Applying the lens of Paulo Freire to evaluate exclusion from school in England

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PhD by Published work

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Abstract

This PhD by publication applies the lens of Paulo Freire to 12 published works (Appendix 1 – appended separately), to evaluate exclusion in mainstream schools in England. This commentary responds to the nature and practice of exclusion.

Suspension and permanent exclusion remain a local and national concern. This led me to question risk and protective factors for exclusion, seeking new knowledge to inform policy and practice. Limited research to date triangulates the lived experiences of children and young people (CYP), caregivers, educators, and health professionals. The body of work presented here contributes substantial evidence of the lived experiences of those exposed to school exclusion, with evidence of impact on policy, practice and research methods.

This commentary brings together individual publications that collectively discuss school exclusion. Publication 1 highlighted higher than average Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs as well as Autism in the City of Sunderland, while publication 12 explored the wider impact of school exclusion on CYP with Autism and the family unit. Publication 2 is the most extensive study in England to date, detailing 174 semi-structured interviews from 53 schools in a Northeast city accounting for 55 CYP, 41 families, 78 health and education professionals (Appendix 2, Table 1). Publications 3 and 6 examine the managed moves process, informing policy discussions and practice. Publications 5 and 8, and 9 and 11 explore headteachers' (HT's) positions and reasonings for preventative measures for school exclusion and why CYP are excluded. Publication 5 explored the overuse of the category 'other' as a reason for school exclusion in the school census return, leading to its removal in 2021. Publications 4, 7 and 10 provided 'invaluable' evidence to the Health and Social Care Independent Review of Drugs, revealing that schooling can be a risk factor for drug use and use of weapons.

Publications 1-4 employed the metaparadigm of phenomenology and dialectical pluralism, combining interpretivist and positivist approaches. Publications 5-12 adopted standalone methods of either descriptive statistics (publications 5-6), or the philosophical approach of

hermeneutics and phenomenology, using interpretative phenomenological analysis (publications 7, 10 and 12) or thematic analysis (publications 8-9 and 11).

A retrospective thematic analysis was employed to identify concepts and provide coherence. This allowed interrogation and reframing of current understandings and for the aim and objectives for this submission to emerge. Objectives one and two seek to determine protective factors that buffer, and risk factors that increase, the likelihood of school exclusion. Objective three evaluated the impact of exclusion on CYP and their family.

Protective factors that 'buffer' the likelihood of exclusion include enduring relationships, being 'in the know', 'working it out' and 'doing the right thing'. Risk factors that increase the likelihood of exclusion include 'free rein', being 'under the radar', 'sink or swim', 'set up to fail' and 'challenging times'. The impacts of school exclusion included 'hanging by a thread', 'snowball effect' or 'new beginnings'. These themes indicate a general position of what Freire calls 'banking education', in which 'the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing' (1970, p. 73). This commentary emphasises the need for alternative approaches.

England's current mainstream education system appears unsuitable in meeting all CYP's needs, as Freire highlighted more than five decades ago. These missed opportunities to include and effectively support all CYP's needs can often lead to inequalities, disadvantages, and short and long-term repercussions for the CYP and their family. The current education system in England focuses on reintegrating CYP into mainstream schools rather than, as Freire (1970) suggested, transforming the structures that, for many, were the underlying cause of the exclusion. Freire would argue that denying children access to equitable resources is a form of dehumanising oppression, preventing them from becoming fully human. Children cannot liberate themselves from their oppression but require Government directives to mandate inclusive environments within all school communities, to address the oppression and marginalisation of further generations of children.

The published works

Publication 1: Martin-Denham, S., Donoghue, J. and Saddler, H. (2017) *The prevalence of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16, across the City of Sunderland: School of Education.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 2: Martin-Denham, S. (2020a) *An investigation into the perceived enablers and barriers to mainstream schooling: The voices of children excluded from school, their caregivers and professionals. S*underland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 3: Martin-Denham. S. (2020b) *The enablers and barriers to successful managed moves: The voice of children, caregivers, and professionals.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 4: Martin-Denham, S. (2020c) *A review of school exclusion on the mental health, well-being of children and young people in the City of Sunderland.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 5: Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020a) *Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in school census returns in England? A Policy Brief.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 6: Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020b) *Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 7: Martin-Denham, S. (2020d) 'Riding the rollercoaster of school exclusion coupled with drug misuse: the lived experience of caregivers', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 25(3-4), pp. 244-263. Available at: https://doi:org/10.1080/13632752.2020.1848985.

