

The general theme of the EP, commissioner and recipient interview questions focused on the valued contribution of EPs as trainers, although all differed slightly in content due to the nature of their different experiences and roles within the training event. The PEP interview schedule focused more so on the strategic and operational overview of EPs undertaking training within the service. Whilst some of the structured questions attempted to answer the research questions directly, i.e. what did you value most about the training? Other questions focused on each units of analysis in the hope that
specific information would be generated. The purpose of the probing questions was to enable the participants to provide detailed responses and was used throughout all interviews and the focus group to attempt to elicit as much detail as possible.

A protocol was developed to guide the facilitator throughout the interview process. Each interview began with an introduction and an explanation as to the purpose of the research, aims and objectives, levels of confidentiality and areas for discussion. All the interviews were audio recorded and only minimal notes of key themes were taken; this was to ensure that the researcher could actively listen to all of the views expressed, and pose appropriate follow up or probing questions. At the end of each interview, initial key themes that emerged were summarised and it was agreed that following analysis, the themes would be sent back to each participant for member checking. All participants agreed to this procedure. Consent forms were signed to confirm they had read and understood the information provided; were happy to participate; understood the confidentiality statement and their right to withdraw from the study (please refer to appendix J for an example).

Preparing and using pre-determined questions gives a certain amount of structure to the interview but also allows flexibility for the interview to explore areas that participants wish to expand on (Robson, 2002). It also gives the researcher opportunities to clarify points and ask follow up questions (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994), which possibly minimises the chance of misinterpretation. The option of modifying the question sets during the interview can also be seen as an advantage of semi-structured interviews (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007), as the researcher is able to use their professional judgement to ask additional questions or omit questions.

### 3.6.6 Focus Group

The original plan was to conduct a focus group for each group of training recipients however there was low participant uptake (please refer to section 3.8 as to why this was not feasible). A focus group was undertaken with one group of training recipients. Whilst there appears to be confusion as to what constitutes a focus group (Barbour, 2007), Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) suggest that “any group discussion may be called a focus group as long as the researcher is actively encouraging of, and attentive to, the group interaction” (p. 20). The intention of the focus a group was to provide a forum in
which the participants could share their experiences and ideas about the topic area in a comfortable environment (Kruger & Casey, 2000). Focus groups can capitalise on communication between participants in order to generate data and are often used within exploratory research projects (Barbour, 2007). People make meanings of situations and experiences, and meanings are usually formed in interactions with others (Creswell, 2003). Therefore it was felt that the interactive dynamic of a focus group allowed data to emerge about the topic area.

The logistical difficulties and practical barriers of using focus groups as a data gathering tool is addressed by Barbour (2007), who suggests such logistics are time consuming and requires in-depth planning. A potential disadvantage of the focus group technique is groupthink. Due to the interactive nature of focus group, participants can influence and can be influenced within this environment and the uniqueness and independent responses may be lost in such an open forum (Kruger & Casey, 2000; MacDougall & Baum, 1997). In order to determine the composition of the group, it was important to consider factors that could potentially influence or undermine the openness of discussion. It was felt that participants with different relationships, dynamics, power and status could impact upon the discussions and answers given (Morgan & Krueger, 1993). The composition was considered important, as the researcher wanted to ensure that participants would be comfortable within each others’ presence and have enough in common to encourage discussion, offer mutual support, but also allow for differing and contrasting views to be expressed freely, this was openly discussed with the focus group. The researcher checked the appropriateness of the composition with the commissioner of the training prior to undertaking the focus group. It was confirmed that all the recipients were TAs, who had no links with the commissioning of the training or differing levels of responsibility or seniority. The focus group comprised solely of TAs from one school and a discussion took place before the focus group commenced to ensure that all participants understood the confidentiality boundaries of the study, that all their views were valued and that there were no right or wrong answers.

Focus groups can be unpredictable and problematic (Barbour, 2007; Murphy, Cockburn & Murphy, 1992). Bloor, Frankland, Thomas and Robson (2001) assert that the role of the researcher within a focus group activity is to facilitate discussion not to control it,
therefore it was important for the researcher to capitalise on the interpersonal and communication skills she had developed as a TEP within this forum.

As detailed within section 3.2.5, an important factor to consider was the role of the researcher and the impact this may have on the study. An important factor and possible threat that could compromise the credibility of the data collected within both the focus groups and interviews could be social desirability bias.

‘Demand characteristics could lead to a response bias such as the (participants) unequivocal positive view on training rather than a truthful response, if this is what the (participant) thinks the researcher was looking for within an answer or perhaps to avoid criticising a professional or senior colleague.’ (Dutton, 2010, p. 15)

The researcher felt the study was vulnerable to response bias, as questions were being asked about her EP colleagues, and recognised that this may inhibit entirely truthful responses. This was discussed directly with commissioners and recipients, who reported that they were happy to discuss their experiences of the training and were aware that they did not have to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable with. It was hoped that providing a safe environment to discuss opinions would facilitate honest and open discussion. The researcher was vigilant of the members’ body language and signs for being relaxed within the group. This would also be facilitated by establishing a rapport with everyone involved with the study, ensuring that they were aware what the research aims were; how the data was to be used; who would have access to the data; the researcher expressed why they had an interest in the topic area; each person felt their views were valued; there were no right or wrong answers. In being mindful of the potential barriers to focus groups, during the focus group the researcher checked that there were a variety of speakers and that the discussion was not controlled by a small number of members. The researcher was also vigilant in members’ dissent of other members’ views, in the hope that a range of experiences were captured. It was hoped that in consideration of the potential difficulties that may impact upon the openness of discussion as detailed above, the effects were minimised.

As discussed earlier the lack of participants prohibited the use of focus groups with all training event recipients and therefore a combination of data gathering methods was
used. Barbour (2007) highlights the practical barriers of undertaking focus groups and suggests that as a consequence a mix of one to one interviews and focus groups may need to be considered. It is important to explore the potential disadvantages to gathering data via two methods. The one to one interviews provided a forum to explore individual participants’ experiences and it was likely more detailed answers transpired. As a consequence the data could potentially have skewed the analysis, and in order to compensate for this it was important not to under-represent or over-represent individual participants’ responses from both one to one interviews and focus groups. The researcher was mindful of this throughout the analysis and when presenting the results.

As recommended by Barbour (2007), a cost-benefit analysis of including a mixture of methods was considered and it was concluded that the benefits of including all participants who were offering an insight into their experiences of undertaking EP training offset the disadvantages that using a mixture of methods may raise. A fundamental reason as to why interviews were chosen as an alternative to focus groups was a direct response to the requests of the participants.

A protocol was developed to guide the facilitator throughout the focus group process. The structure and process was devised according to the guidelines of Barbour (2007). Prior to the focus group being undertaken, an information sheet was sent to all participants informing them of what a focus group was and detailing a loose structure of discussion topics (please refer to appendix D). Literature examined within section 2 also guided the formulation of focus group questions (please refer to appendix I). The focus group began with an introduction and an explanation as to the purpose of the research, aims and objectives, levels of confidentiality, areas for discussion and ground rules for the group. The focus group was audio recorded and only minimal notes of key themes were taken; this was to ensure that the researcher could actively listen to all of the views expressed, facilitate the interactions between the participants, pose appropriate questions and deal with any difficulties that may arise within group interviews. At the end of the focus group, initial key themes that emerged were verbally summarised and it was agreed that following analysis, the themes would be sent back to each participant for member checking. All participants agreed to this procedure. Consent forms were signed to confirm they had read and understood the
information provided; were happy to participate; understood confidentiality statement and their right to withdraw from the study (please refer to appendix J for an example).

### 3.6.7 Documentary Analysis

Further supportive methods, such as analysis of the purpose made evaluation forms for training event A and summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) of the training materials were also used. Please refer to section 3.9 for further details of the documentary analysis.

### 3.7 Time Scale for Research

Table 3.4 below provides the timescale for the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month/Year</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Received ethical approval for research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Met with PEP to discuss research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>Identified two EP training events and invited EPs, commissioners and recipients to participate in the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>Conducted PEP interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>Undertook observation of live training event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2011</td>
<td>Identified third training event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2011 – February 2012</td>
<td>Conducted EP, commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January - March 2012</td>
<td>Transcribed data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March-April 2012</td>
<td>Analysed data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>Member check of findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April - May 2012</td>
<td>Completed thesis write up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2012</td>
<td>To complete participant and executive summary. Feedback to EPS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.4: Time Scale of Research**
3.8 Unforeseen Difficulties with Data Gathering

Real world research is fraught with many unforeseen difficulties and the very nature of such research cannot be controlled by the researcher. This section details the unforeseen difficulties that arose within the study and offers rationales as to why certain aspects of the study had to be changed. The data collected for each training event is presented in table 3.5 overleaf.

3.8.1 Identifying Training Events

It was originally intended that the range of EP training activities undertaken within the EPS would be collected from the EPS training database and then two training events would be identified using the inclusion criteria set out in section 3.6.2. However at the point when the researcher needed to access the database, the administrator who maintained the database was on long term leave and did not return to work. The researcher was therefore unable to locate the database and use it as intended. In order to identify suitable training events a contingency was to involve the EPs themselves in the process. The possible implications of this are discussed within section 3.6.3. Members of the EP team were contacted by the researcher to advise them of the study and to give them an opportunity to highlight any potential training events that met or would meet the inclusion criteria set out in section 3.6.2. Due to the time that it took for the thesis proposal to gain ethical approval from the University of Manchester, the inclusion criteria for the training events were no longer appropriate, and consequently only three training events proposed by the EP team met the criteria. A commissioner of one of these training events declined to take part in the study citing time constraints as the main factor.

In October 2011, the researcher had two confirmed training events and need to identify one more training event. A further training event was then identified by an EP colleague in November. Further information was sent to the commissioner to explain the research in more detail. Following this, the commissioner contacted the researcher to discuss whether a forthcoming EP training event would be more suitable. The commissioner reported that the training had been originally commissioned by the previous SENCo who had recently retired. The commissioner advised that a forthcoming EP training event had been arranged for January 2012 and would be happy to take part in the research then.
3.8.2 Focus Group and Interviews
The initial plan to gather data was to conduct semi structured interviews with the three EPs who delivered the three identified training events, followed by semi structured interviews with the three training commissioners and three focus groups with the recipients of each training event. Whilst the researcher only experienced difficulty arranging an interview with one of the commissioners of the training, in terms of arranging a mutually convenient time to convene, the main difficulties the researcher faced was organising the focus groups. For focus group A, the difficulties faced were around the logistics of organising a time that a group of TAs could convene without it impacting upon the delivery of service. The commissioner provisionally agreed to participate within the research but needed to confirm this with the headteacher of the school. It was initially requested that the interview and focus group be undertaken outside of schools hours. Whilst the commissioner agreed to this and was happy to be interviewed out of school hours, the TAs were not willing to do this and out of the ten TAs who took part in the training, only one TA agreed to be part of the focus group out of school hours. This was discussed with the headteacher of the school, as the commissioner felt it was unlikely that anymore TAs would agree to attend a focus group outside of school hours. It therefore agreed that an extended assembly was put on by the school SENCo to enable the TAs to participate within the focus group and the impact of service delivery would be minimised.

3.8.3 Recruitment of Participants
Unfortunately for the two other focus groups planned, the researcher was unable to assemble enough recipients of training to undertake the focus groups therefore semi-structured interviews were used instead. Whilst the commissioner of event training B had agreed to contribute to the research, she was not the line manager of the children centre workers who undertook the training and therefore could not offer support in organising the focus group. From the outset two recipients declined to take part in the research due to work commitments. The other eight recipients offered to exchange contact details but expressed their concerns over the logistics of organising a mutually convenient time for all of them to convene because of
Table 3.5: Overview of Data Collected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview with:</th>
<th>EP</th>
<th>Commissioner</th>
<th>Recipients</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Observation of Training</th>
<th>Training Material</th>
<th>Evaluation Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retrospective Training Event A</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Training Event B</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrospective Training Event C</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.5: Overview of Data Collected
different work patterns and many being based in different children centres across
the city. After making follow up calls to the recipients, for a multitude of reasons
including the certainty of ensuring service delivery, redundancies, job changes,
differing work schedules, and children centre closures; all of the recipients
expressed their uncertainty of being able to commit to being part of the research.

Whilst the researcher endeavoured to organise a mutually convenient time and
offered flexibility as to where and when we could meet, none of the recipients
agreed to take part. However a number of the participants suggested that they
would be more likely to agree to be interviewed separately as this would be more
convenient for them. In November 2011, four of the participants agreed to be part
of the study. Two semi-structured interviews were arranged for December 2011 for
two of the participants. The two other people who had expressed an interest in
being part of the research requested to be contacted again in January 2012 to
arrange a convenient time to meet. The researcher contacted both people twice,
once by phone and once via email, but did not get a response. For ethical reasons
the researcher did not want to appear to be pressuring people to be part of the
training and decided not to pursue this any further.

3.8.4 Collection of Training Data
In relation to Training Event C, three out of fifteen expressed an interest to be part
of the research. Whilst I endeavoured to arrange a mutually convenient time for the
three teachers to meet to undertake the focus group, due to family commitments
two out of three teachers could not meet outside of school hours and due to work
patterns and commitments within school hours it was not possible to arrange a
time to meet as a group either. Again to remediate this, the teachers suggested that
they could meet separately to discuss their experiences of the training.

The intention was to collect evaluation data for each training event however
recipient evaluation forms were only available for training group B. An evaluation
was conducted for training event A; however this was directly undertaken by the
SENCo for her own research purposes and could not be accessed as the SENCo went
on maternity leave before this data was requested. A commissioner evaluation was
completed by the SENCo for training event A and has been included within the
results. For training event C, no evaluation data was collected by the EP. This highlighted the difficulties researchers are faced with when undertaking real world research and it should be recognised that despite the difficulties presented, as much data was collected as possible within the allocated time-frame of the study. Please refer to table 3.4 for a representation of the entire data set collected.

### 3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

Interviews and focus group for each data source were analysed separately because they formed different data streams which pertained to the range of research questions. The data was aggregated in order to answer each research question separately. This also helped triangulate findings (Robson, 2011). In order to answer RQ 1, a constant comparative analysis between the PEP and EP interviews was undertaken. For RQ 2, a constant comparative analysis was undertaken between the PEP and EP interviews and the data elicited from the content analysis of the training materials. Finally for RQ 3, a constant comparative method was used for the commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group and the data elicited from the training event evaluation and training materials.

#### 3.9.1 Exploration of Data Analysis Methods

Within this section, data analysis methods will be explored. For the interviews and focus group data sets three methods of analysis were considered. The rationale for choosing thematic analysis as an appropriate analysis tool will be addressed.

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that qualitative analytic methods can be broached from two different viewpoints. One viewpoint being analytic methods such as interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith & Osborn, 2003), grounded theory (Glaser, 1992), discourse analysis (Gee, 2005), deconstructionism (Olson, 1997) and narrative analysis (Murray, 2003) that are theory dependent and require specific guidelines for use (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Talja, 1999). Braun and Clarke (2006) purport that analyses which are governed by a theoretical position may impinge upon how they are utilised and may give the researcher less freedom during the analysis process (Braun & Clarke, 2006), whereas other methods are seen to be independent of theory and have the freedom and flexibility to be used
across a variety of theoretical approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is positioned within the latter (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and is independent of epistemology nor bounded by theory and can therefore be used as a specific research tool rather than a research method. As Boyatzis (1998) suggests thematic analysis is “not another qualitative method but a process that can be used with most, if not all, qualitative methods…” (p. 4).

Three methods of analysis were considered for this study and two were discounted for a number of reasons. IPA was considered as an analytic method for the present study. IPA seeks to explore in detail how people within a particular context make sense of a particular phenomenon, with a main focus being on what meanings particular experiences have for people (Smith & Osborn, 2003). IPA seeks to interpret the data and relies on a two staged process of sense making of the experience, firstly for the participant and secondly for the analyst (Reid, Flower & Larkin, 2005). Furthermore IPA suggests only a small number of participants should be involved in order to gain detailed accounts of their experiences. Its idiographic nature means that it focuses more on, for example, individual events and experiences whereas the present study is focusing on three training events. The researcher chose three training events in order to consider a range of training events and therefore felt IPA may not be an appropriate methodology as the amount of data gathered could not be analysed to the extent to which IPA recommends within the time-frame. Whilst IPA is seen to be flexible in its application, it is suggested that the use of IPA with focus groups may lose its idiographic core, consequently changing its theoretical foundations (Tomkins & Eatough, 2010).

A further method considered was Grounded Theory, but this was discounted for pragmatic purposes. It is recommended that when using Grounded Theory, a literature review is undertaken simultaneously as the research is conducted (Glaser, 1992). This would have presented difficulties for the researchers as in order to gain university approval to undertake the research, a gap in the literature needed to be identified and how the research may contribute to knowledge needed to be
presented, therefore a literature review had to be conducted prior to commencing the research.

Thematic analysis was selected because it is a “dynamic, creative, iterative, yet disciplined craft of qualitative interpretation” (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 130). It is a method to identify, analyse and report themes and patterns within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Dependent upon the researcher’s choice of thematic analysis the codes and categories can stem from theory and literature or the data set itself (Gibson, 2006) and may influence how the analysis is undertaken, interpreted and reported. Whilst one of the main advantages is the flexibility it affords the researcher, it was also felt that the guidelines that were offered by Braun and Clarke (2006) facilitated the researcher with her thinking around her approach to the analysis of data to ensure that informed choices were made in relation to how the data was analysed and why these choices were made.

3.9.2 Inductive and Explicit Thematic Analysis
Braun and Clarke (2006) advocate that researchers must consider the specific thematic approach they will be using prior to undertaking the analysis and that these analytic decisions need to made explicit. They suggest that themes can be drawn from the data by utilising two different methods: an inductive method or deductive method. An inductive thematic analysis was chosen for this study. Inductive coding means that themes emerge directly from the data as opposed to being driven from the researcher’s theoretical framework, which Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest it provides a rich picture of parts of the data but lacks detail and rich exploration of the overall data set.

Using an inductive analysis means that data can be coded without consideration or influence from pre-existing codes or a researchers pre-conceived analytic ideas (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As there is paucity of literature within the topic area, an inductive approach was considered an appropriate method for the present study. A decision was therefore made to analyse the data as whole data sets retrospectively rather than using a running data analysis, as this would be more aligned with an inductive approach.
A further analytic decision is the level at which the data will be identified; this is either at an explicit or interpretative level (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Identifying explicit themes is concerned with the surface meaning of the data whilst an interpretative level attempts to ‘identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations’ of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). It was decided to identify themes at an explicit level. Challenges inherent in researching within one’s own profession is detailed within section 3.2.5, therefore it was decided that researcher bias could be better controlled using an explicit approach. Furthermore if the large data set was to be analysed at an interpretative level, this may become unwieldy and difficult to undertake within the time constraints for this research.

3.9.3 Thematic Analysis Procedure
Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six phases of thematic analysis as represented in table 3.6 was used to guide the analysis of the interview and focus group data sets and details the stages of analysis at each stage. Although the procedure is presented as a linear, staged approach, the analysis was iterative and reflexive. The 15 point checklist (please see appendix K) for good thematic analysis was also referred to (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

It is recommended that in order to fully immerse the researcher in the data it should be fully transcribed (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and is seen as essential for the initial stage of accurate and thorough analysis (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). The interviews and focus group were therefore fully transcribed. Using Dragon NaturallySpeaking Professional software V10, all 12 data sets were listened to by the researcher using a headset and microphone and dictated on to separate Microsoft Word documents. These were then transferred on to an encrypted memory stick. After each interview was transcribed, transcripts were checked against the original recordings to ensure accuracy of dictation.

Interviews and focus group for each data source were analysed separately because they formed different data streams which pertained to the range of research questions. Each data source was analysed separately and then themes were collated
to explore the commonalities and differences and exceptions which emerged (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases of thematic analysis</th>
<th>Description of process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Familiarisation with the data</strong></td>
<td>· Transcribed data sets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Checked transcripts against voice recordings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Re-read transcripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· A list of initial ideas was created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generating initial codes</strong></td>
<td>· Systematically assigned codes across the entire data set, by highlighting extracts and making notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Collated data relevant to each code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Searching for themes</strong></td>
<td>· Each code presented on a post-it note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Organised post-it note codes into potential themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reviewing themes</strong></td>
<td>· Checked data extracts corresponded with coded themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Created a thematic map of potential themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defining and naming themes</strong></td>
<td>· Read the collated extracts within each theme to ensure the themes are “internally coherent, consistent and distinctive” (Braun &amp; Clarke, 2006; p. 96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· To ensure themes were clearly defined and reflected the meanings evident in the data set, recordings were listened to and transcripts were re-read in relation to the thematic map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Re-organised themes and data extracts where necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Producing the report</strong></td>
<td>· Final analysis of themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Related the analysis to the research question and literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Wrote up the data analysis to be included within results section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6: Six phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
Throughout the coding stage the whole data set from the interviews and focus group were given equal attention and codes were assigned across the whole data set in order to create a comprehensive data set. Whilst the researcher was mindful of the UoA during the initial coding, as an inductive analysis was used, the codes and consequently the themes were not identified from pre-conceived ideas, instead the UoA guided the researcher in her analysis. Each transcript was read and each pertinent sentence or paragraph was highlighted and given a code which summarised its explicit meaning. Please refer to appendix L and M for an illustration of the analysis phases. Themes were identified through “careful reading and re-reading of the data” (Rice & Ezzy, 1999, p. 258) as detailed within table 3.6. For each code identified, data extracts were collected. The collated extracts for each theme were re-read and analysed to ensure the themes were “internally coherent, consistent and distinctive” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 96). Once the generated themes and the data extracts had been reviewed, these were checked against the original recordings to ensure the coded data related to the original data source, and were changed or refined as necessary.

3.9.4 Documentary Analyses

Documentary analyses were undertaken for both training event evaluation and the training materials. Following training event A, the commissioner was asked to complete an evaluation form and in training event B, the recipients were asked to complete an evaluation form by the EP trainer. The evaluation forms were examined to consider as to whether the experiences shared within the interviews and focus group were congruent with wider responses given within the evaluation form.

The process of analysis for the training materials was to undertake a summative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) to explore the general degree of congruence between interviews/focus group and training materials. This involved comparisons and examination of the content of the training documents for evidence of distinct or valuable content and process elements particularly those that were referred to by the EP trainers, commissioners and recipients of the training during the interviews. All interviews were analysed prior to completing the
content analysis. The training materials were examined in conjunction with the themes elicited from the focus group and interviews. For example, the importance of underpinning the training with psychological theory was seen as important to the EPs, commissioners and most recipient’s of the training, so the training materials were then examined in relation to this theme. The training materials were also examined to consider what training formats the EPs utilised and other distinctive content and process elements. Please refer to section 4.1 for a description of each training event.

3.10 Trustworthiness of Gathering Data and Analysis
Most qualitative researchers agree that the criteria used by quantitative researchers when evaluating their research are not conducive within qualitative studies. Merriam (1998) suggests that whilst positivist researchers focus on criteria that strengthen the rigour of research such as internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity, instead, qualitative researchers have developed alternative criteria to ensure the research is trustworthy. Guba (1981) proposed four criteria that should be considered in pursuit of a trustworthy study for qualitative research. In order to demonstrate the integrity of the research, the qualitative researchers equivalent focus responds to the following criteria set out by Guba (1981):

- **Credibility**
- **Transferability**
- **Dependability**
- **Confirmability**

**Credibility** (qualitative equivalent to internal validity): This is seen to be one of the most important factors in determining a trustworthy study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Hammersley (1990) defines validity as “the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers” (p. 57). So in order to ensure there was congruence between the participants beliefs and experiences and the way in which the researcher interpreted their viewpoints, during the focus groups the researcher attempted to summarise participant views and checked the
accuracy of this interpretation with participants. After the analysis the themes generated from the interviews and focus group were emailed to the participants presented in a diagrammatical format in order for them to check that the researchers interpretation was a true and accurate reflection of the interview/focus group discussions. Participants were asked to email the researcher with any comments within a two week period and were advised that they did not have to respond to the email if they were confident that their views were reflected accurately and they had no further comments to offer.

The researcher was supervised throughout the study which afforded the research in-depth dialogue that enabled fresh perspectives to be considered and refining of methods to take place (Shenton, 2004). This enabled the researcher to reflect upon and discuss factors relating to the design, execution and analysis of the study, for example: rationale for using specific research tools; ethical considerations; methodological considerations; interpretation of findings. A reflective research diary was also kept throughout the study which also helped the researcher include pertinent experiences encountered in more detail than if a diary had not been written. It should be noted that the diary evolved into a personal journal of the thesis journey and therefore it was not considered appropriate to include within the appendices.

Factors which could impact upon the credibility of the study are detailed within the ethical consideration section 3.11.

Transferability (qualitative equivalent to external validity). Transferability refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised or transferred to other contexts, settings or populations. Shenton (2004) asserts that findings of qualitative research are specific to a small amount of settings and it would be therefore difficult to generalise these findings to other settings and populations, further to this Gomm, Hammersley and Foster (2000) suggest that to generalise findings to other settings may negate the significance of the contextual factors of the case being studied, others feel that transferability should not be dismissed from qualitative inquiries (Denscombe, 1998; Stake, 1995) as it is important and necessary for scientific research (Mayring, 2007). It is therefore suggested that practitioners and other researchers can make their own judgements as to whether the study’s findings are
applicable within their own context, and if they wish to relate the findings to their own setting (Bassey, 1981). It is highlighted that both researcher and reader have to take responsibility for this and it was therefore important for the researcher to offer sufficient contextual information about the study in order to facilitate others decisions about the transferability of this study.

**Dependability** (qualitative equivalent to reliability). Dependability refers to how dependable the results will be and closely corresponds to the notion of reliability in quantitative research. Within quantitative research, reliability would be evident if the same study be repeated within the same context and setting, with the same participants, using the same research methods, the same results will be found. Due to the changing nature of people, settings and context, addressing the issue of dependability within qualitative researcher can be problematic (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In order for the study to be repeated, a detailed description of the methodological framework and research procedure will be detailed; including recruitment of participants, time frame of research, length of interviews and focus groups and detail of settings research was undertaken.

**Confirmability** (qualitative equivalent to objectivity). The concept of confirmability corresponds closely to the notion of objectivity within quantitative research. “Here steps must be taken to help ensure as far as possible that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher” (Shenton, 2004, p. 10). Whilst it is important for the researcher to highlight and acknowledge personal values and beliefs that underpin the research, it is also important that steps are taken to ensure that the impact these may have on the research findings are kept to a minimum and that the voices of the participants are heard above all else.

### 3.11 Ethical Considerations

Stake (2003) highlights the privileged position of the case study researcher: “Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict.” (p. 154). It was therefore of significant importance to be mindful of the ethical implications throughout the
study. Key ethical challenges were explored using the guidelines developed by the University of Manchester’s School of Education, Research Risk and Ethics Assessment. Ethical approval for this research was received from Manchester University in July 2011 (please refer to appendix M). An operational risk analysis was also developed (please refer to appendix N). In line with the Code of Ethics (BPS, 2009) there are ethical considerations the researcher must be aware of when conducting research. The BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2009) offers guidelines for psychological researchers to consider when undertaking research, these include: informed consent, right to withdraw, protection of participants, confidentiality, proper conduct, debriefing, and avoidance of deception.

The influences of ethical conduct came from four sources: the University of Manchester Research Ethics Committee; the professional code of practice from the BPS; the HPC, Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (HPC, 2009); and the researcher’s own ethical principles and moral judgements.

Prior to starting the interviews and focus group, the researcher sent a letter to all participants (see appendices A-C) explaining her role, the purpose of the research, and how the data would be used. This was reiterated at the beginning of each interview and focus group to ensure informed consent was sought and time was allowed for any questions to be addressed prior to commencing. The researcher advised all participants that they could withdraw consent to participate at any point during the interview or focus group and for up to two weeks after they took place. Within the focus group, simple ground rules were highlighted and observed throughout. The rules included respect for each other’s views and opportunity for all members to contribute.

Within the University of Manchester Ethics assessment it was confirmed that the research was a practice review which may involve topics of a sensitive nature which were not personal to the participants. The researcher was aware that she was asking others who were outside of her profession what they considered to be valuable contributions of EPs as trainers within Children’s Services. This may have impacted upon their desire to be forthcoming with completely honest answers to a
person within the EP profession. In order to firstly ensure that participants were aware that they were able to refuse to take part within the research, they were given several opportunities to withdraw their involvement, firstly in writing prior to the interview/focus group taking place and then again during the interview/focus group. It was also imperative that the participants felt comfortable and able to answer honestly within the interview/focus group, the researcher ensured confidentiality would be kept.

It was also recognised that the recipients of EP training focus group may be uncomfortable discussing their experiences within a group if there are trainer/trainee links or line management duties with other members of the group. To overcome this, the researcher checked the appropriateness of the composition with the commissioner before undertaking the focus group. It was confirmed that recipients were all TAs and had no links with the commissioning of the training or line management duties. When constructive comments about the training were expressed within the focus group, questions were posed to explore how these may be overcome. This was seen as a useful aspect of the focus group, as evident from an email from the commissioner of the training who reported that the recipients had approached her to discuss the possibility of a whole staff meeting to discuss the implementation of the training. The commissioner reported that the recipients had felt it was a constructive focus group and they had felt listened to by the researcher. This was seen a positive aspect of the focus group and supported the next steps with the implementation of the training and evidenced that constructive feedback within the focus group was dealt with effectively and sensitively, without causing discomfort to the recipients or posing a threat to the EP and school relationship.

It was acknowledged that EPs may feel their professional practice was under scrutiny during commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group. It was recognised that contentious themes may arise in EP interviews relating to their role as a trainer. Psychologists work within HPC standards, are required to undertake supervision and self evaluation and as a profession are seen to be reflective practitioners, therefore it was felt this activity might be less threatening than to other professionals. Prior to starting the interviews, the researcher spoke to all
participants explaining their role, the purpose of the research, and how the data would be used. This was reiterated at the beginning of each interview to ensure informed consent was sought and time was allowed for any questions to be addressed prior to commencing. It was highlighted prior to commencing the interviews the purpose of the study was to explore the contribution EPs can make as a trainer, rather than an evaluation of their practice. All EPs self-selected the training events, and it was felt that if EPs did not want to be interviewed in relation to the topic area, then they had the option to not volunteer.

Participant information sheets, consent forms and all other documentation relevant to the current study were discussed with the researcher’s supervisor and approved by the University of Manchester’s ethics panel.

All data collected was anonymised and transcriptions were coded and encrypted to ensure confidentiality. The names of services, organisations, schools and staff involved were changed.

All participants were debriefed after all information had been collected and analysed. This was in the form of letters, presentations and meetings depending upon the level of involvement and preferred feedback method.
Chapter Four: Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will detail the findings of the research study. As described in section 3.6, data was analysed using the thematic analysis procedure described by Braun & Clarke (2006). The results aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1 What are the key operational and strategic factors for EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in Children Services?

RQ2 What do EP trainers identify as distinctive and valuable content and process elements within training?

RQ3 What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

All the results were generated through the semi-structured interviews and a focus group, and were further supported by the documentary analysis of the training materials and evaluation forms and observation of a live training event. Each theme and sub theme is further supported by direct quotes from the interviews and focus groups.

It was originally intended to identify all participant quotes, but it was felt that by doing so some of the participants’ anonymity would be compromised, particularly amongst the EP group as participants were from a small population. The decision was therefore taken to not identify individual EP quotes for ethical reasons. A code was assigned to each recipient and commissioner and related training event, please refer to table 4.1.

Each research question was reviewed and answered separately. As detailed within figures 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3, a thematic map is presented for each research question to illustrate the themes that emerged from the data sets. XMind Version 3.2.1 software was used to construct these maps (Eclipse Foundation, 2006).
### Participant Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision Teaching (PT) Recipient One</td>
<td>PTR1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT Recipient Two</td>
<td>PTR2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT Recipient Three</td>
<td>PTR3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT Recipient Four</td>
<td>PTR4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT Recipient Five</td>
<td>PTR5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT Commissioner</td>
<td>PTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT Commissioner Evaluation</td>
<td>PTCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EY Recipient One</td>
<td>EYR1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EY Recipient Two</td>
<td>EYR2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EY Commissioner</td>
<td>EYC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Memory (WM) Recipient One</td>
<td>WMR1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM Recipient Two</td>
<td>WMR2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM Commissioner</td>
<td>WMC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.1: Participant Key**

As detailed within the table 3.2 on page 65, the themes generated from the interview with the PEP are presented first and relate specifically to RQ 1. Within RQ 1, EP views were also included as themes emerged within their interviews around strategic and operational considerations relating to their training. The themes generated by the three EP interviews relate to RQ 2. As the PEP also had an active case load and was the allocated EP for a number of schools, their views about the EP’s distinctive and valuable role as a trainer were also included within RQ 2. Finally the themes generated by the commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group relate to RQ 3.
4.2 Case Description

The case study was a Local Authority in a large, metropolitan borough in Central England in which the researcher was employed as TEP. In 2011 it ranked within the top twenty of the most deprived areas within England and has a population of over 300,000. The LA develops strategic planning in relation to developing their workforce and sets out the long term and short term aims within a key workforce document every four years. Its main aim has been to create a shared vision amongst its workforce to help develop inclusive seamless services that focuses on early intervention to support all children, young people and their families.

A fundamental strategy has been to improve service provision and training opportunities for its workforce, and to develop a range of multi agency training and development and integrated ways of working, in order to develop a confident, competent workforce. A current aim has been to invest in workforce training in strength-based approaches to work with children and families. Successful delivery of inter-agency safeguarding training and Common Assessment Training amongst a significant amount of their workforce was reported. A training and development review was being undertaken to ensure that the whole workforce are trained to a core standard.

The EPS within the LA is a semi-traded service and funding for EPs non-statutory work was delegated to schools. This means that any work that does not fall within the EP’s statutory remit would have to be funded by the school or service. The EPS was within its second year of marketing its psychological services and offered training programmes to a range of services, which has included schools, universities, early years provisions, social care, fostering and adoption agency, private organisations and other EPSs. Further strategic and operational factors of delivering training will be discussed within section 4.4.
4.3 Training Vignettes

A brief vignette will now be given for each training event in order to contextualise the training.

4.3.1 Training Event A: Precision Teaching Training

The Precision Teaching training was delivered to the small urban single form entry primary school by the link EP in September 2011. It was identified through the needs of a child who was not progressing and the EP had suggested that this intervention may be beneficial for a range of children within the school. The training was delivered at school during an INSET day, and took two hours. Ten TAs and the SENCo who commissioned the piece of training attended the training. Through examination of training materials it appeared the format of the training included didactic teaching and experiential activities.

4.3.2 Training Event B: Early Years Training

The Early Years training was delivered to eight children-centre workers across the LA in October 2011. This training event had been run for four consecutive years for children centre workers as a strategic response to service restructuring. The EPS was commissioned to develop a training package that would build the capacity of children centre workers to meet the needs of pre-school children with SEN and their families across the city. The training consisted of four days training, shadowing opportunities and a follow up session that was to be scheduled for February 2012. It was delivered at a LA office within the city. Through examination of training materials it appeared the format of delivery was diverse and included didactic teaching and guest speakers, experiential activities, group discussion and activities and worksheets and was developed and delivered by the specialist early years EP.

4.3.3 Training Event C: Working Memory Training

The Working Memory training was delivered to a small urban single form entry infant’s school by the link EP in January 2012. The training was identified through the needs of a child who was not progressing and having difficulty retaining information. The school had already commissioned Precision Teaching training from the link EP as a whole-school literacy intervention and the EP had considered that the Working Memory training would offer a valuable knowledge base in preparation
for the Precision Teaching training. The EP suggested that the training may be beneficial for a range of children within the school. The training was delivered at school during a twilight session at 3pm, and took two hours. Twelve teachers, five TAs and the SENCo who commissioned the piece of training attended the training. Through examination of training materials it appeared the format of the training included didactic teaching, group consultation and problem solving and group activities.

4.4 Research Question One

What are the key operational and strategic factors for the EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in children services?

As seen in figure 4.1, the data from the PEP interview yielded seven major themes. RQ1 will be answered by discussing each theme separately. There appeared to be two competing themes that emerged from the data. The PEP had both an active EP role within the service and a strategic managerial position, the responses given and subsequently the themes drawn from the interview highlighted the poignant competing demands and priorities between the two roles. The PEP noted that the main focus of the EPs’ work was in relation to schools and therefore predominantly the key operational and strategic factors for the EPS in delivering training within schools will be considered in this section.

4.4.1 Theme One: Building Capacity

It was seen that historically schools had been dependent upon external services to provide repetitive support to the same schools.

“I think there's an opportunity there to skill school staff up and have greater consistency across the city in terms of service delivery in schools.”

A significant rationale for EPs undertaking training was to build city wide capacity of other services for children and families, such as children centres.

“I think we’ve done it with the training, what we’ve actually been able to do is improve practice within the school, which has then had positive outcomes within the school and the school has been able to add it to their toolbox, their menu of delivery.”
Figure 4.1: Thematic Mindmap for RQ1
Strategically the PEP felt EPs were well placed to deliver training to a range of services to build the capacity of staff across the city. This was to ensure greater consistency across the city in terms of service delivery and the equitable service that families could expect regardless of their geographical location.

4.4.2 Theme Two: EPs’ Valuable Contribution

The EPs valuable contribution to training was highlighted throughout the PEP’s interview. A distinctive contribution was seen to be their background knowledge and expertise within their field in terms of knowledge of a range of children’s needs, psychological knowledge, and working from an evidence base. This distinctive and valuable contribution that EPs could offer within their role as trainer appeared to be a consideration as to why they undertook training within the local authority.

It appeared this knowledge base facilitated the planning and delivery of training events, as EPs were able to use their psychological knowledge to plan training packages with a theoretical underpinning and utilise their background knowledge when delivering training, ultimately linking this with the individual school.

“I do think actually what EPs can offer is their understanding of not only the holistic picture when it comes to behaviour, but we are able to look at the little parts that interact with each other. So we can bring our knowledge base of psychology, and then learning, but then be able to see how that might link with say the school environment, interpersonal relationships, school culture, learning needs.”

One EP expressed their uncertainty with how the EP’s distinct contribution sits within a traded service model and expressed a concern of other professionals encroaching upon their profession. It was also evident that there were ethical concerns about how psychological theories are utilised and presented by non-psychologists.

“There is the whole idea about, 20 years ago, we should be giving psychology away, Miller I think, we should be giving it away. We know it, so we should drip feed it to everyone we meet and eventually we will all be psychologically aware. Well in traded services terms really? Do we? I don’ know. So is that where I’m coming from. Am I thinking, “Are you nicking my job?” Because we’re the only
traded services to be doing that training.... But I suppose someone could, quite easily, sell me a car. They don’t have to know about the engine. So someone can use slides and effectively present the information in training, so what’s our unique selling point of psychologists? Is there an ethical concern? Is there something that we add as a valuable difference? Or is it that I’m watching my territory. I don’t know I don’t know if we add anything.... I think I do it differently, because of my knowledge of psychology....”

It appeared that there was personal conflict between what the EP thought they should be doing in terms of giving away psychology and how vulnerable this could leave the profession within a traded service model of delivery.

4.4.3 Theme Three: Local Knowledge

Local knowledge was considered a crucial factor in terms of EPs undertaking training. Within this theme, three sub-themes emerged, these were: relationships; linking training to practice; identifying and responding to needs. It appeared that the EPs’ position within the schools in which they worked facilitated their ability to undertake training.

“Training tends to evolve from the needs of schools and how we’ve helped to identify those needs, rather than a determined plan of, “This is what we’re going to develop this training”.”

The PEP considered that the majority of training evolved directly from the EP’s work within schools rather than what the service has generated as a training package. As each EP was the link EP to a number of schools, it appeared that the EP’s discrete knowledge of individual schools was considered paramount in terms of being able to develop relationships, identify and respond to a range of needs at different levels, i.e. school needs, staff needs and children’s needs and subsequently link the identified training to staff practice. This was facilitated with the EP’s familiarity of school systems, working knowledge of individual classrooms and individual pupils within the school.

Particularly within school, establishing relationships at a range of levels was considered an essential element of an EP’s practice. Strategically the relationship with the senior management team (SMT) was considered important for the training
outcomes within school. In addition to this, the SMT placing value on the training was also considered important for the sustainability and effectiveness of the training.

“We are in a position within schools to build those relationships with the senior management team. Often, I think, the training delivered to schools will meet the strategic requirement of the management. If the management is on board with it then I think then there is potential to take this forward. I think the difficulty is when you’ve got someone who is coming to training who doesn’t have that influence on senior management and therefore the implementation may not happen."

An important aspect of the relationship with the school SENCo was being able to share information about staff. This enabled the consideration of group dynamics within the group and how this could impact upon training delivery.

“The SENCo was able to say, “Well actually these members of staff are really up for it, whereas actually these members of staff might not be”, so therefore you judge carefully as a trainer, where you would place those in a group. You need to take that into account when you deliver your training, include them in perhaps the problem solving, coaching to get them over the hurdle, or to get them to observe.”

Strategically, the relationships that the EP was able to develop with individual staff and their familiarity of specific classrooms was also seen to be useful in terms of linking the training to individuals’ practice and how the training applied within the context of the specific classroom. It appeared that the EP’s ability to encourage staff to reflect on the training they undertook and how they applied it within their practice was also facilitated by the EP’s position within schools.

“I think, when we deliver training in schools and we have good knowledge base of the school, we can be part of that process of saying, “Ok how can we now apply it in your situation and setting”, and we’re in a good position to actually have an overview. Because we might have visited several classrooms, have worked with several different staff, and have a good relationship with the senior management team, and developed and built relationships within the school.”
“As we’re working in the school, we’re infiltrating in the classes, we can help make the links between what they’ve been trained in and what they’re undertaking.”

Strategically the PEP thought that the EPS should be identifying gaps within service delivery across the LA and considering how the EPS could support services in filling those knowledge or skills based gaps. The PEP suggested that EPs value the knowledge of others in relation to their service or school. Strategically, relationships within the school also helped the EP identify what training would be valuable to the school. It was considered that EPs could support schools in identifying needs and by taking account of local knowledge could individualise training to meet the needs of the particular school.

“If you are delivering training with the school that you know, and you can take into account the needs of that school, and you’re customising your training you’re doing. Then I think it’s likely to have good outcomes.”

The local knowledge of the school supported the schools in identifying their needs and gaps within their service and how these needs might be met.

“I think it is about their ability to help schools work out their needs and how these needs are then going to be met. I’m not saying that a needs audit is done overtly but by having that discrete knowledge about the individual schools that you work with, can really help you help the school know where the gaps are and how they can plug them.”

It appeared that training undertaken within other provisions, for example, children centres was seen as more of a strategic response. An example of one of the training events, was a strategic response to LA restructuring rather than EPs identifying service or children’s needs (see Training Event B, section 4.3.2).

Whilst a skills audit was seen to be one way of helping schools identify their training needs, it was considered that predominantly training needs arose directly from EPs’ work within a link school or through the EPs’ knowledge of the individual school.
“Where we deliver training directly into schools, it's because there is something that's arisen out of our work, or it's something that impacts on our work within that school.”

It was considered a fundamental way of identifying training needs was through the work an EP undertook with specific children. This was a fundamental response to ensuring the children’s needs were being met and to improve the outcomes for children.

“So strategically... we're finding or identifying gaps, where we think we can have high impacts and we can improve the outcomes for the children on the whole that we are working with.”

4.4.4 Theme Four: Centralised versus Bespoke Training

As highlighted in section 4.4.1, the competing demands and priorities of the PEP dual role as practitioner and manager appeared to elicit conflicting responses. These competing priorities were most evident within this theme. There appeared a sense of urgency when discussing centralised training and this appeared to be a next strategic step for service. Whilst the PEP considered bespoke individualised training to produce the best outcomes; centralised training was considered to be the most time efficient and financially viable for the EPS in relation to traded services and meeting income generated targets.

“I think there is scope for both. It is perhaps a better use of our time perhaps, to be offering centralised training. On the other hand I think if you are looking at outcomes it would be beneficial to do the more school-based training.”

A further factor in developing a centralised training package is responding to a range of needs:

“I think with the centralised training, my role is to consider LA strategic plans or government initiatives and agendas and perhaps what the service feels might be important that is not currently offered.”

The PEP felt there was scope for both centralised training and individualised training within the EPS, although it was seen to be difficult to quantify the effectiveness, in terms of outcomes, of centralised training if a range of services attended the training due to the logistics of follow-up. It was felt that both would meet different
needs and would have different functions. Centralised training was seen as more
generalised training; seminar type information giving and taster sessions and was
considered more useful for individual CPD.

“When you’re doing training in the centralised place... what you’re delivering is
a very much more generalised course. So you might draw upon examples of
your role, but you’re not thinking about each individual school or services
special circumstances and situations, so it’s more like attending a seminar,
people come to gain some information or knowledge, but it’s left with that
person about how they go and apply it.”

However individual needs could not be considered. As the PEP explained:

“There are different needs and different local contexts that you can’t consider in
detail [when delivering centralised training] and I think that’s part of our role
when you’re doing training with specific schools. Our role starts way before the
training even commences, it’s about knowing that local context and the
negotiation around the training.”

As discussed within section 4.4.3, the PEP considered the position EPs had within
schools was valuable in terms of how they could individualise training to meet the
needs of the school. This local knowledge facilitated the service in being able to
adapt training to meet the local needs. Although the PEP did identify how the two
types of training may fit together in terms of centralised training being a pre-cursor
for a more bespoke piece of training. The PEP highlighted the potential benefit of
centralised training was seen to be a ‘first step’ for services to find out more about a
specific topic and seeing what relevance it would have for their individual service.

In considering the distinctive contribution EPs and the PEP identified for
undertaking training, this conflicted with how the EPS thought they could meet the
income generated targets and how they should move forward within the current
market.

**EP:** “One issue is market forces within local authorities i.e. trade services. The
next is what we’ve just talked about, what EPs can do best, and the other is
what we need to be able to do training. Because the whole idea of about
putting time and time is money, putting next year’s time, it makes me want to
go and do [prepared] training because I’ve already got the package there, and I can just photocopy it and shove it out there. But that’s the exact opposite of what we should, in terms of market forces, because we should be using our unique selling point which is the very thing we’ve just identified..... I suppose our principal EP is trying to make sure we’ve got enough money next year to pay the bills.”

EP: “You also need an EPS that sees the value in training. Especially in traded services, there is a massive conflict, because you say you do training because you it’s more efficient and you can reach more people, but in the traded services, it’s more in your interest to do individual pieces of casework because you can charge more.”

The dissonance between what services the EPs delivered and the financial implications of traded services was evident for two EPs and was an issue that appeared to have not been resolved.

As discussed within section 4.4.3, the importance of local knowledge and being able to link training with staff practice was seen as a valuable contribution EPs can make as a trainers. However the ability to undertake this type of role within centralised training was questioned.

“I think that [school based training] leads us to ask questions about what we’re doing with the training or conversations about “Can you remember when we did this training on...? Well you could utilise it here, can you take that training, and can you apply it to these situations, and can you apply to the new situation?” So I think we are in a good position when we do training in the school. I think that is reduced when we do centralised delivery.”

Whilst the specialist training, knowledge and specialisms each EP had were seen to be a distinctive contribution that EPs could offer within their role as trainer, a counter perspective was that training packages need to be developed that could be utilised by all EPs. Again this appeared to highlight the competing demands the PEP had to work within.
“We need packages that everyone can deliver. The package needs to be self-explanatory. It isn’t just something that a particular person has a particular interest in that area, it is not something that only that person can deliver.”

Furthermore as highlighted within section 4.4.2, predominantly training needs arose from the needs of individual schools, rather than through offering a pre-determined training package.

**4.4.5 Theme Five: Holistic View of Training**

The PEP considered that EPs had a wider view of training and saw the importance of seeing training as a more holistic activity rather than just a standalone training event; it was suggested that the sustainability of training relied on this holistic perspective.

“Our EPs are positioned well; they have the understanding of looking at the implementation rather than specifically just the training itself. It’s having that understanding and knowledge about what needs to be in place for the training to be effective, in terms of its sustainability. The work doesn’t just stop after the training has finished.”

The PEP saw EPs as well positioned to undertake training but considered the strategic role as more subtle in terms of how this was undertaken.

“We are definitely always mindful of the strategic overview, and the holistic overview of what needs to be considered when we are looking at delivering training, or supporting a service in building their capacity. But perhaps this is done more discreetly.”

It appeared that the EP’s strategic role was more subtle unless a strategic role had been identified and made explicit. It appeared from EP and PEP interviews that explicit strategic roles facilitated more open dialogue and consideration of the strategic delivery of training.

As discussed within section 4.4.4, a dissonance between the types of training the EPS should be undertaking was discussed. Whilst bespoke training was considered to be the most valuable in terms of outcomes, centralised training appeared to be an area that the PEP wanted to develop. However the difficulties in undertaking
centralised training and being able to consider the individual services’ needs were highlighted.

“I think you can say it’s like a pre-training package, where you can help identify specific needs, look at where they are in terms of being ready to take on this training, and that’s important to be ready and especially you don’t know that when you go into training, especially centralised.”

Project type work was highlighted as a possible activity to undertake alongside training and at one level was already seen as embedded within EP practice in terms of plan-do-review cycles.

“Our original suggestion around our traded work, was around research project work and training delivery, and I don’t see why these things can't intermingle together. We have our specialist knowledge on research, and our knowledge of the specific context we work in, and I think that gives us a good position to integrate our knowledge of what a service needs, delivering the training and continuing this with project type work. I would like to think, that every time we’re going out, wherever we go, whatever the work is, there is an element there of research, there is element in there of project work. You’re giving the TA, SENCo, children’s worker, things that they might look at, things that they might do differently, things that they might evaluate and I think I hope all the time that we’re passing on some skills. I think it's a little cycle of what we do.”

The wider view of training included considering the current cultures and practices within the school, the value they would place on the training, and offering a longer term package in terms of pre-training, to consider if the service are ready to make changes and post training follow ups to support the implementation of the training. Local knowledge appeared to be important in how the training would need to be implemented in terms of pre-training and pre-requisite skills that would be need to be in place in order for the training to be effective. As the PEP explained:

“In respect to the RJ (restorative justice) approach that we’ve been delivering, its successful doing that, where we’ve got that in that particular setting where there is a history of it already, where they have already got SEAL (Social Emotional Aspects of Learning) already well in place, and they have good peer
mentoring and support systems. If we were going into a very different types
school where they weren't using the SEAL curriculum, they had no concept of
peer mentoring, where they didn't have positive at behaviour approach already,
then you would have to be starting from a very different baseline, and when we
are looking eventually at the RJ training package then I think we can say it's like
a pre-training package where you can help identify specific needs, look at
where they are in terms of being ready to take on this training, so you could
offer a pre-training package, here's the actual training package and here's the
follow-up package.”

It appeared that considering the schools readiness to take on a training package
should be considered along with follow-up training sessions, which would be
incorporated into a longer term training approach. Coaching and mentoring was
also seen as an extended role of training and could fit within a centralised training
model as well.

“If we are doing centralised training we can support the school thereafter, so
you [the recipient] come while we do this topic and then we can come and help
you within school, monitor cases, coaching and support.”

Whilst the PEP felt that EPs are well placed to undertake strategic planning in terms
of training and whole service work, it was felt this was not overtly undertaken,
although would be undertaken subtlety. A holistic overview, understanding of what
factors need to be considered when starting

“I think again we've got that subtle strategic role in helping management move
ideas through the school and as we're working in the school and were
infiltrating in the classes, we can help make the links between what they've
been trained in and what their undertaking.”

Although there was a financial pressure to generate income, a priority for the
service was early intervention and building the capacity to meet the needs of all the
children within the city.
4.4.6 Theme Six: Marketing

It appeared that the EPS had not developed a strategic plan in terms of how training would be marketed and appeared to be focusing more on identifying future training packages to be marketed for the next financial year.

It was considered by the PEP and another EP that the service needed to find their niche within traded services and the training market.

“I think there was an opportunity for us to find a niche in that particular market, but what we needed to do was to come up with ideas of things which were easy for us to put on but high impact.”

“I think there is some scope around that type of thing involving potentially a lot of strategic type of work, that project type of work. It's just a case of getting ourselves organised to market that, and choosing topics that they really really want.”

A significant factor in marketing the service was organising how it was going to be marketed. It appeared that this was also dependent upon what was going to be marketed in terms of the uniqueness and pertinence of the topic choices.

As a manager with financial responsibility for the service it was evident that there was a focus on generating money by undertaking training. However highlighted within section 4.4.4, this appeared to conflict with the PEP’s practitioner experiences, that a significant amount of training encompasses more than a just standalone training session and a wider view of training needs to be considered in terms of planning, delivery and follow up.

The LA advertised the EPS within the traded services directory, and a brief menu of services was advertised. This did not have specific reference to the types of training that the service could offer, but highlighted generic elements of what the offered in terms of consultation, psychological assessment, intervention, training and research.

Marketing had predominantly been discreet in terms of EPs’ work with their link schools and other educational provisions, such as children centres. The PEP felt that the service was gaining a reputation for delivering quality training within the city,
and word of mouth appeared to be the most successful strategy in terms of marketing their training.

4.4.7 Theme Seven: Barriers

It appeared that there were two fundamental barriers to undertaking training: time and money.

“Time. Definitely a barrier.”

Time appeared to be a fundamental factor as to why there was a driving force for centralised training to be marketed, in terms of planning and delivering training. The current austerity measures also appeared to be a further constraint for whole service delivery.

“The climate. The climate isn't good at the minute because schools and other services on the whole, are having to be pull back with how they spend their money.”

Whilst the current financial climate was highlighted as a barrier for undertaking training, it was seen that without services undertaking training, the quality of service provided within children's services would be diminished.

“I think everybody can keep going for a certain length of time, then you will get to the point where you will need to refresh. You've got new staff coming in, you're not working efficiently, your standards are beginning to fall because you're not investing in the person and then perhaps do need to get to the situation where you need to look at what you're going to do next, what the next step is, impacting upon services being able to develop their staff in terms of training. This will have consequences that will need to be considered.”

The competing priorities of the service were evident within this theme; individualised bespoke training had more benefits, in terms of meeting the needs of schools but was seen as more expensive in terms of time and money, whilst centralised was seen to be more efficient and less time demanding for the EPs, consequently meaning that it was more lucrative for the EPS, as you would potentially have a larger group of recipients attending the centralised training.

Another apprehension expressed by one EP was their perceived encroachment of other professionals upon their role as a trainer. This seemed to be heightened
because of the economic context in which the research was carried out. The concern appeared to be two fold. Firstly the EP considered that there might be ethical implications for unqualified trainers delivering a course about psychology. Secondly it appeared that the EP was concerned about others encroaching upon their role as trainer in a period of austerity that introduced a level of vulnerability to the profession. This encouraged the EP to reflect upon what they added within the context of training.

“I suppose someone could sell me a car and they don’t have to know about the engine so someone can use slides and effectively present the information in training. So what’s our unique selling point as psychologists? There is an ethical concern as well. But is there something that we add that is a valuable difference? Or is it that I just want to watch my territory? I don’t know. I don’t know if we add anything. I think I do it differently because of my knowledge of psychology.”

4.5 Research Question Two

What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?

As seen in figure 4.2, the data from the three EP interviews yielded seven themes. RQ 2 will be answered by discussing each theme separately.

4.5.1 Theme One: Application of Psychological Knowledge and Skills

Highlighted within figure 4.2, the themes that emerged indicated that the overarching theme of several sub themes was the distinctive psychological knowledge EPs could bring to training. These will be discussed separately.

All three EPs and PEP identified the application of psychological knowledge as the most distinctive element within their training. As seen in figure 4.2 overleaf, the EP’s psychological knowledge base was utilised and applied in several ways, including: shaping content and delivery of training; enriching responses; linking psychology to educational practice. However there appeared to be an agreement amongst the three EPs that the most fundamental distinction was their deeper knowledge of a wide range of psychological theories and models, which could be drawn on to enrich and individualise both the content and processes of the training.
Figure 4.2: Thematic Mindmap for RQ 2
“What we bring is that sort of that psychological perspective that I hoped would enrich their training experience.”

“It’s the depth of knowledge that a psychologist has.”

“We’ve got a wider view of human nature as well that would allow us to... enrich a response, it is, it’s the ad lib. So say there was someone in the audience asking me about [the topic], I would be able to pull on all kinds of psychology.”

4.5.1.1 Sub Theme One: Enriching a Response

All three EPs felt that a distinctive contribution was that psychological knowledge enabled them to draw from a range of theories that would enrich their response, for example one EP described how they used their knowledge of systems theory to respond to a recipient’s question about a specific child. This meant their responses were enriched and influenced how flexible they could be in terms of utilising the information and adapting their response to meet the needs of the recipients.

“I would say it’s the ad lib, it’s the depths, it’s the understanding ... I don’t just have [training] slides and child example, I’ve got a wealth of knowledge on concentric circles about that child, so I could say, well in fact [the intervention] might not work with that child and it sounds to me like you’re talking about, and I can see the broader aspects of human behaviour and knowledge.”

“It’s something about having that psychological knowledge and experience to draw on in the training, so when you’re going through, it’s not just about going to PowerPoint, it’s not just about going through the activities, you have to have a large amount of understanding behind that. Working with children with very profound needs adds depth to the training, that wouldn’t be there otherwise.”

This was also evident within the live training event observation, for example a recipient asked the EP how a particular approach could be used with a child with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, the EP utilised experience from previous casework, discussed their psychological knowledge about the triad of impairments, and related this to the particular question.
4.5.1.2 Sub Theme Two: Shaping Training

All the EPs commented on how the training was shaped by their psychological knowledge in terms of planning, delivery and content. As one EP explained, psychological theories and approaches underpinned the whole training experience, from commissioning through to evaluation.

“So, it’s about helping people find out what they need, finding out where they are at the moment, so its needs analysis, then it’s motivational interviewing, where are they in terms of being able to start to move forward, it’s Vygotsky, what’s the zone of proximal development, what’s the next step, its solution focused, let’s see what works and see how we can aim for the North star, out of PATHS (Planning for Alternative Tomorrows with Hope), then its facilitation and coaching skills to help them get there. Then it’s our research methods, knowledge to be able to do baseline post intervention measures.”

The planning of the training was also influenced by their understanding of psychological theories, as one EP explained:

“I rely heavily on upon information processing so I’m thinking about attention span, perception theory, memory, language and thought, I’m thinking all the time when training and designing it, how long will people be to sit and listen before they have to do something active.”

As one EP described, their psychological knowledge influenced how the content was presented:

“The content might be different, in the way we present it because we would make astute choices because of our understanding about the learning process. So we could look at the topic and say, here’s how it is best to break it down.”

All the EPs discussed how their knowledge base of learning theories influenced how they delivered the training.

“Hopefully our understanding of cognitive processes allows us to break a topic down into its constituent parts.... that idea of acquiring knowledge, getting it to accuracy, then to building its fluency, our appreciation of the learning process itself, will help us choose useful methods of presenting this information and which would hopefully help us to judge more carefully how a novice with no
experience at all, can be presented with information, then they can make a longer journey through the training.”

“Well we have knowledge of learning theories, so I suppose as example then, in relation to incorporating a range of activities, that’s trying to accommodate people’s different learning styles.”

An examination of the training materials supported the range of activities utilised within the training sessions, these included: dissemination of information; group activities; worksheets; scenarios; problem solving; role play; modelling; practising interventions; group discussions; videos. A range of activities was also evident within the observation of the training event, these included: dissemination of information; worksheets; group activities; problem solving; group discussions.

Whilst the EPs felt that other providers could have delivered the training in terms of disseminating the information from the PowerPoint slides and handouts, it was agreed that their breadth of knowledge of psychological theories and models could enhance the recipients’ knowledge base in terms of content of the training. It was felt that the EP’s knowledge base would be different from that of other professionals or training providers.

“I think the content would be different, I don’t think another provider would necessarily know about [the topic area] so much.”

“But there you have to have the understanding and there was nothing about attachment theory, because that would not be her area of expertise. So it felt like that there was still loads that we could offer around, knowing what we know about psychology and then knowing what we know about education and the settings and how to apply it. That was very different, but the knowledge that she was able to give them, looking at what she did, I think there was no way that we would have overlapped, it would have been so different.”

4.5.1.3 Sub Theme Three: Theoretical Underpinnings

All three EPs considered that a fundamental part of the training was to ensure the recipients had a theoretical underpinning of the topic area; this was seen to be crucial for deeper level learning to occur and facilitated this being embedded with their practice. As one EP explained:
“We started talking and saying I could do training around [the topic area] as well, so there was aspect of it, that we kind of got an intervention that the school wanted to start using more, but felt that they kind of needed to have, the theoretical understanding of why they were doing it, what’s the purpose... So that hopefully when they come to do the [the other] training, they’ve got an intervention that the TA is doing, and actually the principles that are part of that, hopefully are being embedded in the classroom as well from the [current] training.”

This was also evident within the analysis of the training materials, in terms of the information provided about the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the training, for example, learning theory, behavioural psychology and working memory. This was also evident within the live observation that was undertaken for training event B, where the EP spent time discussing the theoretical underpinnings of behaviour psychology.

Another EP explained about the importance of the recipients’ understanding the psychology behind the training.

“The psychology is very much embedded as part of the training, and that’s a really important part of the training. We are now going to be using that in the home visits.... So it’s important for them to know why they’re doing these things.”

Whilst another EP considered the theoretical framework would underpin the recipients’ practice in terms of their decision making process.

“What I hope what the training would have offered them is a deeper understanding, so they’ve got that theoretical framework that they then could make more effective decisions about how to work with parents and children.”

4.5.1.4 Sub Theme Four: Researcher-Practitioner

All the respondents indicated that fundamentally being applied psychologists and being able to draw from a wide psychological knowledge and evidence base was the distinctive contribution that EPs felt they bought to training.

“It's about having the learning and having the experience of looking at it in the real world and merging those together all the time. The reading something
academic and then being in the world with that knowledge, and then merging
the two and understanding the importance of that, because you can have your
real research and academic people, and I think the practitioner side of EPs, we’re
expected to know that knowledge. But it's actually about me knowing it and
actually using it and applying it on a practical level.”

As highlighted within the above quote, it was acknowledged that EPs are researcher-
practitioners, and this was also identified as a valuable commodity, in terms of
utilising research and methodology skills and applying evidenced based practice. For
example:

“Our very specialised training, it’s our background knowledge and expertise: our
knowledge of the full range of children’s needs; our research background, the fact
that what we’re saying we can substantiate. It's not circumstantial; it's taking
into account different facets of the child’s needs.”

“We would do it according to evidence-based robust processes.”

“There is an evidence base behind it and we have an understanding of the
research and the theory and can give more. Training can be more based on firmer
ground because of evidence and theory and it's not just “Try this, it works”.”

However there appeared to be a gap between the knowledge EPs had in terms of
undertaking training and actually applying this specific knowledge within their
practice, as one EP explained:

“We can go in and look at the problem around a child, and we can look at it from
a systemic point of view, or within-child and we can come up with a good
argument about what actually needs to change, and start to affect that change.
But I think when it comes to delivering training, we kind of get caught up in the
delivering of the training, and I think most EPs forget about that systemic
thinking that we are knowledgeable in, and then a month after we've done the
training, nothing’s changed, maybe we need to be thinking about why this hasn’t
been taken up.”

4.5.1.5 Sub Theme Five: Linking to Education

Being able to link the psychological knowledge with education and learning was very
important to all of the EPs, especially how psychology could be applied to educational
settings and real life cases. This was an area that all EPs identified as a distinct contribution to their role as trainer.

“We have the psychology and I hope we would have the knowledge when delivering training about how this would be applied within an educational setting, and then be able to slant or change the content or process to reflect that. So teachers might have the teaching and the knowledge of teaching and learning and that kind of thing, but they might not have the psychology, so therefore we bring the two together.”

“You've got hopefully specialist knowledge on psychological concepts, but then linking that with what school is already doing and what would be useful.”

4.5.1.6 Sub Theme Six: Psychological Paradigms

Two EPs described how psychological paradigms shaped their practice and their role as trainer:

“Social constructionism is always with me I’m afraid, as I'm training I'm looking to see, I'm not going, “Here’s information, I've given information, therefore it's out there”. I see it more as a social action, symbolic interaction that kind of field of psychology where I’m thinking, did she look like she understood what I was saying, why did she just do that…”

“I think the way I've tried to develop my practice is, is quite interactionist….. yes within training, we need to look at strategies and what’s going on in the environment and how we teach, we also need to understand a child's point of view, that there are within child issues and there is an interaction, and we need to be looking at the interaction rather than just what's going on around them.”

Interestingly one EP thought that the EP’s own interests and paradigm positioning would influence what type of training is suggested. The EP saw this as a valuable contribution EPs can make in terms of bringing their own interests and offering a new lens through which to view issues.

“I'm really interested in cognitive psychology, and [training topic area] in particular, so that is probably, I'm sure if another EP came in and talked to the SENCo about the same problems I did, they could spot a completely different avenue that they could go down to address that. So maybe my own interests in
[topic area] have biased where I’ve led the school. Maybe that’s something that’s valuable, I’ve got my own biases towards particular paradigms but for what the school have been attributing and understanding the problem in one way, just by introducing another it doesn’t necessarily matter whether that’s [the topic area] or whatever, it’s just giving them another way of looking at it.”

4.5.1.7 Sub Theme Seven: Effective Communication

A further skill that was highlighted was being able to take academic literature and effectively present it to the recipients so it is meaningful for them.

“Maybe it’s something to do with ad hoc, spontaneity, bespoke, weaving from all our psychological knowledge, all those textbooks, taking all that and being able to mould it into something, using all those learning theories that we know, like information processing and that into something that could just be presented that will unlock that blockage to somebody at that point.”

“I don’t think another provider would necessarily know about [the topic], or much about the content side of things, to actually take the literature and put that into a way that teachers can understand and access and use and I think that’s important.”

“Let’s translate into something that makes sense to them [participants].”

“Our ability to communicate and be able to communicate complex ideas.”

It appeared that all the EPs and PEP felt this was a significant skill of the EP, as without their ability to effectively communicate, they would not be able to share their psychological knowledge with the training group. As their psychological knowledge appeared to be something that all EPs considered as a significant distinctive contribution as a trainer, it could be suggested that their ability to communicate effectively was paramount.

4.5.1.8 Sub Theme Eight: Consultation Skills

Not only was the psychological knowledge in terms of content, an important skill that all three EPs identified was their ability to utilise their psychological, consultation skills within the training. This was seen to be a distinctive quality in terms of seeing
training as more than just the dissemination of information, but more so a collaborative, problem solving group activity.

“Giving them some time, some coverage, some self efficacy to go away with it and try it. Then you go back and you see where there are. That is your facilitation skills but also the plan- do-review, like a two-step consultation model.”

“It’s almost like doing psychological consultation on the hoof and I’ve had that a number of times actually in each of the training that I’ve done...... a facilitator but with that psychological background. I think can be quite helpful in those difficult situations.”

“So yeah, it’s the problem-solving, that they already know what to do, it’s just let’s look at these problems in this way, from this perspective, what can you do about it that you already know? They all came up with loads of ideas, and I would do this and I would do this and I would do this because of this.”

The use of consultation skills was also evident within the training event observation, whereby the EP utilised these skills in order to collaboratively explore a practice issue a recipient had highlighted, this included identifying and clarifying the concern, and collaboratively problem solving the concern with the group, for example the EP asked, “given what we know about [the child] and what we have talked about today, what do you think we can do to help him?”. This appeared to increase the recipients’ involvement and linked the training with their practice.

These skills also helped the EPs manage their responses to recipients, whether it was managing emotional situations, managing their own response to difficult situations, in terms of group dynamics, managing individual and group responses to topic areas and discussions. Whilst generic facilitation skills were seen to be key in all training, they alone were not seen as distinct, however when incorporated alongside psychological consultative skills, they were seen to be a valuable skill that an EP had.

“Facilitation is really really key I think... So it’s then how to manage their strong feelings and emotions about the things that they are hearing, and how you manage that and still facilitate the rest of the group.”

“You have to manage your own personal responses to what they’re doing.”
Furthermore it appeared that rather than seeing the training as a ‘trainer’ and ‘trainee’, the two EPs that undertook the training within their school, considered it a joint journey, a collaborative activity between themselves, the commissioner and the recipients of the training. As one EP explained:

“We’ve got to have a communitarian ethic, both parties take a participatory stance, you’ve got to put them in a co-researcher position so you not doing to them, you’re working with them.”

4.5.2 Theme Two: Local Knowledge

All three EPs spoke about the importance of local knowledge. This appeared to be especially useful in relation to the EPs who undertook the training within a school for which they were the link EP. All EPs utilised their local knowledge including: schools systems; culture; priorities; relationships and dynamics; recipient and commissioner knowledge and skills; knowledge of children; political issues. This influenced the training in terms of needs analysis, planning, delivery, application and evaluation.

“...like what happened in this school, we talked about these children and how [the] training would be good. Maybe then that is when the process of knowing the school becomes more important, because I know that the child has these particular difficulties so I can make sure in my training we talk about that. I do think it is important.”

“With an EP there could be more awareness of the process and system, whether that training would be more bespoke and tailored to in the school at that time. What are the issues in that school at that time?”

“So yes, it’s content and process. There is that, as obviously there's the content of what you’re giving them, but also the process of actually, first of all linking that to what school actually needs and the issues that they're facing; but it may be broader than that, which is the point I need to work on is incorporating that in a much broader process to actually take that knowledge and then implement it.”

“They’re going to get more mileage out of it, so.... if that’s the way she thinks it's going to work in her school then they’ve got the local knowledge and that’s something you need to consider. I said earlier about paradigms and about social
constructionism and you have to recognise that the local knowledge is superior to the outsider.”

Valuing others’ views and knowledge was also seen as an important part of training, as two EPs explained:

“There is no one way to see the world, so there’s no point me standing at the front and saying this is the way you should do it, I need to do is find out what is their way of doing it.”

“It’s valuing their contribution and experience within their context. I can offer knowledge about something, but then it’s how we take that further for those teachers in that school.”

Group dynamics and professionals roles were considered particularly important to one EP, who discussed how she negotiated the training with this in mind:

“I went in to see the headteacher and she said how would you feel about having the teachers in the training as well, and I said I don’t have a problem with that, but it might be best to separate training, like I said earlier if you have a PGCE you should already have the nuts and bolts of that, and it should be quicker to get that across. But TAs, I think generally people who come to be a TA comes to have a have come to a different route in life to people who come to be teachers and you need to present this. If you’re presenting information, it’s not just information, but it’s capturing a social event. So you’re trying to work with the people you got in front of you. It’s almost like, if you had teachers and TAs you’d have to differentiate to such an extent it would stretch the resource a bit... I think that graph [in the training] can be a bit daunting, and I just think I always do a bit of, “now don’t be scared of it, you might have a bit of a problem with it, but don’t worry, by the time you leave, I promise you, I won’t leave until you’re happy with the graph”. And I don’t know if I could swing it that way if the teachers were there, and I don’t think if you were sitting there and that was working for you, and that sort of feeling of “oh she understands this is quite scary for me”, “oh actually I feel I’ve achieved”, I think you would lose that journey if you were sitting next to someone who just whacked it on the graph.”
As described by one EP, the local knowledge was important in identifying school issues. However the positioning of the EP in terms of being an external service enabled them to be more objective:

“You kind of know what the issues are at the school but at the same time you’re not bound up by all of it because you’re not part of the school culture, so you’re kind of separate from it, so you can be more objective....”

This closely linked with another EP’s perspectives in relation to being able to use training to challenge others’ practice.

“You can almost challenge what’s going on in the school already in terms of the school culture and the approaches to inclusion.”

As highlighted within this section, it appeared that all EPs considered their position within schools allowed them to draw on local knowledge that would facilitate their ability to undertake training.

4.5.3 Theme Three: Relationships

This theme could be subdivided into the relationship EPs had with others and their awareness of the importance of other relationships. This theme appeared to be intrinsically linked with local knowledge, meaning that the relationships were a key factor in identifying local knowledge and working effectively within these systems. The success of the training was to some degree seen dependent upon the EP’s relationships.

The local knowledge of others in relation to the relationships within the school was seen to be important and was harnessed and capitalised on within the training.

“I was just thinking that's not what I want, but I judged it to be if I now come and correct her than I've lost the link to the group.”

“I think it's more she has she is nurtured them as a team, they have faith in her, and so I suppose, I am tagging onto that aren't I? I've seen that and harnessing it.”

The relationship that an EP had developed with the commissioner was also considered an important factor when challenging school practices.
“I did read a paper that said psychology is all about building relationships, but what about the challenging role of the psychologists. Sometimes it’s not always about being there for the child.....Yes you can get your eloquent challenging in as opposed to if they perceive you as confrontational, challenging all the time, so you’ve got to make it stand like a peak, so you have to go, helpful, kind, nice, peak and challenge, otherwise it’s just a background noise.”

“I think relationships are critical when you’re wanting to effect change, you can skilfully challenge some perspectives and at the same time gently persuade them to consider doing things a little differently.”

Building trusting and collaborative relationships were seen to play a crucial role, especially with the school EPs, although it appeared that the EPS’ delivery impacted upon the time they had to develop these relationships. It was felt that the commissioners’ trust in the EP was important in the planning of the training.

“The SENCo knows you and thinks I really trust this [person] and it’s really going to work well for me, but that’s not about psychology that’s about personality and then you start whittling down to who is good at building relationships.”

“Trying to trust their judgement with what they want to do with it as it’s a tool for them.”

The trainer-recipient relationship was also seen as important.

“There is a whole lot of emotional factors underline that. I need to make sure that they feel comfortable with me. There is a lot of psychology to do with that.”

Another EP felt that it was also vital that they had an established relationship with the school, and key people within the school. As one EP explained:

“That is the important critical factor, is the relationship with the school, our relationship with key staff you know. I think that's where school do value us.”

Another EP described how the relationship with school helped tailor the training to meet the school needs.

“They wouldn’t have that relationship with the school, it might feel more off-the-shelf and not so much tailored to what the school necessarily needs at that level.”
4.5.4 Theme Four: Responding to Needs

This theme appeared to closely link with local knowledge in that the EP’s ability to identify and respond to a range of needs was dependent upon their local knowledge of the specific context. It appeared that the two school based training events emerged through the individual casework the EPs were involved in rather than the staff’s own identified training needs. The two school EPs were able to harness the training through identifying children’s needs and extending this to whole-school work to ensure the staff had the capacity to meet the needs of the children.

“In terms of casework as well, there was a couple of children that had been raised and I’ve only just started to work with them. But even from the outset, you could see they were struggling to retain learning, pick up new skills, everything what you might expect with a child with working memory needs. So really it came out of casework that this is something that was coming up in school, and it seemed to make more sense to work at that level, rather than to work with this teacher, and then this teacher and tell them the same things.”

The third training event emerged from whole service strategic planning and the EP had to plan the training to meet the needs of the strategic restructuring of the service. Whilst the training needs were identified in different ways, within the interviews, all EPs’ suggested that the fundamental purpose of the training was to improve the outcome for children, which in relation to training meant skilling staff up to meet the needs of all children.

“It’s how I try and help them ensure that we are meeting the needs of the children in their school.”

“I hoped that they would end up having an appreciation of children that would otherwise be falling under the radar.”

“We could develop a package to train staff to become [EY] workers, that we hope would increase the services for children with disabilities.”

Whilst the main purpose of the training was to meet the needs of the children, this was not to say that the recipients’ needs were not considered. As one EP explained, after a training topic had been suggested to the SENCo, a taster session was arranged
for the SENCo/commissioner and a TA, to demonstrate the training and to ensure that this was an appropriate tool for them.

“I went into the school....to explain and see if it was right for that child and for them as a school.”

Whilst the commissioner of the other school training event was consulted, no other recipients of the training were consulted prior to the training taking place, although what emerged from the data was that a fundamental part of all of the training events was responding to the needs of the group during the training itself.

“If you're presenting information, it's not just information, but you’re capturing a social event, so you're trying to work with the people you’ve got in front of you.”

Another EP acknowledged the difficulty in developing training to meet the needs the individuals in the group but felt this was overcome within the training event itself:

“It’s difficult. We’re not going to be able to meet the needs of every person in terms of the planning of the training, but what I think we’re good at, is when someone brings something to the training, and then we say “ok, right, that’s interesting, let’s look at that”, and then we are able to move the training. We can’t change what’s on the slides, but we can change what we talk about, depending on what people bring.”

By incorporating psychological theories, such as Vygotsky (1978), all the EPs felt they were able to adapt the training to meet the needs of not just the group, but the individuals as well. One EP highlighted that the psychological knowledge they utilised influenced the bespoke nature of the training.

“I suppose it's the nearest you can get to do bespoke development, it's the nearest thing you can get to Vygotsky and where are you now, how far can I stretch you in your zone of proximal development.”

Ensuring that individuals’ needs were responded to was seen to be a crucial part of all the training events. This was also observed within the live observation of training event B, where the EP actively encouraged recipient feedback in terms of how comfortable and confident they were with the content and pace, and gave time for recipient questions.
“Not to lose sight of the fact they're still all individuals, and you're trying to watch, you’re trying to assess, and plan, and act, and you're doing a plan-do-review cycle for all of those faces.”

“Checking in with everyone to make sure everyone is ok with what has just been discussed.”

One EP described how the valuable contribution was in their ability to respond to individual needs and allowing the training to be shaped by the recipients:

“Our value is in that one-to-one, that motivational interviewing, building that into it, where our understanding of where that person as, let me come and find you, let me find out where you are, let me check in with you, that’s where you are, okay which direction do we want to go in? That's up to you.”

“That's what you’re here for, so it's inviting them in. Moulding the training about them, find out where they are at, because if you don't do that then you’re not doing anything, are you?”

As highlighted, all of the EPs thought a valuable contribution was their ability to individualise training to meet the needs of the specific school or service they were delivering training to. A conflict between being able to develop individualised training and utilising ‘off the shelf’ training materials was discussed within all interviews, and whilst the more bespoke training appeared to be where EPs thought they could offer the most value, the financial and time constraints appeared to limit this type of work.

“We’ve just identified is that our value is in bespoke design and in which case I would say to you as a SENCo I’ve got two options for you. I could do you training on Friday afternoon for 2 hours, that will cost you not much more than the two hours or I could design something brilliant and I’ll be loving it and be getting my creative juices flowing and we are getting everyone interested in it, but it'll cost you five times as much, because it would take the day just to put it together and it won't be polished. Therefore you’re paying miles more for something that might be a bit clunkier, maybe, when people are learning, but actually are we supposed to be research practitioners and pushing forward the boundaries of
psychology and I suppose my answer to your question is I need time to prepare which isn’t attached to the price tag.”

This highlighted the dissonance between what an EP felt they could bring to training and the reality of how the current financial situation and model of service delivery impacted upon their practice.

4.5.5 Theme Five: Identifying the Impetus for Change

Linking closely with two themes particularly Theoretical Underpinning and Linking with Education, a further point highlighted by all three EPs was the importance of identifying the impetus for change. A main factor in this process appeared to be getting the recipients to see the value of the training, in terms of identifying the benefits to their practice. It was hoped that establishing a link between the training and their practice would motivate the recipients and make the training more meaningful and pertinent to their role. By highlighting the purpose of the training and explaining the knowledge that underpinned the training appeared to have an important function.

“...It would have been linked with an underlying purpose as to what you were doing, that’s the knowledge that underpins that.”

“It’s seeing what the teachers are experiencing, the problems they’re coming up against but actually, trying to then give them some training, some insight into it and hopefully for them to see the use of it in their classroom.”

One EP described it as the ‘readiness of learning’:

“...The readiness of learning........so it’s not just our understanding of the cognitive and information processing but it’s our understanding of the motivation to learn and why do we need to know this and how can I present this, how far can I throw this training. It’s... I’m talking to you now about this is on the slide......but maybe the way I sell it, not in a traded services way, but the way that I make sure that their, their schemas are all open, cognitively, because there is a whole lot of emotional factors which underline that.”
Not only was it important for the recipients of the training to value the training and establishing an emotional connection with the training, but it was seen to be crucial for its sustainability that the commissioner also valued it.

“The idea that if the SENCo is there and she's got it, I sold it to her she's going to keep that spinning now isn’t she?”

“You need a school that puts some value on it.”

4.5.6 Theme Six: Wider View of Training

All three EPs considered training to encompass much more than a standalone training event itself, and highlighted that the strategic element of training was important. For example:

“The actual process of planning the training, why it's happening and fitting that within up to a much broader picture, it's not just a standalone. It does have a purpose in that it links to what else is going on, in terms of other training we're doing, in terms of casework we're doing, in terms of gaps in knowledge in the school. I keep coming back to it but I think it's a process that is different.”

The strategic considerations of training emerged from all EP interviews, although it appeared that when a strategic role was clearly identified, the more strategic dialogue was observed. One EP who had an identified strategic role for the training, highlighted how her psychological knowledge was used within this context and how this then shaped the ongoing process and development of the training:

“Well, I think it helped afterwards in developing this model, because now as I think about it, I think my knowledge of scaffolding, that was me feeding into the strategic group, saying you know you need a scaffolding approach, you know, to make sure it's effective. And they were like 'oh yes yes'.”

“Then we did put in after the training, we put in a kind of induction programme if you like, so I helped develop [early years] workers, because I was saying to them, the training itself isn't enough, in order to be able to work as [early years] workers they would need to do shadowing the [team]. They would need to do joint work and then working independently, kind of have that scaffolding, so I kind I introduced that notion of scaffolding to them and they've taken on board.”
It appeared that if there was not an explicit strategic role for the EP, the strategic considerations were considered in a more subtle, implicit way.

“It’s more subtle, unless you work directly with the head and you’re working on their strategic objectives. We are definitely always mindful of the strategic overview, and the holistic overview of what needs to be considered when we are looking at delivering training, or supporting a service in building their capacity. But perhaps this is done more implicitly.”

One EP described how although the training was a stand-alone piece of training, it had been planned to coincide with another training event. It was hoped that the initial training would embed the theoretical understanding and some prerequisite knowledge for the subsequent training. The EP’s local knowledge of the school also fed into this strategic plan as they were aware that previous training had not been sustained because of lack of leadership and ownership of the intervention and therefore this was taken into account for the current training. The importance of whole-school involvement was also identified as important.

“In the infants though Precision Teaching hadn’t been picked up, and I would say there has almost been some resistance to it, that they haven’t we seen the point of it. So when we started talking about it a bit more, me and the SENCo, it felt like they didn’t really understand what PT was about. So we started talking about “Let’s do PT training for the infants, but let’s involve the teachers as well, rather than just the TA’s”. So there was a bit more leadership around that, and that’s then filtered on, “Well why are we doing PT? Because the children that might struggle to retain learning?” So we started talking and saying “I could do training around working memory as well”. So there was aspect of it, that we kind of got an intervention that the school wanted to start using more, but felt that they kind of needed to have the theoretical understanding of why they were doing it, and what’s the purpose?”

One EP considered their role as trainer as a catalyst for change, although expressed uncertainty as to whether the training alone would be enough to create change. Interestingly the actual research process itself was identified as having potentially positive implications for the training.
“It kind of feels just by doing a standalone training session, there's nothing in between that and by you coming in and doing that interview that your that kind of bridge... It's almost like I've given them that tension and the knowledge to recognise that there is a tension and your interview has then maybe prompted them on the path towards change... It makes you think as a practitioner you obviously have a purpose behind why you’re doing that training, and just doing it as a stand-alone hour after-school training, you kind of think, is that fulfilling the purpose? I suppose it goes so far... Because everyone will sit there and say that's brilliant, that's really good, everyone has this kind of espoused theory but actually when it comes down to it, nothing really changes. So maybe it takes that opportunity like what you've had, to look back at it and say we've got the knowledge now, it's double loop learning, it’s something you start to think about. You know you want to change, you say you want to change, but what is it that's stopping you from changing?”

There was a degree of dissonance between all of the EPs’ idealistic views of training and what was needed to ensure its longevity and application within practice, and the realistic expectation of what the training was. This appeared to be heavily influenced by two main factors, money and time. The current financial climate and new model of service delivery were discussed as potential barriers to being able to undertake a more strategic role within training, as one EP discussed the difficulties they encountered when trying to strategically plan the training:

“For the most long-lasting effect while there is a critical factor in this, which is traded services, they've run out of money now, so I would like to do a follow-up with them, as I think that’s vital and that’s what I would do if I wasn’t in trade services but because they haven't got any money, they're not going to pay for it. I did try to build this in and I’m saying “this is how long it would take”, but they used it up on something else, for another child and at the end of the day, if they say “come to a meeting for another boy on the brink of perm ex”, and I say “I want to save that for a cosy chat with TA and a cup of tea and a biscuit”, they're not going to spend the money on that. So I suppose you present information, you give them some time to try and consolidate it, and then you go back and polish it and reconcile any issues that come up for them, but in this case that's not necessarily going to happen.”
It appeared the priorities of the service impacted upon the EP’s ability to undertake a strategic role. As highlighted above, one EP encountered difficulties implementing follow-up sessions because of the schools competing priorities and the new model of service delivery. The second EP was able to link two separate training events with the school needs and individual casework and the third EP had an identified strategic role within the training.

All three EPs considered that ongoing project work, such as Action Research may be more valuable than standalone training, for example:

“You could do like an action research model, so part of is about the attachment, and then part of it is working staff to see how we can look at behaviour differently, but if you are looking at behaviour more generally training could be part of that. It would be great to get into a school and be part of that.”

“We’re better off doing action research, in the moment, spontaneous developing, than we are doing giving some information off-the-shelf. Because the off-the-shelf is so big because it’s the World Wide Web shelf, and that’s my least favourite part of the job.”

Although negotiating this type of work with consideration of the economic constraints was highlighted as a barrier in undertaking such type of work.

“So more like action research, supporting people through a development process. So we should be doing ongoing project work. However, it’s fire fighting and long term work, which we used to have when we had a set amount of hours, and the school would say “you’ve got 25 children you’ve got to see”, what ties them altogether? So, therefore let’s make an overarching project for the school, and let’s do an action research cycle through the year. But who’s going to buy that now? When they can get something that costs less.”

The current financial climate and the EP’s ability to work within a traded service model of delivery appeared to be causing two of the EPs conflict in terms what type of work they felt they should or could undertake.
A further thought expressed by one EP was that whilst they considered EPs to have an understanding of systemic work, they were uncertain as to how much this was effectively utilised within delivering training.

“As an EP, it’s looking at that systemic context of what’s going on and I think it’s something we could be very good at, but it’s something we’re actually very bad at it. We have all this training in terms of systems thinking and systemic work, and what’s going on in school and we can look at problems from 1,000,001 different points of view including putting training in, but I always feel that our knowledge never really gets applied to training.”

4.5.7 Theme Seven: Instilling Confidence

Instilling confidence within the recipients was highlighted by all of the EP trainers. It appeared that if the recipients felt confident with the approaches, interventions or tools that they were being trained in, they would be more likely to utilise this within their practice.

“It’s about getting them to believe that a) they can do it, which is the thing about the graph, b) acknowledging that they will look at it and say, “Oh no I can’t do this now….. but you will be able to do it,” and making a big point at the end of saying, “See how you can do it!” And emphasise for them the journey that they have taken, in terms of self-efficacy. So it’s about self-efficacy, can and they go and use it? My job is to ensure they feel ready to use the tool.”

4.5.8 Theme Eight: SEN Knowledge

A further suggestion of the valuable contribution of EP trainers related to the complexity of the work undertaken by EPs and their experience with complex casework and special educational needs and how this fed into their training role.

“So what I bring is my experience of complex cases and the range of work I undertake and utilise and that within training.”

“We realised they needed a lot of support around SEN and things, and this is where we could make an important contribution.”
4.5.9 Theme Nine: The Value of Teaching Experience

An interesting internal debate was ignited in all three EP interviews about how prior teaching experience would influence or be a valuable commodity in the EP’s role as trainer. Two of the EPs had previous teaching experience and both felt that this experience had helped with their generic presentation and training delivery skills, although did not feel that this was their valuable contribution to their role as trainer.

“It’s not just the teaching background, because you can get teachers who wouldn’t do this, so maybe it’s the combination of understanding learning, but also understanding psychological theories that can support the learning. Because I did my psychology degree before I had done my teacher training, I was applying psychology to education for 13 years. It’s living with, and actively applying that knowledge, minute in, minute out, day in day out... As long as you’re actively applying your psychology while you’re there. I don’t think it’s about the teaching.”

One EP who had not been a teacher deliberated on the potential differences between teaching and non teaching EPs, and described how they had incorporated a consultative approach to training and similarly to EPs with a teaching background, considered their contribution as a trainer more than the dissemination of information but the psychological skills and knowledge that are utilised.

“Sometimes I wonder then because I’m not a trained teacher, whether I differ in delivering to someone that has been a trained teacher. I don’t know, I feel like I try and elicit strategies from people if I’m doing the training. I feel like I bring the knowledge, enabling the strategies. They have a bank of strategies that they already know how to do and I feel like I bring the knowledge and give them that and then a quite substantial part of the training is about getting them to think about the knowledge that I’m giving them and think about all the strategies that they know. Which ones would fit with that?”

One EP considered the evolving role of the EP in terms of their role as trainer in relation to the change of training route:

“I think it would be interesting to see the evolving image of what the psychology service is going to be, given that there are very few people who have training teachers background now because it’s just being taken for granted that people can stand up and teach and I’ve watched people who haven’t been teachers
trying to do it, [and thought] “My God what are you doing there?” and I don’t realise how much you get out the practice of.”

4.6 Research Question Three
What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?
As seen in Figure 4.3 overleaf, the data from the commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group yielded eleven themes. RQ 3 will be answered by discussing each theme separately.

4.6.1 Theme One: Theoretical Underpinnings
A valued contribution that all of the recipients interviewed from training event B and C and the two commissioners who attended the training identified was the theoretical underpinnings that were offered during the training.

**EYR2:** “I think they did everything. I really enjoyed the part with the EP, about the psychology part. I’ve done psychology a bit before and it was like, “I’m all keyed in here”, and it was looking at the theories behind everything, and I thought that was really good.”

**WMR1:** “Yes, it’s the theory of it, yes, and how it related it to my practice. The theory side was good. I think it was quite an in-depth subject.”

**EYR1:** “Well you’re just looking at the surface without looking at the theory, and you know the who’s, why’s and what’s.... and that was like, “oh”, you know when we did it on the course, we all we knew it and we have the tools for it, but now we understand it right from the bottom, right up to the top.”

**WMC:** “There was a lot around the technical bit and identifying, us using our working memory and all the things that would have to go into all the things that children would have to use to be able to write a sentence, and all the processing they would have to do, and we spent a lot of time on that because you know, it was important we understood that and I think we did.”
Figure 4.3: Thematic Mindmap for RQ 3
It appeared that the theoretical underpinnings gave the recipients a deeper understanding of the topic area and this was valuable within their practice. Whilst some recipients within training event B expressed that as practitioners they used some of the interventions and tools prior to the training, the theoretical underpinnings helped them make sense of certain tools and interventions, and gave them a firmer grounding as to why they being asked to use them.

**EYR2:** “It was why we’re doing what we’re doing. I mean, at the moment there’s quite a lot of the work [within the training] that I turned round and said, “We would do that already”, but it’s about understanding why we do it that helped.”

One recipient spoke about how the theory gave her confidence when talking to parents:

**EYR1:** “It was good to do that, it was something to back up what you are saying anyway. Because quite often I can see parents, it’s going straight over their head, and they think, “Yeah you can say that”, but it’s good with having that knowledge and the backing of it.”

Whilst the theoretical knowledge was touched upon briefly within the focus group for training event A, in that they highlighted the theory was explained within the training, none of the group reported that it was of value, all of them focused more specifically about how valuable the intervention was rather than the theory behind it. However the commissioner of the training event who also attended the training felt it was important that the recipients were given the theoretical platform on which to work.

**PTC:** “That was important, that psychological theory in order to understand what they were being asked to do, absolutely. I mean the ladies I work with are bright, vibrant people, and as long as they’ve got a reason to do it, if it’s just the paperwork exercise then why bother? It was quite pertinent that the theory was explained.”
4.6.2 Theme Two: EPs’ Knowledge, Experience and Skills

Both the recipients and commissioners felt a distinctive and valuable contribution of EPs delivering training was their varied knowledge base and experience of: psychological theories; child development; SEN and disabilities; knowledge of the services within the local authority.

WMR2: “That psychological knowledge, that’s what [the EP] trained for years to do, you know what, it’s really nice for someone different to come in and you come to it with fresh eyes and you’re ready to hear what someone else has to say sometimes.”

PTR2: “I just thought she had a handle on where we’re coming from with working with SEN children.”

EYR1: “I don’t think a person in another role would have that first-hand experience, they might be knowledgeable of it but they wouldn’t have had that first-hand experience.”

A commissioner felt that their knowledge base was a reason as to why the EPS had been commissioned to undertake the training and felt that the EP was a key professional within educational services.

EYC: “I think it was the real understanding of Portage. I think it is their knowledge and skills about child development. It’s always of value, their knowledge and skills around children with SEN and disabilities in the city. They are key in the educational settings, they support children under five who will be potentially going into schools with them, so I think it was recognising the expertise in that, and we didn’t have that skill set amongst our managers at that time.”

All of the recipients and commissioners were uncertain as to whether a different training provider could have delivered the training, although different reasons were offered, these included: EPs’ knowledge base; familiarity with the school; understanding of SEN; linking with educational practice; familiarity with child’s needs.

The majority of the recipients did not think the training was distinct in terms of the delivery and thought that the training was well presented. Two of the recipients
within training group B felt that other providers could have delivered the training in terms of the dissemination the information from the PowerPoint slides. However one thought no other provider would have the knowledge of the topic area and another recipient felt the specialist knowledge and training was unique to EPs. It was commented on by several recipients and all commissioners that the EP’s knowledge base would be different from that of other professionals or training providers.

**EYR1:** “I don’t think I would’ve got the full picture. Because EPs are part of all that, with the statementing and funding and all that, and what they know about the children. And if someone did the training who was away from that role, it would have just been recited out of the book really wouldn’t it? Not from personal experience.”

A commissioner felt that another training provider would not have had the EP’s local knowledge of the school. It was felt that another training provider would have had a generic training package and it would not have been individualised to their particular school context.

**PTC:** “The context of the school you’re working in and the context of the child that you’re working with isn’t the same as even the school down the road and I think what the EP brings is the knowledge of our school and children and our staff.”

Two other recipients felt that it was how the EP facilitated the training that made it distinct:

**WMR2:** “Well, I’m sure anybody could be able to teach that, but I suppose, well no actually, because we were able to have discussions and he was moving around and speaking to us and giving us cues and making us think, and having us elaborate on our ideas, and think a little bit deeper about the children that we have in our class. It was key then actually, that an EP did it. I suppose it’s all well and good picking up a script and been able to teach it, but it’s like I said, it’s those cue questions, asking somebody’s advice. I guess it was to get us to think a little bit deeper.”

**EYR2:** “It was prescribed but any time they sort of said before we started if we wanted to ask questions, feel free to ask questions at any time, and several of us
did. And then again they said if you didn’t understand what we’re saying or where we’re coming from, then we will try and explain it in a different way. So in that way it was it was done differently, and the training went away from the handouts at times, when people asked different questions, or wanted to know a bit more.”

The consultation skills of the EPs appeared to be utilised within the training and the EPs’ ability to navigate the training in response to the recipients’ questions appeared to be of importance to some recipients.

4.6.3 Theme Three: EP-School Relationship

An important theme highlighted seemed to be very much about the EP-school relationships. For training that was undertaken within a school, the value of the EP-school relationship was highlighted as being significant. All focus group members of training event A and C, commented on the usefulness of the EP being familiar with their school, in terms of local knowledge of the children, school and individual staff and how comfortable the recipients felt within the training.

All of the recipients from both school-based training events felt that the relationship the EP had with the school was important, and made all of training group A feel more comfortable within the training.

PTR1: “Yeah, she’s used to our faces and in a way that helped her to be more relaxed, because she was really relaxed, which helps you become more relaxed.”

Several recipients of both school base training events felt the EP’s familiarity with the school enabled the EP to develop the training to meet the needs of the group.

PTR3: “Yes, because she was able to pitch it at us, knowing the children we work with normally on a daily or two to three times a week basis and then she was able to be really sure that this was going to happen.”

PTR1: “Yes, it was more personal and more directed to what our needs were, so if people did ask a question, those questions were answered.”

This was also corroborated by the training evaluation form for training event A. This also highlighted that the needs of the individual members of the training group had been considered:
PTCE: “Difficult areas of the teaching where delivered with sensitivity and thought about each adult’s needs, which gave everyone the confidence to attempt the work.”

The group composition was also seen as important to training group A. Several recipients felt that the EP focused it to meet their needs as TAs rather than to meet the needs of a generic group.

PTR2: “It was our needs, rather than the teachers.”

The composition was also seen as important in terms of the ease in which they could approach the EP. This was also seen to be facilitated by the EP’s familiarity within the school.

PTR4: “I think the fact it was to a smaller group out because we said we’re a team that is school-based, and it was done at school, in your own environment, with our own colleagues with us. [The EP] has been in our school loads of times, so it was a familiar face. You don’t hesitate to ask questions, if there was something that was going to bother you. Whereas the last training I did, it was a big room. You’ve got teachers and TAs and trying to get our point across can be quite difficult even if you put your hand up you are not always seen or heard, and sometimes things go off on a tangent somewhere else, because someone else will be bringing in a problem they’ve got at their school, and want them to pinpoint their problems rather than generalising for everybody.”

PTR5: “I thought what [another focus group member] was saying... sometimes you go on a course and there are teachers, and sometimes you might feel a little bit intimidated when you put your hand up, but [the EP] didn’t make us feel that way.”

Two other recipients felt that the relationship the EP had with school gave the EP an awareness of the demands being placed on them, consequently relieving some of their job stresses.

PTR4: “That was a benefit from the whole thing, because she made our job a lot easier to implement and put it together. She’d done the work for us. She knew how busy we were.”
Two recipients felt that the relationship the EP had with the SENCo helped with the longevity of the training in terms of the SENCo trusting the EP and seeing value in the intervention.

**PTR2:** “Yeah, and I think the fact she had a connection with [the SENCo], and [the SENCo] was behind it as well. I think someone just coming in and having no connection with the school wouldn't have been a good idea. Because of that connection we can continue with it.”

**PTR3:** “I think without [the SENCo] being connected to her it wouldn't have worked.”

One recipient felt that there was a helpful balance between being familiar with the school and being positioned externally from the school. It appeared the EP’s position as peripatetic professional ignited an interest in the training that may have not been there if the training was internal.

**WMR2:** “It was good as well, because he knows some of the children, he knows some of the staff, and I think that helped because there is a relationship there. It sometimes helps, it takes somebody who is in a different position to come in, to switch on to that person.”

Because of the working relationship the EP had with the school, the school-based commissioner of training group A, considered the EP to have a vested interest in the training.

**PTC:** “I think because she works in the school as well and she sees some of our children and she's a familiar face and she's not an outsider coming in. So yeah people are generally more comfortable with being trained from someone who is semi-familiar if that makes sense. And also they know she's got a vested interest in the school and it's not someone just being paid and leaving again, it could be a lot about that actually. That we can trust she has our interest at the forefront.”

The other SENCo who commissioned the training also felt that the EP had a useful role within the school, and how the EP’s relationship with the school could help in developing practice further during subsequent EP visits to the school. The
commissioner felt it was the EP’s continued involvement after the training had been undertaken that could help with the longevity.

**WMC:** “And now [the EP] is coming to see a little boy tomorrow, and we’re going, “this little boy has got working memory problems, tell us what we’re going to do”, and that’s the good part, that it isn’t [the EP] coming and doing the training and we’re never going to see him again. He is part of the extended school, and when he comes in now to see individual children, we can relate that back [to the training] and talk it through.”

The commissioner explained how she appreciated the EP’s active role within the school in terms of identifying need and offering support and considered the EP as a valued member of the school team.

**PTC:** “I think in the past paediatricians stay in their paediatric roots and never venture into the school.... and they might dib in or dab in for the occasional meeting, never really see the children, unless the statement is going through, almost impersonal like the other agencies, [Autism Spectrum Disorder] ASD, behaviour support, learning support. And [the EP] has broken the mould really, right from day one when she came, it’s been about, what does this school need? What do these children need? What does this staff need? How are we going to support that? And she’s offered, rather than us not really knowing what we’re asking for.”

### 4.6.4 Theme Four: Linking with Practice

The majority of the recipients and all of the commissioners felt that a valuable aspect of the training was how it linked with their practice.

**EYR2:** “The training, it helped link with your work and you think, “Oh yeah, it helped, that links in with that.”

**PTR4:** “We could see ourselves sitting down with a child and doing that.”

**EYR1:** “Not that I saw it [theory and practice] separately before, but it helped to bring those aspects together.”

One recipient explained how she felt it was part of the EP role to relate SEN to school practice:
WMR1: “Their role [the EP] encompasses making a link between children with specific needs and how you can support them in school.”

Another recipient highlighted that they not only valued the theoretical underpinnings the training offered, but also how it connected to their practice. It appeared that this helped address the child’s needs and individual needs too.

WMR2: “There was a lightbulb moment, because it was like “Wow, that’s why he’s struggling”, and I think it was so important to understand the reasons why. So like I said I understood what it was, how to then relate that back to my practice. Both were fundamental in my work.”

A commissioner reported how the evaluation forms highlighted that the recipients’ considered the training to relate to their practice.

EYC: “[The EP] and I do evaluations with the cohorts, and I think what comes back is, is a different way of working. They can all see how it applies to what they do now.”

4.6.5 Theme Five: Consultation Skills

As touched upon with section 4.6.2, several recipients commented upon the specific facilitation skills that the EP utilised, these appeared to be consultation skills, such as collaborative problem solving, questioning and eliciting ideas from the recipients. As two recipients explained:

WMR1: “There was a lot of time for group discussion and relating it to your own practice, and it wasn’t just him saying I’m going to speak at you for an hour and a bit. He did give us a chance to look at practical situations, so it was a nice varied mix. He came round and had a chat with each group, so it wasn’t just like “you do that and we’ll feedback together”, he came round and gave ideas and shared back and it was good to be able to have those discussions.”

EYR2: “That’s what I would say I enjoyed about it more, when they brought our skills and experiences out, and built on that.... and did the workshops, and the case studies, and you are able to talk in groups about different experiences.”
4.6.6 Theme Six: Instilling Confidence

All recipients highlighted that the training instilled confidence in a variety of ways, these included: delivering an intervention; understanding the theory; supporting children; working with families; working with other professionals; readiness to learn within the training.

All recipients who were trained in a specific intervention commented that they felt confident in using the tool and strategies after the training ended.

EYR3: “I feel confident to use it, if the opportunity arose.”

PTR5: “Yes, it empowered us to know what to do next.”

All recipients commented on how the training had impacted upon their practice, in terms of knowledge base of subject area, self-efficacy of using an intervention and confidence. Within training group A, it appeared that the confidence and self-efficacy they had with using the intervention increased their motivation and enthusiasm to try it out within their practice.

PTR2: “I did feel quite confident leaving the training, and think, this is something I can pick up now and run with.”

R: “Was that how others felt?”

ALL: “Yeah.”

PTR1: “Yeah, we all pretty much got started straight away.”

PTR3: “Yeah, we did.”

PTR2: “Yeah, we were all eager to have a go.”

PTR4: “Yeah, even the ones that were doubtful still had a go.”

PTR1: “Yeah, we wanted to make it work.”

The commissioner of training group A reported that she felt the recipients’ self-efficacy had increased and that they felt empowered to implement the training within their practice. The commissioner described how the EP supported the recipients during difficult parts of the training to ensure they were confident in its application.
PTC: “[The EP] kind of built it up, because there’s a little bit of graph work involved which some people get a bit nervous about, and she warned them at the beginning that was going to happen, but she really gradually built up to it, so by the time she got to that point everyone felt so in control about the knowledge that she’d given them, the graph was no problem because they were ready.”

PTC: “I think that was really empowering, they were really invigorated, they really wanted to get to grips with it.”

Another commissioner highlighted how staff felt confident in identifying children’s needs and how to support them:

WMC: “Now we’ve understood that, and identified the children, now we need to plan, what we are now going to do for those children that’s different. It was definitely a worthwhile piece of training, some staff who I have managed to speak to have said how much the training has made them think about the children with those types of difficulties in their class. If we hadn’t have done it [the training], then those children’s needs wouldn’t have been recognised. The staff, well the ones I spoke to, have certainly said they are more aware and confident in how to identify and support those needs.”

The follow-up evaluation form from a commissioner also reported how the training had impacted upon the recipients’ self-efficacy in relation to their newly acquired skills.

PTCE: “Since the training, many of the TAs have spoken to me about how highly they regarded [the EP’s] input, and how effective they believe their new skills will be.”

Similarly a recipient also felt the EP had got them emotionally ready to learn and described how she now felt confident with sharing the newly acquired information with colleagues:

EYR1: “It got to me to stage where I felt confident and comfortable to learn.”

EYR1: “Because in the centre we take a lead on different things and this is what I wanted to do anyway, before colleagues were coming to me but I feel now, I don’t have to Google everything, I feel confident in telling them.”
The experiential activities were considered useful in terms of practising new activities and utilising the new skills, which in turn instilled confidence to make use of them within their practice:

**PTR3:** “I made a mistake on my graph, I ended up having a laugh about it with [the EP] but then it made me think when I went, I know exactly how to do it because I’ve made that mistake.”

**PTR4:** “I think when you first use it it’s just getting used to it. I think when I first looked at the chart I was overwhelmed with it and thinking oh gosh, but I think using it really helped me work out what it meant and what I needed to do.”

**EYR2:** “Personally I like the hands-on bit. They bought some toys in and we had to put them in age appropriate order, and that was a good exercise because it’s visual and tactile... I enjoy anything like that, but that’s mainly it’s just different styles, people have different styles of learning. I suppose I can see myself doing that on homevisits, now I know a bit more about it.”

### 4.6.7 Theme Seven: Training Delivery

The way in which the training was delivered was discussed by all recipients and commissioners and, as highlighted within section 4.6.2, whilst some recipients felt the training was distinct in terms of the psychological knowledge content and how the training was facilitated, the majority of the recipients commented on the generic training delivery, and although they did not think the way in which training delivered was distinct to EPs, the delivery of the training was valued in terms of how it was presented, paced and met recipients’ needs.

One recipient described how the training was broken down and delivered at an appropriate pace:

**EYR1:** “Yes, and I think [the training] was just like the way precision teaching is, it was broken down into tiny steps, although it seemed a lot with the folder and that, but it was broken down, so it was just enough, at the right time to take in.”

Another recipient felt that it was paced well and the EP endeavoured to ensure that all recipients had understood the training.
WMR2: “I think the way that it was presented was really good, because it was really concise and very, it was at a decent pace but at each point before we moved on and he would say, “Are you all with us?” And we were able to say yes or no.”

Another recipient described the different activities that were used within the training and highlighted that group activities and feedback sessions were beneficial as a way for the recipients to learn from each other.

EYR2: “We did use a whiteboard quite a lot, there were exercises that we had to do which were quite good, and then we did those in groups or pairs and then we came together and shared what we did. Sometimes we would have individual situations, where we’d actually do a case study and say “what would you do if..?” and then you came back and discuss it and people said “I wouldn’t do it that way”, which you want because that’s what it’s all about really, and why wouldn’t you do that and that’s how you learn from one another as well. That was useful.”

It appeared that a didactic format was incorporated within all of the training events. Within the evaluation forms for the EY training, most reported that the parts of the training where it focused more on the dissemination of information were the least enjoyable parts of the training. This was corroborated by both of the EY recipients interviewed.

A commissioner who attended the training described how different teaching strategies were used:

PTC: “I don’t know whether [the EP] realises that they used a lot of different teaching methods so it’s accessible to everyone.”

A useful aspect of the training event A was that the intervention was demonstrated and practised until everyone was comfortable and confident in undertaking it.

PTR1: “Well she demonstrated everything.”

PTR5: “Yes, she took it our pace.”

Another recipient commented on how the EP was able to elicit the recipients’ knowledge base which enabled them to scaffold their learning:
EYR2: “They brought a lot, obviously their experience of what they’ve done over the years and they were sort of trying to bring out of us, like you said what we expected and what knowledge we’ve got and tried to bridge that gap so we could all learn, and of course we’re not going to become EPs overnight, but at least we got to do the training.”

Two commissioners felt that the training was delivered in a way that provided recipients’ with the knowledge and strategies that would enable them to use the training within their practice. As one explained:

PTC: “It was just done in a really succinct, carefully planned way, and everyone left at the end of the day knowing the psychology behind what they were doing, the child they were going to choose, how they were going to do it, how it was then be tracked right, why it was going to be tracked, the positives for everyone and the knowledge in that it’s okay to get it wrong is not about flying with it by Monday morning and it was a learning process and EP very much came from that point of view, that it was a learning process, it is okay to get it wrong and we’re able to rectify that and move on from it.”

The third commissioner felt the training had given them the knowledge around working memory and how to identify children with working memory difficulties but felt that a further follow-up training session would be beneficial to problem solve further. The barrier to investing more within training appeared to be around the amount of traded time they had left for the EPS and competing priorities for utilising the EP within the school.

WMC: “At the beginning of the year, [the EP] came into plan how it was going to be, and we sat down to plan and at that point we had some really high profile children coming into school, and really they took priority over everything else, over all our training needs and all our low-level needs. I needed [the EP] in place for the children with very complex needs, and I needed their support with that really, and that’s what their time was taken up doing. It was who comes in, and where you are at as a school, and where your priorities go.”
4.6.8 Theme Eight: The EP’s Strategic Position

For one commissioner the strategic position of one EP was considered the most valuable role they played, in terms of planning the training and navigating the trainings sustainability.

**EYC**: Yes [the EP] has played a key role to strategically, [the EP] has always been part of the strategic elements of that and making decisions about deciding where to go and her views have been really valued. It’s not about, “this is where we are going now [EP]”, it’s about where she thinks we should go, she certainly played a key role in this.”

Whilst another commissioner felt that the EP was attempting to do this during the current training but this had not been undertaken. The commissioner commented on how the training experience had helped them see value in considering training more strategically and contemplated how further training would be planned collaboratively with the EP.

**WMC**: “I guess I think [the EP] was trying to do that with [the training] because [the EP] was asking about our feedback, about how we were getting on. But staff meetings are precious, I guess now I’ve gone through this experience and we’ve had this training, at the beginning of the next academic year when I’m with the EP, I would say “let’s have a look about what we can do”, instead of doing two different things perhaps do one meeting and then a follow-up meeting of how that’s going to impacts on us, and then at that next meeting we could come ready. I guess to the first meeting, we could come ready with “we’ve got these children and we think these are the problem”, these are the kind of things and then [the EP] could go away and we could go away and have a think about it, and then do a bit of working time together, and then action afterwards really.”

Recipients of training event B were also aware of what the training encompassed:

**EYR1**: “So the plan was then to go away and shadow, to consolidate what you’ve learnt and put it into practice.”

Whilst the training was considered more than just a standalone event, and follow-up sessions and shadowing opportunities were highlighted as potentially useful activities.
to gain experience of the training, there was some concern that this would not happen:

**EYR2:** “Well there hasn’t been an opportunity, this was a consensus amongst the group, we did a bit of an evaluation, we enjoyed the training now we’ve got it, we’ve all got to use it, because if you don’t use it, you forget it. So [the EP] did say we will do a one day refresher so whether that will happen or not remains to be seen, we’ll just see. I do know that our children’s centre is starting to do a weekly or monthly portage meeting and I’ll need to follow that through, to see what they’re doing with that. As to whether there’s going to be cases that come forward for shadowing opportunities because that’s the next step. That will help next.”

### 4.6.9 Theme Nine: Interpersonal and Communication Skills

The interpersonal and communication skills were seen to be valued by the all the recipients and the two commissioners who undertook the training. One commissioner highlighted how crucial the communication was between the EP and themselves.

**PTC:** “The communication between myself and EP was absolutely vital.... that’s really what made it happen.”

This was also evident from the evaluation they completed:

**PTCE:** “The communication with [the EP], both before and during the training, ensured that the delivery of the content was to the highest level.”

Another recipient described how the psychological knowledge of the psychologist was distinct and how they were able to effectively communicate the information so it was understood.

**R:** “So if another trainer did the training and not an EP, do you think there would have been any difference that you would have noticed?”

**EYR1:** “Yes possibly, because I think the way the course was delivered was to come across to get into your head as opposed to... if someone had come in who wasn’t trained in that respect, because obviously someone who has got the [EP]
training knows more about what they're trying to say, and when you're talking about your brain and development they [EPs] have got the knowledge.”

R: “So when you said about getting into your head, what did you mean by that?”

EYR1: “I think they can explain what’s going off [in your head] far more, because they are trained as a psychologist, rather than someone who is trained in something else.”

R: “So do you think it was something about their role as a psychologist?”

EYR1: “Yes, I think so, I think it’s the training that they’ve done, and they can put it into terms for us to understand.”

R: “So is it about being able to translate it into something that we can understand?”

EYR1: “Yes I think so, they were able to say it so we could understand, because as I said we’re not an expert in that, they are. And that is what they can do, so it was about the brain, and the psychology knowledge.”

Being able to effectively communicate psychological knowledge was also echoed by several other recipients and both commissioners who attended the training.

PTC: “The way that she communicated the psychology behind what she was doing, what she was trying to explain was very people friendly and very man on the street psychology, very accessible.”

WMC: “There was a lot around the technical bit and identifying [needs], and that was presented in a way, I think, everyone could understand.”

WMR1: “I managed to follow what he was saying, and he was able to tell us about what WM was in an accessible way.”

The interpersonal skills were also valued and an important part of the training. A commissioner felt the personable approach the EP had appeared to alleviate any preconceived ideas the recipients had about psychologists and made them feel comfortable within the training:

PTC: “Well, this going to sound ridiculous, she’s just one of us. I think people can get quite scared about psychologists being in the room, and can have
preconceived ideas about how they’re going to be judged, or how their difficulties might be recognised and thrown into the open forum. Our EP is not like that at all, she wants the best for the kids and that means she wants the best for the adults. She’s just a friendly person, they felt they could approach her and they can ask questions and if they don’t understand, it was okay if they didn’t understand it.”

Another recipient felt the EP had made the training comfortable:

**EYR1:** “There was comfortability [sic] in that training, and the EP made that.”

Several recipients also commented on the approachability of the EP and how this positively impacted the interactive nature of the training.

**EYR2:** “They made you feel relaxed, obviously they were there to teach you but it wasn’t a question of, them and us, we were all made to feel we all had enough with it as well which is good.”

**PTR1:** “And she was really approachable, she made us feel at ease didn’t she?”

**PTR2:** “She was so user-friendly.”

**WMR1:** “I didn’t know anything about WM, so it was good that [the EP] was approachable, and I felt I could ask him about things I wasn’t sure about.”

**EYR1:** “The EP made you feel there was no right or wrong answers so you didn’t feel “I daren’t say that, or I can’t comment on that.”

It appeared that the informal and friendly approach the EP took, worked for all the recipients.

**WMR2:** “It was nice that it was as informal as he had it, because it is often the case that someone stands in front of you with the suit on, but it was very much like, “okay, I’m a colleague here and we’re just going to discuss”, and that worked really well for us.”

**4.6.10 Theme Ten: Outcomes and Impact**

As seen throughout all the themes, all of the recipients and commissioners saw a range of positive outcomes and value from the training, which included: outcomes for children; identifying children with particular needs; building capacity of staff;
acquiring new knowledge; developing confidence in new areas and interventions; impact on practice.

All recipients of the training highlighted that the main value of the training was that it helped them within their practice in a variety of ways; evidencing child’s progress; supporting child progress; building staff capacity to work with children; adapting practice to meet the needs of children.

Several recipients spoke about how the training has impacted upon their practice:

**WMR1:** “I can modify my practice when necessary, and not always assume like I said before, that a child is just being very despondent and not bothered, when in actual fact it could be something else that’s causing them to appear like that.”

**WMR2:** “I wanted to get an awareness of the mechanics of working memory and how it works, that kind of theory behind it and mainly think of strategies that I could use to help child in my class, so yeah, that was what I got from it, yes.”

Another recipient discussed how useful the tool was for monitoring children’s progress:

**PTR2:** “Yeah it gave me an overview of the progression, because often when you do things on a day-to-day basis, you don’t always notice that at a glance, until you’ve looked through your notes and records, but this was really handy, because it’s just looking to see if that child is making progress.”

Other recipients spoke about how they were utilising their newly acquired skills. Training group A were enthused and offered examples of how they have used it and the positive outcomes it had had for the children they work with. Four recipients discussed how they had seen the impact on a child’s progress, as these examples show:

**PTR2:** “[The child] is working on sounds with me, so I’ve been able to make a sheet and I’ve been working on that, and [the child’s] really shown signs of improvement.”

**PTR5:** “Yeah, like the boy who I chose had difficulty with letter-sound correspondence and I set to work straight away with him. I gave me a little bit of
motivation to go away and try something a bit different. It was great for him and me to see the graph go up.”

PTR3: “Like yesterday’s speech therapist came in so I was able to explain it to her, to show her information that I had gathered, so she's ready to move on to a different sound, you could see from the progression that she is making, but she’s ready.”

Another recipient talked about how the training has built their capacity and helped them identify children’s needs:

WMR2: “I think the training has helped me, it adds another string to your bow, it’s like if you have any child with a specific need, that you’re unsure of, it’s quite nice then to actually say, “Well hang on there, maybe it’s this and these are the signs”."

A recipient also spoke about how the training had supported their work with parents:

EYR1: “For instance, if there is an angry parent like I was a few years ago now, and I can say now, “Well this is why this happens”, and “This is why that happens”, and “Let’s look at this”, and “Let’s do this”.”

One commissioner spoke about how the training had impacted upon the member’s practice:

WMC: “We’ve got some staff that are excelling in the training, they've gone, they've been mentored and then now running their own cases.”

Another commissioner commented on how the training had built the capacity of not just the individual staff but the service as a whole:

EYC: “We’ve got people who were developing into portage workers and we’ve got more people that can offer shadowing, and that’s how I see how it needs to grow and that the strength into our service. To say within our service we’ve got a strong skills set that allows us to support children and families and disabilities under five before they even get to school.”
All of commissioners felt that the training had impacted upon their practice in terms of: supporting the development of staff; planning future training; utilising training within their practice.

**EYC:** “Well it has helped me widen my skills as a manager.”

**PTC:** “I’ve had five review meetings since the training and the training has come up in each of those reviews already.”

Two commissioners commented on how they are sustaining the training within their service:

**PTC:** “I keep jigging them along, so we can see what happens and seeing how it’s working.”

As highlighted with section 4.6.9, whilst the third commissioner discussed how she had learnt from the training experience and how it has impacted upon future training she will undertake.

Two of the commissioners discussed the importance of the outcome of success and both discussed how this is being evaluated. One commissioner described how the evaluation intended to measure not only the children’s progress but also they wanted to consider the outcomes for the staff and any logistical concerns that may have arisen.

**PTC:** “It’s got to be valued, absolutely, and there has got be a measurable outcome. If you’re going to invest several hundred pounds, and people’s time, and half an INSET day, there has got to be a measurable outcome of success... What we’re going to do is measure the impact on the TAs, because before I go on maternity leave, there’s going to be a finite amount of time, and children don’t make huge changes in that period. Whereas adults can feel more skilled up within that time. So initially it’s looking at the TAs’ skill base and how confident they are with delivering it’s, any glitches we’ve got, any problems, how we can move forwards and looking at the impact of the child is going to be much more long-term.”

An interesting outcome of the interview and focus group process resulted in commissioners and recipients reflecting on how the training affected their practice
and what the next steps might be. It appeared that this may have led to some changes to subsequent practice. One commissioner commented that she appreciated the time for “professional dialogue” and considered the interview as a productive and reflective experience. As highlighted within section 4.6.8, a commissioner considered how she would like to move forward in relation to the training and how she would like to plan future training.

It appeared the focus group recipients also benefited from time for reflection. The commissioner of training event A contacted the researcher after the focus group to inform her of the progress. Following the focus group the recipients contacted the SENCo and asked for a staff meeting to be organised for them to share their experiences with class teachers and to consider the logistics of delivery. It appeared the very nature of the post-training reviews could be seen as an important step in the training process.

The recipients and commissioners referred to the training event as an opportunity to increase their knowledge base and develop a new skill. Furthermore many felt that it had increased their capacity to work in a new way and increased their confidence within their practice. All commissioners reported they would commission the EPS to deliver further training, although all cited the costing implications to be a concern.
4.7 Summary of Results

This section will give a brief summary of the themes generated for each research question. With reference to previous research and literature the research questions will be discussed in detail within the following chapter.

4.7.1 Research Question One

What are the key operational and strategic factors for EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in children services?

There appeared to be two competing priorities that ran throughout the PEP interview. As discussed within the PEP interview, the PEP had both an active EP role and a managerial position within the EPS. This highlighted competing demands and priorities between the two roles and consequently led to a range of strategic and operational considerations for the EPS in delivering training. The data yielded seven major themes for RQ1. These were:

- **Building Capacity:** A driving force for the EPS in delivering training was to ensure that services within the LA built the capacity of their staff to meet the needs of children and to ensure equitable services for families regardless of their geographical location.

- **EPs’ Valuable Contribution:** A significant contribution that the PEP felt EP trainers could offer was their knowledge and expertise in relation to psychological theories, children’s needs, learning and being able to link this with a particular school’s needs and systems.

- **Local Knowledge:** A crucial strategic factor in delivering training was the EPs’ local knowledge of schools. This was in relation to their knowledge of schools and linking this with practice; EP-school relationships, in terms of SMT, staff and children; identifying and responding to needs, in terms of staff and children. The EP’s positioning within school was seen to facilitate their ability to identify and undertake training within schools.

- **Centralised versus Bespoke Training:** The PEP’s competing priorities were highlighted significantly within this theme and there was ongoing dialogue
about how the service developed their training arm of the service, in terms of delivering centralised training and bespoke training to services.

**Holistic View of Training:** A factor when undertaking training was how it was going to be implemented and sustained. Having a holistic longer term view of training rather than as a standalone event was seen to be of importance for the sustainability.

**Marketing:** Whilst the EPS did not appear to have a clear strategic plan of how they were to market training, the PEP felt that a significant amount of training arose through EPs’ work within their link school and through word of mouth. There appeared to be a clear focus on identifying future training packages and the EPs finding their niche within the training market.

**Barriers:** Time and money were seen to be the significant barriers for the service in undertaking training.

4.7.2 **Research Question Two**

What do EP trainers identify as distinctive and valuable content and process elements within training?

**Application of Psychological and Skills:** A distinctive psychological knowledge base which EPs could draw from within training, enabled them to shape the planning, delivery and content of the training, enrich their responses within training and offer recipients a theoretical underpinning of the topic area. They were able to utilise the consultation skills, link their knowledge with education and practice and effectively communicate complex ideas.

**Local Knowledge:** This appeared to be particularly important for school-based training. All EPs utilised a range of local knowledge, including: schools’ systems; relationships and dynamics; knowledge of children’s and staff needs; political issues.

**Relationships:** This theme could be subdivided into the relationships EPs had with others and the importance EPs placed on understanding others’
relationships. This appeared to be linked with the previous theme of local knowledge and was fundamental in working effectively within these systems.

**Responding to Needs:** This theme appeared to be closely linked with local knowledge, in terms of how EPs’ local knowledge was utilised to respond to the needs of the following: service; school; staffing group; children.

**Identifying the Impetus for Change:** This theme linked closely with two other themes: Theoretical Underpinnings and Linking with Education. The idea was that it was important for the recipients to place value on the training, subsequently facilitating them to consider how this would benefit their practice.

**Wider View of Training:** There appeared to be dissonance between what EPs considered as idealistic ‘effective’ training and what the realistic view of the training was. All EPs considered effective training to include more than a standalone training event; this included coaching, shadowing opportunities, and follow-up sessions. The potential financial implications of viewing training as a holistic process was considered a barrier for undertaking such work and potentially impacting upon the sustainability of the training.

**Instilling Confidence:** In order for the recipients to utilise their training, EPs felt that they had to instil confidence in recipients in the subject they were delivering training on.

**SEN Knowledge:** This knowledge base was also considered a valuable contribution of EP trainers.

**Value of Teaching Experience:** Whilst it was considered that previous teaching experience was not a distinct contribution to EPs delivering training, it was considered helpful with generic presentation and teaching skills.
4.7.3 Research Question Three
What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

Theoretical Underpinnings: Both commissioners and recipients considered this to be a valuable contribution of EPs undertaking training. It appeared that the commissioners who undertook the training and several of the recipients considered that the theory gave them deeper understanding of the topic area and informed their practice.

EPs’ Knowledge, Experience and Skills: All recipients and commissioners highlighted that EPs’ knowledge, experience and skills were distinctive to the training, these included: child development; psychological knowledge; SEN; local knowledge; facilitation skills.

EP-School Relationship: This was a significant theme that was highlighted by all the school-based recipients and commissioners. The EP’s familiarity with the school was considered valuable, in terms of local knowledge of school, children and staff.

Instilling Confidence: All recipients commented on how the training instilled a level of confidence in several ways, these included: understanding the theory behind their practice; supporting children; working with families; readiness to learn within the training.

Training Delivery: Whilst the training was not distinct for most in how it was delivered in terms of presentation skills, many commented on the pace at which it was presented and others discussed how the content of the training was distinct to EPs.

The EP’s Strategic Position: This was most valued by the commissioners, especially when the EP had a specific and explicit strategic role within the planning and delivery of the training.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills: This was valued by all the recipients and both of the commissioners who undertook the training.
The EP’s ability to effectively communicate psychological knowledge was seen as really valuable.

**Outcomes and Impact:** The outcomes of the training were seen throughout all of the themes. These included: outcomes for children; identification of children’s needs; staff development; acquiring new knowledge; supporting children and impact on practice.
Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The aim of the study was to explore the EP’s distinct and valuable contribution as a trainer. This chapter considers the findings of the results and with reference to the existing literature, the results will be discussed. RQ 1 will be addressed first and then RQ 2 and RQ 3 will be discussed within the following section together. It was felt that similar themes emerged from the EP, commissioner and recipient interviews and recipient focus group and it was therefore considered useful to combine RQ 2 and RQ 3, so comparisons could be made and similarities and differences between themes could be addressed. The strengths and limitations of the research will then be considered. Finally recommendations that emerged from the findings and the wider implications of the study will be discussed.

The aim of the study was to address the following research questions:

RQ1 What are the key operational and strategic factors for EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in Children’s Services?

RQ2 What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?

RQ3 What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

An exploratory case study design was used to explore these questions with a PEP, and EPs, recipients and commissioners from three EPS training events in a Central England LA. In total sixteen people participated within the research, a PEP, three EPs who delivered the training, the three commissioners of the training and nine of the recipients of the training. For RQ 1, the UoA were: Strategic overview of EP training; Operational overview of EP training. For RQ 2, the UoA were: Experiences of training; Needs analysis of training; Content and process of the training; Evaluation and impact. The participants were all self-selecting. As described in section 3.4, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and a focus group and additional data from an observation, and analysis of training material and evaluations. As described in section 3.6, data were analysed using the thematic analysis procedure described by Braun & Clarke (2006).
5.2 RQ1 What are the key operational and strategic factors for EPS in delivering effective and distinctive training in Children’s Services?

These results predominantly derived from the PEP interviews. Additionally the EP interviews touched upon strategic considerations for delivering training therefore data from these were also incorporated within RQ 1. The data yielded seven themes which were: Building capacity; EPs’ Valuable Contribution; Local Knowledge; Centralised versus Bespoke Training; Holistic View of Training; Marketing; Barriers. It was interesting to note the PEP had two significant competing roles, 1) an active role as an EP and 2) a financial and strategic manager for the EPS. The responses given and subsequently the themes drawn from the interview highlighted the poignant competing demands and priorities between the two roles.

5.2.1 Context for EPs’ Role in Training

This section provides an overview of RQ 1 results and subsequent sections will focus more specifically on key themes arising from the data.

A significant rationale for EPs undertaking training was to skill up staff to meet the needs of children within the authority, rather than focus on individual casework. Strategically the PEP felt EPs were well placed to deliver training to a range of services, particularly schools, to build the capacity of staff (please refer to Building Capacity theme, section 4.3.1). This was to ensure greater consistency and equity in terms of service delivery that families could expect regardless of their geographical location within the area. Ultimately the EPS’s aim was to enhance outcomes for children, through strengthening the schools and other educational provisions’ capacity.

As highlighted within Farrell et al. (2006), a significant contribution EPs were able to offer was to work at a systemic level to increase the capacity of schools and other services which included in-service training. The current study appears to support this finding.

Arising from the EPs’ Valuable Contribution theme, section 4.3.2, a distinctive contribution that EP trainers could offer was seen to be their knowledge base, in terms of psychological knowledge, SEN and learning, which was linked with their local knowledge of the school or service. Strategically it was suggested that this enabled
them to offer valuable training within the LA. These elements will be considered in more detail in section 5.5, when RQ 2 and 3 are addressed.

In relation to school-based training, arising from the Local Knowledge theme, section 4.3.3, the EP’s local knowledge was considered a crucial strategic factor in undertaking training. This was in terms of the relationships EPs had developed within the school, which consequently led to the identification of gaps within the service and consequently their training needs. It was suggested the majority of the training needs evolved from individual casework of the EP, therefore directly relating to the children’s needs within the schools. The PEP considered this to be facilitated by the EP’s working knowledge of individual classrooms and schools systems (familiarity with the school), which enabled the training to be d penetrated within the school. Strategically the EPs’ relationships with the SMT and SENCo were considered important for training outcomes and sustainability. Highlighted within previous literature an effective way of achieving change for children is through the organisations and systems the child is part of (Stoker, 2000), and an important element of effecting change within organisations is through the consideration of other impeding factors such as social-cultural, relationships and values (Roffey, 2000). The PEP considered these to be significant elements of undertaking training.

In relation to the training that was undertaken within the children’s centre, local knowledge was still seen as valuable, as the EP had an understanding of the service and the political pressures that instigated the need for the training and was able to sensitively navigate the recipients’ training needs around this. As suggested by McCarthy (1992) and Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) an important consideration for undertaking training is an awareness of the political context surrounding the training.

The competing demands of the PEP’s dual role were illuminated significantly when discussing training opportunities within the service. Whilst the PEP considered individualised training to produce the best outcomes in terms of sustainability and outcomes for children; arising from the Centralised versus Bespoke theme, section 4.3.4, a training focus centred on developing centralised packages appeared to be the next strategic step for the EPS. It appeared the competing demands of training
delivery were heightened due to the financial pressures that had been placed on the service since the transition into traded services, where income generation targets were set for the service. As highlighted earlier, the PEP identified the EP’s local knowledge as a valuable contribution to the implementation, identification, effectiveness and sustainability of training, however considered centralised training to be most time efficient and economically viable for the service. The PEP acknowledged that there is a danger that centralised training could be seen as more of a lecture-seminar type experience that does not necessarily enable individual needs to be accounted for to the same extent as training which is bespoke and tailored to the individual school.

The dissonance between what training should be delivered within the EPS and how was also a concern for the EPs delivering training. In relation to the Holistic View of Training theme, all EPs considered training to encompass more than a standalone training event. Whilst the value of strategically planning and undertaking training over time, in terms of consideration into the need for follow up sessions and longer term project work was noted, there appeared to be a degree of uncertainty as to whether this could happen within the service model of delivery at a time of financial austerity. This was compounded by the competing demands placed upon the EPs by a school, and the fact that training needs were dependent upon the competing priorities the school was faced with, for example individual children’s needs were considered a priority over other needs, including staff training. Time and money were highlighted by all EPs and the PEP as a significant barrier for the delivery of training within the LA.

5.2.2 Current Economic Climate and Commercialisation of EP Services
It was not within the scope of the thesis to discuss each theme in detail therefore within this section a specific focus will be on themes that appeared most overarching in terms of significance for the service and the frequency the theme was observed within the data sets. This will include elements of: Barriers; Centralised versus Individualised Training; Holistic View of Training and Marketing.

All EPs and the PEP highlighted action research and longer term project work as an effective way of undertaking training and development. However the financial
climate appeared to be a potential barrier as to whether schools and other organisations would purchase this possibly more expensive service. It did not appear that project and development work were common practice within the service. Overall, it appeared that whilst the EPS considered bespoke individualised training to be a more effective training route in terms of best outcomes for children and services, this was marred by the economic viability and the uncertainty as to whether organisations would pay for the service. As suggested in Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) paper, longer-term project work and training appeared to be successful in sustaining longer term impact; however it was acknowledged that time was considered a significant barrier in undertaking such an activity.

The EPS appeared to be aware that strategic longer term planning needed to be considered, especially in light of traded services and how services can be marketed and training packages could be developed. This appeared to cause the main conflict in terms of how the EPS felt it needed to move forward. The competing demands of the practitioner versus financial manager were seen to be a real concern for both PEP and EPs, and it appeared that these competing priorities had yet not been reconciled.

Currently training appeared to be a response to individual school needs rather than a response to traded services, in terms of training providing a means for income generation, although there was evidence to suggest that this was at the forefront of the PEP’s mind, in terms of dialogue around centralised training and the development of packages. Arising from the Marketing theme, section 4.3.6, it appeared that the EPS had not developed a strategic plan in terms of how training would be marketed in addition to its current avenues of raising awareness of training: word of mouth and link EPs. The service appeared to be at the initial stages of identifying and developing further packages and an overt marketing strategy did not appear to have been considered at length or perhaps was not seen as a service priority.

There appeared to be a fundamental difference in terms of what EPs felt their distinctive contribution was, in terms of their role as trainer, and what EPs felt they needed to do, in terms of achieving income generation targets. Indeed the current financial climate and the service model of delivery was causing two of the EPs conflict.
in terms of what type of work they felt they should or could undertake. This view appeared to be extended to their EP role in general.

As recently as 2010, Pugh considered that EPSs within the UK have been somewhat sheltered from market pressures. Pugh (2010) suggested that to some degree the EPS is protected by its statutory function and has had the freedom to choose its preferred models of service delivery. Over the past two years, the UK has seen a surge in EPSs having to develop a traded services arm in order to generate income (DfE, 2011), forcing a significant number of EPSs into an unfamiliar territory of commercial marketing.

Despite these pressures, there did not yet appear to be specific strategic plan in relation to the EPS delivering training. This appeared to be undertaken at an individual EP level, in terms of identifying training needs within their own school, which was seen as an effective way to identify and market training. Corban (2011) explored EPs’ views of factors that influence job approbation, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction when working within a LA context. Within this study, EPs highlighted concerns regarding their need “to become more media savvy and to develop marketing, advertising and business skills” (p. 179). It was felt that not adapting to a more commercial model of delivery could jeopardise the profession.

On the contrary, within the current study an EP expressed concern about the notion first suggested by Miller (1969) of giving psychology away within this competitive climate. Similarly Corban (2011) suggests that this benevolence may present difficulties for the EP profession which is viewed by some as underselling itself. However as stipulated within the BPS, a central function of educational psychology is to “communicate psychological knowledge” (BPS, 2007, p. 5) and “develop and train the application of psychological skills, knowledge, practices and procedures” (BPS, 2007, p. 5). As discussed within section 4.6.9, a valued contribution within EP training was the effective and insightful communication of psychological knowledge that positively impacted upon recipients’ practice. Therefore the idea of giving psychology away in relation to utilising it to improve outcomes for children could be seen as fundamental to the EP’s role.
As a manager with financial responsibility for the EPS it was evident that there was a focus by the PEP on generating money by undertaking training. However this appeared to conflict with the PEP’s practitioner experiences highlighted within section 4.3.5, which indicated that a significant amount of training encompasses more than a just standalone training session and a wider view of training needs to be considered in terms of planning, delivery and follow up. This is corroborated with what Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006) identified as key features of effective training, as described in section 2.2. It appeared that in this instance competing demands have impacted upon the strategic decisions around what type of training the service will market. Fundamentally training was seen to evolve from the needs of the individual school. Therefore developing packages would be contradictory to what the PEP felt was currently working. A clear strategic emphasis for EPs undertaking training was their knowledge of individual schools’ needs. Therefore identifying the right type of training packages to develop, that were pertinent to a range of schools could be considered a difficult task.

As suggested by Fallon, Woods and Rooney (2010), with the relatively recent introduction of a traded model of service delivery that has a clear focus on offering value for money for public services, accountability for the outcomes of EPs’ work may be considered particularly significant. In the short term, impacts were highlighted throughout the recipient and commissioner interviews and focus group in relation to a range of outcomes, including: improving the outcomes for children; staff development; identifying the needs of children. However, only training group B and the commissioner of training group A were asked to complete evaluation forms. Furthermore the ability to undertake follow-up training sessions and planning for longer term impact was perceived by two EPs as marred by the current business model of service delivery and challenging financial climate.

5.3 Overview of RQ2: What do EP trainers identify as distinctive content and process elements within training?

These results predominantly derived from the EP interviews. Additionally the PEP interviews touched upon the distinctive elements of EP training therefore this was also incorporated within RQ 1. The data yielded eight themes which were:
Application of Psychological Knowledge and Skills; Local Knowledge; Relationships;
Responding to Needs; Identifying the Impetus for Change; Wider View of Training; Instilling Confidence; SEN Knowledge; The Value of Teaching Experience.

5.4 Overview of RQ3: What do commissioners and recipients of EP training identify and value about its distinctive content and process elements?

These results are derived from the commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group. The data yielded ten themes, which were: Theoretical Underpinnings; EPs’ Knowledge, Experience and Skills; EP-School Relationship; Linking with Practice; Consultation Skills; Instilling Confidence; Training Delivery; The EP’s Strategic Position; Interpersonal and Communication Skills; Outcomes and Impact.

5.5 RQ 2 and RQ 3: Similarities and Differences of what EP Trainers Identify, and what Commissioners and Recipients Identify and Value about the Distinctive Elements of EP Training

The findings from the EP interviews and the commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group revealed a number of similar themes. It should be noted that although the themes are similar in content, the theme titles are different across EP and commissioner and recipient interviews and focus group as the researcher wanted to stay true to the data. The similarities between what the EP trainers identified as distinctive and valuable elements within their training and what the commissioner and recipients identified as distinct or valuable were evident throughout the analysis. It therefore felt appropriate to integrate the findings, ensuring that any differences or conflicting themes are highlighted and addressed accordingly. This section will address both RQ 2 and RQ 3 and focus on the distinctive and valuable elements of EP training that were most widely reported within the findings from both RQs.

5.5.1 Psychological Knowledge and Skills

Arising from the Application of Psychological Knowledge and Skills theme (RQ2) and the EPs’ Knowledge, Experience and Skills theme (RQ3), the EPs, several recipients and all commissioners referred to EPs’ academic background and psychological knowledge base that enabled them to offer a distinctive contribution. The majority of recipients and commissioners of the training were able to identify one or more of the distinctive psychological functions outlined by the British Psychological Society as being utilised by EPs within their role as trainer. The functions of ‘Develop and Train
the Application of Psychological Skills, Knowledge, Practices and Procedures’ (BPS, 2007, p. 6) and ‘Communication of Psychological Knowledge, Principles, Methods or Needs, and their Implications for Policy’ (BPS, 2007, p. 5) were the most commonly identified functions. Fundamentally it appeared that all EPs and commissioners and several recipients considered the EP’s distinctive contribution to training was the application and utilisation of psychological knowledge and skills. This is supported within academic literature, as Frederickson and Miller (2008) suggest a central contribution and function of EPs is drawing upon and applying psychological knowledge and skills. Within this study, it was evident that the EPs utilised psychological knowledge and skills to shape the training in terms of planning, content and delivery. The EP’s ability to effectively communicate psychological principles was also identified as a valued EP skill for commissioners and recipients.

5.5.2 Key Features of Effective Training

Knowledge of psychological theories appeared to underpin the planning and delivery of the training. All EPs considered scaffolding the recipients’ learning as an important part of the training, and one EP commented on how their knowledge of learning styles ensured they utilised a range of activities and incorporated recipients’ varied learning styles. These elements of the training were also identified and valued by the recipients of the training. The elements included within the three training events, were exploration of theory, experiential learning through coaching, modelling and scaffolding, shadowing and feedback, follow-up sessions, problem-solving and experiential activities. As suggested within the literature, these features are considered important for effective training (Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006; Guskey, 2000; Joyce & Shower, 2002; Kealey, Peterson, Gaul & Dinh, 2000; Lyon, Wiltsey-Stirman, Kerns & Bruns, 2011).

However, a considerable amount of the training also included a didactic format and two out of the three training events were single-sessions. Consistent findings suggest that these methods are the most ineffective methods of effecting change within practice (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005; Grimshaw et al., 2001; Guskey, 2000; Hoge & Morris, 2004; Joyce & Showers, 2002; Speck 1996). Whilst the EPs appeared to have an awareness of the features of effective training through their discussions around strategic planning, as acknowledged by one EP (please refer to
section 4.4.6), it is unclear as to whether this knowledge was translated within their practice. This could be compounded by the current austerity measures and EPs’ uncertainty of how to navigate their practice within a traded model of delivery.

5.5.3 Enriching Responses
A distinctive contribution that was identified by all EPs was their ability to enrich responses within the training delivery. It appeared that their deeper understanding of the topic area and their breadth of wider knowledge enabled them to adapt their responses to meet the needs of the individuals within the group in terms of drawing from a range of theories and topic areas to enhance their training delivery. Whilst it was acknowledged that the delivery of the training in terms of disseminating the information from a PowerPoint presentation could be delivered by other professionals, the ability to utilise the information flexibly and purposefully for the recipients was considered distinct. Similarly recipients considered that other training providers could have delivered the training in terms of disseminating the information from the PowerPoint and the majority felt that the delivery of the training was not distinct. Interestingly all of the recipients and commissioners were uncertain as to whether another training provider or professional group could have delivered the training, reasons included the EP’s knowledge base; relationship with school; local knowledge; familiarity with children’s needs within the school; ability to link psychology to educational practice; key role within educational services.

5.5.4 Theoretical Knowledge
Incorporating the theoretical knowledge within the training appeared to be a valued contribution which EPs considered to be critical for deeper level learning to occur. Marton and Saljo (1984) make an important distinction between deep and surface approaches to learning. Research suggests that information processed to a ‘deep’ level will be embedded more than if the information is processed to a ‘surface’ level (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Craik & Tulving, 1975). The EPs considered the recipients’ understanding underpinning theory and concepts and having appropriate background knowledge would enable them to utilise this within their practice. Biggs and Tang (2007) considered this to be important for deep level learning to occur and within an academic teaching context it is seen to produce higher quality learning
outcomes (Ramsden, 1993). Both commissioners who attended the training and several recipients highlighted the usefulness of the theoretical background and offered examples of how this had impacted upon their practice in terms of utilising interventions and working with children and their families.

5.5.5 Responding to Needs

Arising within Responding to Needs theme, section 4.4.4 and EPs’ Knowledge, Experience and Skills theme, section 4.6.2, and linking closely with the Local Knowledge theme, the EPs and the commissioners of the school-based training considered the impetus for the training came from the EP’s individual casework, which was subsequently linked to whole-school development. As stipulated within the SEN Code of Practice, “The educational psychologist can be a very important resource for the school. The psychologist’s knowledge of the school and its context is key.” (DfES, 2001, section 10.8). In line with the report on the role, good practice and future directions of educational psychology services (DfES, 2000), activities such as training are often triggered by individual casework. Within the current study it appeared having local knowledge enabled the commissioning service’s training needs to be identified. Highlighted within academic literature as being a contributing factor to the effectiveness of training, it is suggested that training should evolve from a need and be pertinent to practice (McCarthy, 1992; Rouse, 1991; Wright, 1990). Within the literature, the impetus for other school-based training has also evolved from local knowledge of the school (Murphy & Claridge, 2000).

The EP’s ability to respond to a range of needs was a significant theme throughout all of the interviews and focus group. These included: whole-school or service needs; individual recipient needs; children’s needs. All the recipients highlighted a value of the training was how the EP was able to respond to their needs. It was highlighted that the two school-based training events evolved from the children’s needs within the school. They were able to harness the training through the individual children’s needs and extend this to whole-school development, again highlighting the distinctive function of the EP’s local knowledge. The third training event came about through the recipients’ needs, subsequent to service restructuring. Whilst the
training needs were identified in different ways, a fundamental purpose of the training was to increase the capacity of staff to meet the needs of children.

As highlighted within the literature, Wright (1990) considers motivation to underpin the effectiveness of training and notes that people need a degree of choice to promote their intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Whilst none of the recipients were consulted about their training needs, lack of motivation or engagement within the training was not expressed. Perhaps school-based staff may have had an interest as the impetus for the training evolved directly from the children’s needs within the school. Two recipients from the centralised training reported to have requested to go to the training as they expressed an interest within the topic area, whilst all of the school-based training reported that the training was organised for them without prior knowledge.

As discussed within section 2.2.3, Wright (1990) distinguished between the different definitions of ‘needs’: real needs; felt needs; perceived needs. It appeared that the EP had to navigate between these different needs, and whilst it was evident that the fundamental purpose of the training was to ensure the needs of the children were met through building the capacity of the staff who work with them, the EPs appeared to successfully incorporate and respond to the recipients’ needs as well. It also appeared the EP’s knowledge of learning theories and psychological theories and paradigms meant they were sensitive to the recipients’ needs and responses within the training. Indeed all EPs felt a distinctive element of their training was their ability to respond to the recipients’ needs and allow the training to be shaped by their needs. This was also corroborated by the majority of recipients and the commissioners.

5.5.6 Linking Training to Practice

The ability to link the training to the recipients’ practice was considered a significant factor within the training for EPs, commissioners and recipients. Linking the psychology to educational practice was considered as invaluable. It appeared that this helped recipients make sense of the experiences in relation to real world events which were personal and pertinent to their practice. This supports Farrell et al.’s
findings that suggested TAs value training when it was connected to their practice.

Connecting the training to the recipients’ practice and making it meaningful for them was considered crucial by the EPs as it was seen as an impetus for recipients to make a change within their practice. The importance of the recipients placing value on the training was seen as vital; therefore certain elements of the training focused on this. Laying a psychological foundation at the initial stages of the training appeared to be something all EPs considered important. This was corroborated by the commissioners who attended the training and several recipients, who felt the psychological input gave them a grounding within the topic area. Interestingly the value of the psychological knowledge within the training for one group of recipients was acknowledged but not highlighted as significant. Within this particular group, the value was placed more so on the practical and useful aspects of the intervention itself. Interestingly, here the commissioner for the training considered the psychological grounding an important element for the recipients, as she felt it enabled the recipients to place value on the training.

5.5.7 Local Knowledge

The local knowledge of the schools and the relationships that had formed within the school were considered positive elements of the contribution EP trainers could offer. As Norwich (2000) purports “Educational psychology, in whatever theoretical stance it adopts, is about knowledge and understanding of individuals in educational relationships and contexts” (p. 15). The local knowledge of EPs in relation to children’s centres and Portage was also recognised within the non school-based training. Within the current study, the value of the individualised training within schools was considered significant for both EPs, recipients and commissioners of school-based training. Howard and Thatcher (1990) suggest that from the EP’s involvement in schools, they have an awareness of the demands and stresses of operating in a complex system such as a school. One recipient commented on how they valued the resources the EP had offered, as it was seen that the recipients’ work stresses were acknowledged and understood through the EP’s knowledge of their school. Other recipients expressed that the EP’s local knowledge of the school, staff
and children was paramount, which impacted upon the EP’s ability to plan the training to ensure its relevance and adapt delivery and content accordingly. The EP’s familiarity with the recipients enabled them to feel comfortable within the training.

The EP’s ability to respond to a range of needs appeared to be linked with their local knowledge of the school/service. The concept of ‘noticing and adjusting’ first suggested by the BPS (1999) and explored further by Barrett et al. (2000) referred to how teachers can notice children’s individual needs and adjust their teaching accordingly. The notion of ‘noticing and adjusting’ could be embedded within the EP’s valuable contribution as trainer. This could be considered at two levels. Firstly, the EP was able to ‘notice’ the children’s needs and through training, support the school to ‘adjust’ their practice. Secondly, within the training, the EPs suggested they were able to ‘notice’ the recipients’ needs and were able to ‘adjust’ their responses and the training process to meet the needs of the individual and/or group. The EP’s ability to respond to the needs of the recipients was highlighted as a valuable contribution by EPs themselves and the commissioners and recipients who attended the training.

5.5.8 Special Educational Needs

EPs were described as having a particularly distinctive understanding of the complexity of issues relevant to SEN. A long standing contribution of EPs is considered their involvement in and knowledge of SEN (Norwich, 2000). Within the current study, two of the EPs and commissioners, and several of the recipients considered the EP’s knowledge and experience of SEN and complex difficulties was a distinctive contribution. As previous literature suggests (e.g. Solity, 2000), EPs should be applying psychology within the classroom, through activities such as training to improve outcomes for all children.

5.5.9 EPs’ Process Skills

Highlighted within the literature it is suggested that more focus should be in how information is used and applied within a particular context (Frederickson, 1988; Fullan, 2004). It appeared that a consultation model was adopted within parts of all the training events. The value of this was reflected within the findings. Some recipients commented on the facilitative approaches utilised by the EP trainer, and referred to the usefulness of sharing information and ideas which facilitated their
widening knowledge base. The training events were seen as an open forum where ideas and experiences could be shared, and questions could be asked, which was seen to encourage active participation. A distinct contribution that was highlighted by all EPs was how they facilitated the training in terms of utilising consultation skills. Whilst some recipients acknowledged and valued these skills, it appeared that they were seen as more important to the EP than to the recipients. Woods (2011) suggests, EPs’ work often “involves soft skills of interpersonal facilitation and empowerment... but which may seem relatively invisible to others” (p. 20). However the EPs’ interpersonal and communication skills were highlighted by all the recipients and both commissioners who attended the training as an important element of the training. The EPs were thought to demonstrate good communication and interpersonal skills and were able to create an environment whereby recipients felt comfortable to ask questions and actively participate within the training and try out new skills. This closely linked with how confident some recipients felt when undertaking newly developed skills and interventions.

5.5.10 Wider View of Training

Arising from the Wider View of Training theme, the EPs considered themselves to have an understanding of the different elements that needed to be considered in order for training to be integrated into practice and sustained. The time and potential costing implications were cited by EPs as to why some of the key elements of effective training such as follow-up sessions were not being undertaken. As previous literature suggests, EPs are positioned to deliver training due to their understanding of not only psychological theories but because they are advocates of systemic change (Burden, 1982; Fox, 2009; Frederickson, 1990; Fullan, 2004; Gillham, 1978; Leadbetter, 2005; Noell & Gansle, 2009; Roffey, 2000; Stoker, 2000; Sutoris, 2000; Visser, 2004).

Interestingly when an EP had a strategic role within the training and longer term involvement was allowed, explicit dialogue about strategic considerations was had and was evident within the structure and planning of the training. For example coaching and shadowing sessions were included within a training event following a strategic meeting the EP had with the commissioner. The EP’s strategic positioning
and overview of the training was also valued by the commissioner. Another EP strategically planned the training and was able to link two separate training events together, with the hope that the initial training event would offer prerequisite knowledge for the second training event and would facilitate the implementation of an intervention within the school. Literature suggests that integrating new knowledge with schools can encounter a range of difficulties, one being the pragmatic and systemic challenges that can occur when implementing change (Noell & Gansle, 2009). Whilst some practical issues were addressed by the EP who had an explicit strategic role, literature suggests that strategic reviews and on-going consultation around these considerations is necessary (Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006) and that more focus should be on the process and logistical elements of the training rather than specific aims of the training (Roffey, 2000).

5.6 Impact of Research on Practice

The relationship between researcher and research participants impacted upon the outcome of the research and was constructed and shaped by their encounter. It is important to note that the very act of undertaking the case study may well have disrupted the case (Gillham, 2000). In this instance the process of interviewing may well have prompted participants to reflect on the situation and may have led to some changes to subsequent practice. This was highlighted by commissioners, EP trainers and recipients. All EPs reported that the interview itself had given them time to reflect on their role as a trainer, giving space to consider why and how they undertook the training and the perceived effectiveness and sustainability of it. Indeed one EP following the training intended on revisiting the school to consider ‘next steps’ and how the training had been implemented within practice. This had also been evident within two commissioners’ interviews and the recipient focus group and interviews. This supports research that suggests on-going consultation is a key element of effective training (Balchin, Randall & Turner, 2006; Joyce & Showers, 2002).

The recipients and commissioners referred to the training event as an opportunity to increase their knowledge base and develop a new skill. Furthermore many felt that it had increased their capacity to work in a new way and increased their confidence.
within their practice. All commissioners reported they would commission the EPS to deliver further training, although all cited the costing implications to be a concern.

5.7 Contribution to Knowledge

It is important to consider the strengths and limitations of the study and relevance of this research in building on the existing research literature. A review of earlier literature revealed that whilst one of the key roles of EPs was to undertake training, the EP’s role as a trainer within Children’s Services and its distinctive and valuable contribution had not been widely researched. This study therefore was able to explore the research area and offer a more detailed understanding of the EP’s valued and distinct contribution as trainers within one LA. It is acknowledged that it is difficult to generalise the results too widely. However, the study’s contribution to knowledge is highlighted and provides an insight: into the distinct and valued contributions EPs offer as trainers; of issues in the changing context of the EPS service delivery that may be relevant to other EPSs; and considerations for EPs when negotiating, planning and delivering training. The contribution to knowledge will be discussed further within section 5.10, where the implications of the research are addressed and recommendations shared.

5.8 Limitations of the Research

5.8.1 Transferability of Findings

As discussed within section 3.8, a critique of a single case study design is that it cannot be generalised to a wider population due to the idiosyncratic context and small sample of participants that was involved within the research. It is acknowledged that the data collected within this research are not free from researcher bias, and as Kvale (1996) suggests qualitative data can be interpreted in many different ways dependent upon who is interpreting. As discussed within section 3.2, the same event can be described and understood in a variety of ways and the researcher was mindful of how data were interpreted and findings presented as one reality of the socially constructed experiences of three training events.

Several factors were considered in relation to the degree to which the research could be seen as trustworthy. This prompted the use of the criteria set out within section 3.10, which considered the credibility, transferability, dependability and
confirmability of the research. A main limitation which is acknowledged within this study is the degree to which the results can be transferred to other contexts. The current research was undertaken within a large metropolitan borough within an EPS that was within its second year of marketing its psychological services. In order for this study to be useful to other EPSs, the contextual factors would need to be considered and differences between contexts should be explored. For example, another EPS may have a different model of service delivery or be at a different stage within a traded service model. Therefore different contexts could find different factors/characteristics of EPs delivering training. It is considered that the transferability of findings to another context and the relevance of this would need to be explored by the reader.

5.8.2 Self Selection
It is acknowledged that the selection of the training events was by no means random, being chosen by the EPs who delivered the training. It is possible that the EPs selected the training events that were considered positive and where there may be reason to believe that the commissioner and recipient responses would be more favourable. Therefore the training event selection may have resulted in a more positive view of EPs delivering training being reported than if the training events had been obtained through a completely random sample selection. Irrespective of the EP selecting the training event, the right to participate within the research is dependent upon the participant, and if a person had not wanted to participate they were able to decline involvement without any further commitment to the research.

5.9 Considerations for Future Research
The study was exploratory in nature and has identified distinct and valuable elements of EP training. In order to extend these findings and enable the study to be utilised within other EPSs across the UK, it would be interesting to consider if these experiences are similar within other LAs where EPs deliver training. This could include large scale questionnaires, focus groups and case studies within other LAs. With some EPSs within the UK changing their approach to service delivery, away from a traditional school link EP role, and moving towards community based services, it
would be interesting to consider how this may impact upon some of the valuable elements of EP training that have been identified within this study.

It is suggested that the guidelines set out within table 5.1 could form the elements of a working model for the delivery of training. Future research could draw upon this working model to support the delivery and evaluation of training and will enable professionals to refine the model presented. Another interesting piece of research could relate to incorporating the findings into practice. For example an action research project could be implemented with a school or service with a view to identifying training needs and delivering EP training. This could involve considering the distinct and valued elements identified in EP training, and exploring the longer term impact of the training. As the research was undertaken with training events that had only recently been delivered, the longer term impacts could not be considered. Therefore it could be interesting to consider the longer term impact of EP training and how the valuable aspects of the training supported the sustainability of the training.

5.10 Implications for Practice

Despite the limitations highlighted within section 5.8, there are potentially valuable and important implications and considerations for the Educational Psychology profession. The following recommendations are aimed at individual EP practice and service levels. The findings of this study could offer EPs and EPSs a greater awareness of the potential difficulties of undertaking training within a traded service model of delivery and factors to consider when delivering training to schools and other services.

5.10.1 Ethical Implications of Training within a Traded Services Model

An important issue that emerged from the findings was the dissonance between what services some EPs thought they should be providing, and what they felt they could provide within the traded service model of delivery. Inevitably the challenges of the commissioning era for EP services will influence EPs’ professional identity and
| **Responding to Needs** | · Training needs are identified through for example: EP casework; response to school/service development needs; staff needs; children’s needs.  
· Training needs can be facilitated by the EP’s local knowledge. |
| **Negotiation and Strategic Planning** | · Discuss economical viability and long term impact with commissioner or SMT.  
· Consider potential barriers (i.e. time to undertake training, time to implement interventions) and solutions to these barriers. Encourage active involvement from training recipients.  
· Strategic planning and considerations of logistics of delivery and implementation, utilising consultation skills and local knowledge of school/service (e.g. systems, dynamics, political factors, school/service culture, staff, children).  
· If training is centralised, considerations need to be take into account in relation to how local knowledge can be elicited and utilised in order to inform planning and delivery of training. |
| **Draw from Evidence Base** | · Highlight and utilise key features of effective training and the implications of these in relation to planning and delivery of training. |
| **Application of Psychological Knowledge** | · Utilise psychological knowledge in terms of planning, content and delivery. Linking with evidence of effective training formats and delivery, i.e. experiential activities, follow up sessions, feedback, coaching, training over time rather than single-exposure events. |
| **Responding to Recipients’ Needs** | · Respond to recipients’ needs and adapt training accordingly. |
| **Utilise Psychological Skills** | · Considerations of process skills and how training will be facilitated.  
· Use of consultation framework to consider how new skills will be utilised within practice. Discussing barriers and solutions. Draw on local knowledge of school/service, staff and children. |
| **Instilling Confidence** | · Ensure that recipients are confident with new skills, or confident enough to practise these skills. |
| **On-going Evaluation** | · Incorporate evaluation stage within the training and collaboratively plan how the implementation will be evaluated and monitored.  
· Realistic achievable individual/group targets to be discussed and set in relation to practising new skill set and applying it within practice.  
· Targets should be agreed and discussed within follow-up session.  
· Incorporate local knowledge of school/service, staff and children in the planning of targets to support the evaluation stage. |
| **On-going Consultation and Strategic Reviews** | · Incorporate follow-up sessions and on-going consultation around implementation, practical issues, next steps or further training needs. Problem solve specific difficulties recipients’ have faced.  
· Incorporate strategic reviews with SMT. |

**Table 5.1: Working Model and Guidelines for Delivering Training**
development, (Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010). It appears to also have significant ethical implications that EPSs will need to consider. As Woods (2011) notes:

“The AEP (2009) emphasises the EP’s paramount duty of care to the child when making recommendations or giving advice to overcome barriers to learning. The child is the psychologist’s client, whereas the local authority, as commissioner of the child assessment, is the psychologist’s customer. This duty of care to the child is placed above the EP’s responsibilities to the local authority employer, and the psychologist’s advice should therefore not be influenced by considerations such as local authority, financial or other constraints.” (p. 16)

This could be related to the dissonance the EPs reported within the current study and highlights the difficulty in overcoming current constraints placed upon EP practice. Furthermore Woods (2011) suggests that directly involving EPs with the commissioning of their services highlights EPs’ strong ethical responsibilities. Providing value for money and being accountable for the outcomes of EP services will play a significant role within an increasingly commercial market. The conduct, ethics and performance of EPs are regulated by the HPC (2008) and EPs’ need to ensure that their practice is ethically sound. As Woods (2011) suggests standards set out within the HPC (2008) such as to act “in the best interests of service users” (p. 3) and “with honesty and integrity” (p. 3), “will be paramount to EPs in those inevitable circumstances where there may be challenge to, or dissonance with, commissioners’ views or expectations” (p. 21).

There have always been competing demands on EP time and although the notion of time and money being a constraint for EPs is not a new concept, and in fact could be considered a long standing complaint amongst many EPs and commissioners of EP services. However the new era of commissioning services has reignited and potentially offers new opportunities for the EP (Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010; Woods, 2011).

It will be interesting to see how traded services will develop, compounded by conflicting perspectives on the ethical implications of ‘selling’ EP services rather than free at the point of delivery. This may further be influenced by the extent to which EPS and EPs embrace the development and market their distinctive services within the new commercial arena of traded services.
5.10.2 Implications for Delivering Training

From this study, distinctive and valuable elements of EP trainers have been identified. This study supports previous findings that the EP’s distinctive contribution is in relation to psychological knowledge (Farrell et al., 2006) and that EPs are well placed to undertake training (Baxter & Frederickson, 2005), although prior to this study there appeared to be a paucity of research in relation to the possible distinctive and valuable elements of EP training. However what appeared to be a further significant and valued contribution of the school-based training, was the EP’s local knowledge of the school, staff and children. Where EPs deliver bespoke training or manualised packages they should consider how their local knowledge will facilitate and influence the planning and delivery of the training. Please refer to the suggested training guidelines in table 5.1 for further details of considerations EPs should take into account when negotiating, planning and delivering training.

Future focus on strategic planning is considered as fundamental for delivering training particularly within a traded service model of delivery. It will important to consider how the EPs link with schools will be sustained and built on. With some EPSs within the UK changing their service delivery, and moving away from a traditional school link EP role, it would be useful to consider how this may impact upon the valuable elements of EP training that have been identified within this study. This may mean that EPs are losing a link with individual schools that schools themselves consider as valuable. Could this valuable contribution be projected out to the other dimensions of EP work? If the EP’s local knowledge and relationships with schools are lost, what could be the impact upon their wider role and valued contribution to schools in terms of: casework; assessment; intervention; project and development work.

From the findings of the current study it appeared that whilst the content of the training was distinct, a consensus was that the training delivery was not distinct and that other training providers could have presented the information from the slides and handouts. It could be suggested that it may not be beneficial for EPs to undertake training when it predominantly incorporates a didactic format, as what is gleaned from the findings is that whilst the knowledge base of EPs was seen to be
valuable this was not just around their knowledge of the topic, it focused on how their knowledge was utilised in terms of the EP’s process skills. The EP’s ability to utilise the content and link the training with the recipients’ practice, facilitate discussions, incorporate consultation skills and being able to respond to the needs of the group were seen to be a valued skill set of the EP.

It should be acknowledged that one of the training events was centralised for one professional group and was not school-based. Many of the valued elements of EP trainers were identified within this group as well. It would be therefore important to pay attention to the differing functions, purposes and relative benefits of centralised and bespoke training to ensure that the training is valuable, sustainable and economically viable. For example, if the training was centralised, themes drawn from the training might suggest that the valuable contribution of EP training was being able to effectively communicate psychological knowledge, and apply that to the recipients’ practice, offering feedback sessions and practice opportunities. Whereas if it was a bespoke school-based piece of training, a central focus might be to ensure that their local needs are understood and the training directly evolves out of a school’s specific needs. It would be also important to consider how EPs who deliver centralised training could gain an insight into schools’/services’ systems without having the ‘local knowledge’ that benefited school-based EP trainers.

It was identified within the current study that school-based training needs were identified through individual school needs, and the positioning of EPs facilitated the identification of such needs. Grant and Mindell (1989) delivered INSET to a school, which evolved from a common training need identified amongst several schools. A needs analysis was undertaken for a number of schools, similar training needs were identified and individual whole-school training was subsequently undertaken, exemplifying how to successfully incorporate a training package whilst still tailoring it specifically to the individual needs of the school/service. This suggests that the EP’s distinct contribution valued by schools could be retained and capitalised on in the identification of common needs throughout the LA’s schools and potentially other services.

The EPS in which the research was undertaken was in the midst of planning how training could be delivered and what training should be delivered. The PEP felt it was
vital that training packages should be developed that were unique and pertinent to other services and schools. A case study presented within Fallon, Woods and Rooney’s (2010) paper, highlighted one EPS’s repositioning as a strategic player within Children’s Services across the framework of universal, targeted and specialist services. Whilst still having a core role with schools, the EPS extended its role to a range of contexts. This enabled them to increase the diverse range of services they provided and appeared to include a wide range of training programmes, for example for schools, families, foster parents and Children’s Services.

Interestingly, it has been suggested that the way in which EPSs have changed their service model of delivery has often led to the development of distinctive, specialist services. Consequently this has led to a more ‘marketable’ service and less vulnerability to other professionals encroaching upon their roles (Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010). It could therefore prove invaluable to reconcile the competing demands placed on the EPS in order to adapt to changes in service delivery.

Within the current study the very nature of the post-training interviews and focus group could be seen as a crucial step in the training process and corroborates with research that suggests follow-up training sessions are an essential feature of effective training. Therefore it is recommended that on-going consultation or strategic reviews of training should be considered an important factor in any training that is delivered. As highlighted within the literature, a promising alternative model to promote systemic change within schools suggested by Balchin, Randall and Turner (2006), utilised the EP as a consultant, supported others to implement change and combined key elements of both project work and INSET to support schools to make sustainable, whole-school changes.

From the current research it could be suggested that the EPS should value and potentially capitalise on what others consider as distinctive and valuable elements of the EP trainer, incorporate the key evidence based features of effective training and move forward with these in mind. The guidelines set out within table 5.1 are offered to enable greater consideration of the key features of effective training, incorporating the distinctive and valued contribution of EP trainers.
Chapter Six: Conclusion

The EPS in which the researcher works recently moved to a traded service model of delivery. An increasing amount of work is delivered in the form of training. It is reported within literature that a core role of an EP is delivering training, however there is a paucity of published literature about the role of the EP as a trainer. The study used an exploratory single case study design to consider the EP’s role as a trainer, its distinctive and valuable contribution and the content and process elements of EP training.

Key elements of effective training were identified within the literature and distinct and valuable elements of EP training have been identified within this study. A significant factor was ensuring that the training was economically viable within a traded service model whilst ensuring that it provided sustainable best outcomes for children. As evidenced based practitioners, EPs should advocate and promote best practice and utilise the research base that is available. This should be shared with schools and other services during the negotiation and planning stages of training to enable schools and services to make informed decisions about the training they commission. This could facilitate the longevity and impact of the training delivered.

It is hoped that the study will stimulate further research in the area and that the best practice guidelines outlined in section 5.10 will be useful to practitioners in negotiating, contracting, delivering and evaluating training and in disseminating psychology and embedding good practice.


Lapadat, J., & Lindsay, A. (1999). Transcription in research and practice: From standardization of technique to interpretive positioning. *Qualitative Inquiry, 5*(1), 64-86.


(Eds.), *The Profession and Practice of Educational Psychology: Future Directions.*
London: Cassell Education.


Noell, G. H., & Gansle, K. A. (2009). Moving from good ideas in educational systems change to sustainable program implementation: Coming to terms with some of the realities. *Psychology In Schools, 46* (1), 78-88.


Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter to Commissioners
Dear 

I am writing to gain your consent to participate in a research project I am carrying out as part of my Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

**Background**
I’m currently in my second year of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at Manchester University. I work for the Community Educational Psychology Service for XXXXX Council for three days a week. In order for me to complete my doctorate I am required to complete a doctoral thesis and I have chosen to look at **The Educational Psychologist’s Role as a Trainer: An Exploratory Case Study to consider the distinctive contribution of Educational Psychologists as trainers within Children’s Services.**

**Why have I been chosen and what would I need to do?**
I am aware that you recently commissioned a piece of training from the Educational Psychologist Service and I would like to invite you to take part in a semi-structured, audio recorded interview in ________________ to discuss your experiences of this. I do appreciate how valuable your time is and would be flexible when and where we hold the interview. I expect the interview to last no longer than an hour and hope to gain an understanding of the Educational Psychologists role as trainers.

During the interview I would like to discuss your views and insights in relation to the following areas:

- Overview of the negotiating and contracting of the training event.
- Your reasons for choosing Educational Psychologists for this training event?
- Any aspects of the training which you felt were distinct/different than other training you have commissioned
- The impact the training has had

**What will happen to the data?**
I would like to highlight that confidentiality will be respected and kept throughout the interview and any specific identifying information such as your name and service will not be used. In order to analyse the data in detail, the interviews will be transcribed. Following the study, all sensitive information will be destroyed in line with the Data Protection Act. The research will be carried out within The British Psychological Society’s Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Health Professions Council’s Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**
Your participation in this research would be greatly appreciated but is of course entirely voluntary. You may decide to withdraw your involvement at any point throughout the
project, at any time, without needing to give a reason. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not feel comfortable with.

**What will happen next?**
I will contact you by phone in the week beginning ____________ to see if you would be able to participate in my research. If you agree to take part in the research we will be able to discuss a time and date to hold the interview and I will forward you a full copy of the questions I intend to bring to the interview. I will also be able to answer any questions that you may have regarding my thesis project.

Should you have any concerns about the way in which the research is being conducted, please contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee via Kevin Woods at the university address provided at the bottom of this letter.

In the meantime if there is anything else you would like to know about my research, then please feel free to contact me via email or by phone.

I look forward to speaking with you soon,

Kind Regards,

Jenny Dutton

**Name, position and contact address of researcher:**
Jenny Dutton, Trainee Educational & Child Psychologist

Educational Support and Inclusion
School of Education
Ellen Wilkinson Building
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Jenny.dutton@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

**Appendix B: Recruitment Letter to Recipients**
Dear 

I am writing to gain your consent to participate in a research project I am carrying out as part of my Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

**Background**

I’m currently in my second year of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at Manchester University. I work for the Educational Psychology Service for XXXXX Council for three days a week. In order for me to complete my doctorate I am required to complete a doctoral thesis and I have chosen to look at The Educational Psychologist’s Role as a Trainer: An Exploratory Case Study to consider the distinctive contribution of Educational Psychologists as trainers within Children’s Services.

**Why have I been chosen and what would I need to do?**

I am aware that you recently attended the __________________________ training event undertaken by the Educational Psychologist Service and I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group in _____________ to discuss your experiences of this. I have enclosed an information sheet about focus groups which is intended to answer any of your initial questions. I do appreciate how valuable your time is and would be flexible when and where we hold the focus group. I expect the focus group to last no longer than an hour and hope to gain an understanding of the Educational Psychologists role as trainers.

During the interview I would like to discuss your views and insights in relation to the following areas:

- Expectations of the training
- Your experiences and the impact of the training
- Any aspects of the training which you felt were distinct/different than other training you have undertaken

**What will happen to the data?**

I would like to highlight that confidentiality will be respected and kept throughout the interview and any specific identifying information such as your name and service will not be used. In order to analyse the data in detail, the interviews will be transcribed. Following the study, all sensitive information will be destroyed in line with the Data Protection Act. The research will be carried out within The British Psychological Society’s Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Health Professions Council’s Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

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

Your participation in this research would be greatly appreciated but is of course entirely voluntary. You may decide to withdraw your involvement at any point throughout the project, at any time, without needing to give a reason. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not feel comfortable with.
I will contact you by phone in the week beginning _____________ to see if you would be able to participate in my research. If you agree to take part in the research we will be able to discuss a time and date to hold the interview and I will forward you a full copy of the questions I intend to bring to the interview. I will also be able to answer any questions that you may have regarding my thesis project.

Should you have any concerns about the way in which the research is being conducted, please contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee via Kevin Woods at the university address provided at the bottom of this letter.

In the meantime if there is anything else you would like to know about my research, then please feel free to contact me via email or by phone.

I look forward to speaking with you soon,

Kind Regards,

Jenny Dutton

Name, position and contact address of researcher:
Jenny Dutton, Trainee Educational & Child Psychologist

Educational Support and Inclusion
School of Education
Ellen Wilkinson Building
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Jenny.dutton@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Appendix C: Recruitment Letter to EPs

Dear ,

I am writing to gain your consent to participate in a research project I am carrying out as part of my Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Background
I’m currently in my second year of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at Manchester University. I work for the Community Educational Psychology Service for XXXXX Council for three days a week. In order for me to complete my doctorate I am required to complete a doctoral thesis and I have chosen to look at The Educational Psychologist’s Role as a Trainer: An Exploratory Case Study to consider the distinctive contribution of Educational Psychologists as trainers within Children’s Services.

Why have I been chosen and what would I need to do?
I am aware that you recently delivered a piece of training and I would like to invite you to take part in a semi-structured, audio recorded interview in _____________ to discuss your experiences of this. I do appreciate how valuable your time is and would be flexible when and where we hold the interview. I expect the interview to last no longer than an hour and hope to gain an understanding of the Educational Psychologists role as trainers.

During the interview I would like to discuss your views and insights in relation to the following areas:

➢ Overview of the negotiating and contracting of the training event.
➢ The EPs valuable or distinctive contribution to their role as trainer
➢ Experiences of the training
➢ The impact the training has had

What will happen to the data?
I would like to highlight that confidentiality will be respected and kept throughout the interview and any specific identifying information such as your name and service will not be used. In order to analyse the data in detail, the interviews will be transcribed. Following the study, all sensitive information will be destroyed in line with the Data Protection Act. The research will be carried out within The British Psychological Society’s Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Health Professions Council’s Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?
Your participation in this research would be greatly appreciated but is of course entirely voluntary. You may decide to withdraw your involvement at any point throughout the project, at any time, without needing to give a reason. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not feel comfortable with.

What will happen next?
I will contact you by phone in the week beginning __________ to see if you would be able to participate in my research. If you agree to take part in the research we will be able to discuss a time and date to hold the interview and I will forward you a full copy of the questions I intend to bring to the interview. I will also be able to answer any questions that you may have regarding my thesis project.

Should you have any concerns about the way in which the research is being conducted, please contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee via Kevin Woods at the university address provided at the bottom of this letter.

In the meantime if there is anything else you would like to know about my research, then please feel free to contact me via email or by phone.

I look forward to speaking with you soon,

Kind Regards,

Jenny Dutton

Name, position and contact address of researcher:
Jenny Dutton, Trainee Educational & Child Psychologist

Educational Support and Inclusion
School of Education
Ellen Wilkinson Building
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Jenny.dutton@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Appendix D: Information Sheet for the Focus Group

Dear XXXXXXX,

I thought I would send an information sheet to set out what I am planning to do and to answer any initial questions you may have. Please feel free to contact me if any of your questions are not answered below.

What is a focus group?
A focus group is an informal discussion group where people can share their views, knowledge and experiences of a certain topic, in this instance, in-service training. The focus group will consist of only yourself, a number of your colleagues and myself and will last approximately 1 hour. A tape recorder will be used to keep an accurate record of what is said.

Why are you doing a focus group?
I want to explore your views and experiences of training, the distinct contribution that EPs can offer to training school based professions and the strengths and barriers to training within schools.

Where will the research be conducted?
The research will be conducted within the Local Authority area at venues to be arranged to suit the travel and work commitments of all participants.

What will you do with the information?
The information will form part of a Doctoral thesis and the hope is that the views and opinions discussed within this group will then help me to identify what it is about educational psychologists undertaking training that is distinct.

Will anyone outside of the focus group know what I have said?
I would like to highlight that confidentiality will be respected and kept throughout the focus group and any specific identifying information such as your name will not be used. Individual responses will remain private however the general views of the group as a whole may be feedback to the Educational Psychology Service or LA upon request.

The outcomes of the research will be written up as part of the researcher’s coursework for the Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology at Manchester University. The written materials used within the group will be shredded and taped conversations will be carefully disposed of once the project is complete.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?
Your participation in this research project is voluntary and you may leave the discussion group at any time without needing to give a reason. You may also choose not to answer any question you do not feel comfortable with.

I have a question that has not been answered?
If there is anything else you would like to know about the focus group, then please feel free to contact me on xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and considering being part of the focus group.
Appendix E: Training Observation Schedule and Notes

**Training:** Early years: Behaviour Management and STAR approach session

**Duration of observation:** 1 hour

**Overview of training:**

**No of participants:** Eight participants

**General notes:**
- I was introduced to the group and permission by the recipients of the training was given for me to observe the session. I sat at the back of the room.
- EP trainer seated to the side of the recipients.
- Trainer and recipients on first name terms.
- Participants seated in U shaped desks facing the powerpoint presentation.

**Content:** (cf Guskey, 2000)

**Overview of content** –
- EP discussed reasons for content and why info had been included.
- Gave time for questions
- Session involved learning a practical intervention – STAR approach

**Theory**
- Used evidence base
- Gave theoretical explanation of Behavioural Psychology and how this fit with their practice
- Explained psychological basis to framework
- How STAR and behavioural psychology was linked
- Time for questions

**Process:** (cf Fullan, 2004; & Frederickson, 1988)

**Delivery and format** (cf Guskey, 2000)

**Level of recipient involvement** (cf Wright, 1990)

**Learning styles** (cf Joyce & Showers, 2002)

**Range of Approaches and Activities**
- Disseminating Information
- Didactic
- Time for questions
- Group Activity and Worksheet
- Group feedback to group
- Group discussion and joint problem solving
**EP skills utilised within training**

- Used further knowledge base to answer recipient questions
- Drew from experience and offered examples
- Applied to context
- Understood recipients’ role and how training related to their practice
- Encouraged participant involvement and stimulated dialogue
- Consultation skills used, regarding individual casework and problem solving real life examples. Relating question to specific case.
## Appendix F: PEP Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Can you tell me a bit about EP training?</td>
<td>Introductory question (cf Kvale, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How does it fit into the EPS?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How is it prioritised?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How is it commissioned? Paid for?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is it marketed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Has traded service effected training?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Are there other training providers that offer similar services?</td>
<td>RQ 1 (cf Farrell et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How is the training provided by EPs different than this?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) What can EPs bring to training? Do you think this is unique to EPs?</td>
<td>RQ 1 (cf Cameron, 2005; Farrell et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) What factors do you think EPs need to consider in delivering effective training?</td>
<td>RQ 1 (cf Balchin, Randall &amp; Turner, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What needs to happen in order for training to be a success?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What are the barriers of delivering effective training?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) What do you think are the main aims of training?</td>
<td>RQ 1 (Balchin, Randall &amp; Turner, 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) What needs to happen to make a lasting impact? How do we know it’s been successful?</td>
<td>RQ 1 (Balchin, Randall &amp; Turner, 2006; Guskey, 2000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix G: Commissioners Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Relevance to RQ and literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Can you give me a brief overview of the training and how it was commissioned?</td>
<td>Introductory question (cf Kvale, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What was it about? Who attended?</td>
<td>(cf Gemmell, King, Randall &amp; Sutherland, 2003; Rouse &amp; Balshaw, 1991)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Factors influencing this decision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process of negotiation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) How did it fit in with your organisations priorities?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf McCarthy, 1992; Rouse, 1991; Wright, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Why did you choose EPs for this training event?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Farrell et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Could other providers have undertaken the training?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What would have been the effects of having had the training from another provider?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Any aspects of the training which you felt were distinct/different than other training you have commissioned?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Balchin, Randall &amp; Turner, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Wright, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/process/interactions/process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) What did you hope the impact of such a training event would be?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Guskey, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What has the impact been?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- If you hadn’t had received the training, what would the effects have been?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix H: EP Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you give me a brief overview of the training and how it was commissioned?</td>
<td>Introductory question (cf Kvale, 1996) (cf Gemmell, King, Randall &amp; Sutherland, 2003; Monsen, Graham, Frederickson &amp; Cameron, 1998; Rouse &amp; Balshaw, 1991)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What was it about? Who attended?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Factors influencing this decision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process of negotiation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What perspectives/practices did you bring as an EP that is different than if another provider delivered the training?</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Farrell et al, 2006; McCarthy, 1992; Rouse, 1991; Wright, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did your perspectives/practices influence the training content/process/evaluation?</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Wright, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What can EPs bring to training? What is the distinct contribution? How might this be different to other professionals?</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Balchin, Randall &amp; Turner, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the enablers and barriers of effective training in this context? What would you have done differently?</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Balchin, Randall &amp; Turner, 2006; Guskey, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could other providers have undertaken the training? What would have been the effects of having had the training from another provider?</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Farrell et al., 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any aspects of the training which you felt were distinct/different than other training you have commissioned? Content/process/interactions/process</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Farrell et al., 2006; Frederickson, 1988; Fullan, 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did you hope the impact of such a training event would be?</td>
<td>RQ 2 (cf Guskey, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What has the impact been?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To what extent has this been measurable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you been commissioned to do more training?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix I: Interview and Focus Group Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>RQ 3 (cf)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introductions</strong> - what’s your role, reasons for attending training.</td>
<td>Introductory question (cf Kvale, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior to receiving training, what were your expectations of the training?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Monsen, Graham, Frederickson and Cameron; 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent were these expectations met/differed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you think of another training event that you have recently been on - how was this different? Re content/process/evaluation</td>
<td>RQ 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How has it impacted on your professional practice?</td>
<td>RQ 3 Fullan &amp; Pompert (1977)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the most valuable part of the training?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Guskey, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were the distinct or valuable features of the training?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Guskey, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would be the effects of not having the training or having had the training from another provider?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf McGrath, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there anything else the EP could have done to improve the usefulness of this training?</td>
<td>RQ 3 (cf Wright, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other points you’d like to add?</td>
<td>RQ 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J: Consent Form

Thank you for volunteering and giving up an hour of your busy day to take part in the research.

If you are happy with the information enclosed and consent to participate, please read and sign below:

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information provided and know who to contact if I have any questions.
- I am happy to participate in the study.
- I understand that my information will be treated confidentially and I will remain anonymous as far as possible.
- I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time by advising the researcher.

Name and occupation:
Date:
Signature:

Name of researcher:
Date:
Signature:
# Appendix K: 15 point checklist (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transcription</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for ‘accuracy’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>All relevant extracts for each theme have been collated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Data have been analysed, interpreted, made sense of, rather than just paraphrased or described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Analysis and data match each other. The extracts illustrate the analytic claims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Analysis tells a convincing and well-organised story about the data and topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over-lightly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Report</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done, i.e. described method and reported analysis are consistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>The researcher is positioned as active in the research process; themes do not just ‘emerge’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix L: Exemplar of Initial Coding Phase of Analysis

Sample 1

What we've just identified is that our value is in bespoke design and in which case I would say to you as a SEnCo I've got two options for you I could do you training on Friday afternoon to 2 hours that will cost you not much more than the two hours or I could design something brilliant and I'll be loving it and be getting my creative juices there is an are we getting everyone interested in it, but it'll cost you five times as much because it would take the day just to put it together and it won't be polished therefore you're paying miles more for something that be a bit clunky may be when people are learning, but actually are we supposed to be researcher practitioners and pushing forward the boundaries of psychology and I suppose my answer to your question is I need time to prepare which isn't attached to the pricing but then how do you, what is useful in the short term, I suppose our principle EP is trying to make sure we've got enough money next year to pay the bills but if someone needs to have a longer eye on, what is the value of us going 'here is attachment theory'. so more like action research, supporting people through a development process, so we should be doing ongoing project is, however its firefighting and long term which we used to have when we had a set amount of hours and the school would say you've got 25 children you've got to see, what ties them altogether so therefore let's make an overarching project for the school and let's do some action research cycle through the year, but who's going to buy that now, when they can get something that costs less.

So maybe that's the thing about the training, why would our training be more valuable? Maybe it is about relationships over time, maybe they listen, maybe it's all in the commissioning when the commissioning role is split you've got the SEnCo who is saying I really think this would be good for the children and you've got the manager, headteacher, whoever is in control of whether that will happen or not then who's going to commission a project the SEnCo knows you and thinks I really trust this woman and it's really going to work well for me but that's not about psychology that's about personality and then you start whittling down to who is good at building relationships did read a paper that said psychology is all about building relationships, but what about the challenging role of the psychologists sometimes it's not always about being there for the child.
Sample 2

Well I think the action research would, maybe being evaluated doing it but no one likes role-play.

but maybe you don’t like it because it puts you on the spot and you don’t like the reality of it, but that’s maybe what you do need, I do, I have to practice my words and I’m doing training have to think and say like this, no no say like this, so maybe in training what we need to do it’s the whole thing is that we can give them information, that’s a bit that anyone can do that’s the bit you can take off the Internet, giving them some time some coverage, some self-efficacy to go away with it and try it, then you go back and you see where there are, that is your facilitation skills but the plan to review like a two-step consultation model, talk about it, yes two step consultation, but we’d call it action research.

The skill in which its done I’m sorry but the skill in which its done. The research side of it that is the difference, so what we talked about a lot is the skill of presenting and facilitating, now you can get that by being a trainer like the new Trevor is the new trainer, so why can’t you train? Can people in that topic you know the advisor teacher services they’ve got that wealth of background as if nearly concluded that it’s more to do with my teacher background than it is to do with my psychology in our knowledge at one point so they’ve got a lot of the elements of it so the difference must be then in our methodological background, our understanding of methodology.

well if we were going to do action research we would do properly, in the same way as if we were consultation was someone then we would do according to evidence-based robust processes like monsen comoria or whatever else, well if they say they say they do have a consultation, they just think if I use that word...
Appendix M: Photographs of Thematic Analysis Process

These photographs represent an example of the thematic analysis procedure. Please see table 3.6 in the main body of the thesis for an outline of this procedure.

RQ 1  Stage 3: Searching for themes
Appendix N: Letter of Ethical Approval

Secretary to Research Ethics Committees  
Room 2.004 John Owens Building  
Tel: 0161 275 2206/2046  
Fax: 0161 275 5697  
Email: timothy.stibbs@manchester.ac.uk

ref: ethics/11127

Miss Jenny Dutton,  
Trainee Educational Psychologist,  
School of Education,  
Ellen Wilkinson Building

29th July 2011

Dear Jenny,

Research Ethics Committee 3

Dutton, Atkinson: The Educational Psychologist’s role as a trainer: an exploratory case study to consider the distinctive contribution of Educational Psychologists as trainers within Children’s Services (ref 11127)

I write to thank Cathy for attending the meeting on 20th July and to confirm that, after the submission of the amendments to the information sheet in your email of 26th July, the project has been given a favourable ethical opinion.

This approval is effective for a period of five years and if the project continues beyond that period it must be submitted for review. It is the Committee’s practice to warn investigators that they should not depart from the agreed protocol without seeking the approval of the Committee, as any significant deviation could invalidate the insurance arrangements and constitute research misconduct. We also ask that any information sheet should carry a University logo or other indication of where it came from, and that, in accordance with University policy, any data carrying personal identifiers must be encrypted when not held on a university computer or kept as a hard copy in a location which is accessible only to those involved with the research.

Finally, I would be grateful if you could complete and return the attached form at the end of the project or by July 2012.

Yours sincerely

Dr T P C Stibbs

Secretary to the University Research Ethics Committee

Enclosed: Report form cc Dr Cathy Atkinson
## Appendix O: Operational Risk Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Level of Risk</th>
<th>Contingency plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EPs do not want to be interviewed</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Invite another EP that meets selection criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEPs/EPs do not have the time to be interviewed</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Ensure plenty of notice is given to all PEPs/EPs and there is flexibility with when and where interviews take place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes elicited from the PEP interviews maybe contentious</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Check the themes with the PEP before undertaking interviews and focus groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are not enough training events for the research</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Extend inclusion criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot get enough participants to undertake a focus group</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Ensure plenty of notice is given to participants and there is flexibility with when and where interviews take place. If response rate is too low, then semi-structured interviews will be conducted instead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release time for participants is problematic and difficult to organise</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>The researcher will ensure that participants have sufficient notice to attend the focus groups. Participants given a choice of times/dates that may be suitable, in order to minimise this risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant absence in focus group</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Continue focus group with remaining participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups contains less than six</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Rearrange focus group to suit participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher absence in focus group</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Rearrange focus group to suit participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording devices fail to record or sound quality is poor</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>During focus groups two recording devices will be used. The researcher will make notes throughout the focus group and interviews and more in depth notes immediately after.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>