Publication 8: Martin-Denham, S. (2021a) *The benefits of school exclusion: Research with headteachers in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

Publication 9: Martin-Denham, S. (2021b) 'Defining, identifying, and recognising underlying causes of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties: Thematic analysis of interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* pp. 1-19. Available at: https://doi:org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1930909.

Publication 10: Martin-Denham, S. (2021c) 'School exclusion, substance misuse and use of weapons: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children', *Support for Learning*, 36(4), pp. 532-554. Available at: https://doi:org/10.1111/1467-9604.12379.

Publication 11: Martin-Denham, S. (2021d) 'Alternatives to school exclusion: interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 26(4), pp. 187-205. Available at: https://doi: org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1983326.

Publication 12: Martin-Denham, S. (2022) 'Marginalisation, autism and school exclusion: Caregivers' perspectives', *Support for Learning, 37(1),* pp. 108-143. Available at: https://doi:10.1111/1467-9604.12398.

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Acronyms

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CYP	Child or Young Person
CYPS	Children and Young People Services
DfE	Department for Education
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care
DSM-5	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
GP	General Practitioner
HM	Her Majesty's
HT	Headteacher
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LA	Local Authority
NHS	National Health Service
OCC	Office of the Children's Commissioner
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
RQ	Research Questions
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty

Glossary of Terms

Alternative Provision	Education arranged by LAs for children and young people (CYP) who are unable to attend school due to exclusion, illness or other reasons
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services provide services to CYP who have emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties
Caregiver(s)	Those with parental responsibility for a CYP as defined under section 3(1) of the Children Act 1989
Education, Health and Care Plan	A legal plan that details the education, health and social care support provided to a child or young person who has a SEN or disability
Managed Move	An agreement between a child, caregivers and two schools for the child or young person to change schools as an alternative to school exclusion
Ofsted	A non-Ministerial Government department that has responsibility for the inspection of children's services, schools and local SEND provision in England
Pupil Referral Unit	A school maintained by LAs under section 19(2) of the Education Act 1996 to educate children or young people who would not otherwise receive a suitable education due to school exclusion, illness or any other reason
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for them to have special educational provision. A child or young person has a disability if they have a mental or physical impairment that meets the definition of disability
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)	The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is a qualified teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating SEN provision in a maintained nursery or school

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Chapter overview

This chapter discusses my positionality and interest in school exclusion (1.2). Section 1.3 shares the aim and objectives of the thesis. The structure and focus of the commentary are provided in section 1.4. Section 1.5 explores the role of Alternative Provision (AP), followed by section 1.6, which discusses the children and young people (CYP) who access alternative provision. Section 1.7 analyses the quality of AP and 1.8 provides the chapter summary.

1.2 My position and interest in school exclusion

My phenomenological philosophical position stems from my experiences in school and at home. I would run away from school due to my inability to access the teaching methods or curriculum content. I could not complete simple mathematical calculations, decode words phonetically, or read fluently. I believe my difficulties with learning at primary school influenced my desire to start fires as a young child. I enjoyed burning down buildings. I felt in control, was good at it, and was never caught. I was diagnosed with dyslexia, scotopic sensitivity, low working memory capacity, dyscalculia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in adulthood.

In my final years of primary school, instead of being in mathematics and English lessons, I remember being given jobs to do, cleaning paint pots and tidying in the infant school, away from my classmates. At parents' evening, my class teacher told my mother I was 'thick and stupid'. He told her that I would, at best, become a mother. When engaging with the published work of Freire, I came to understand why, as a child, I had felt powerless at school. Reflecting on his fundamental philosophy, I believe I became dehumanised through my experience of school. I struggled to concentrate in formal lessons or to process and comprehend what I was taught and expected to learn. Freire held the view that a 'culture of silence' (1970) existed, whereby the oppressed are not encouraged or equipped to know how to respond to their world. Freire describes them as passive recipients with educators who do not invite them to participate creatively in the process of learning. Freire's discourse

highlighted that some of the problems I faced at school were due to what he calls 'banking education'.

Freire was concerned about those who experienced adversity. I believe, as did Freire, that an equitable education based on compassion can transform lives. Freire (2000) talked about conscientisation, where people individually and collectively become empowered through understanding their reality. He proposed that the oppressed must not become the oppressor but restore the humanity of themselves and the oppressor, each learning during this process. Once I left primary school, my mother became increasingly concerned about my inability to read fluently. One day, I picked up one of my brother's Beano annuals, which became the start of gaining confidence to read through visual cues. Only in adulthood did I realise that scotopic sensitivity coupled with dyslexia rendered me unable to decipher text phonetically or to easily read black text on a white background. Freire's work resonates with my personal experiences and belief that teachers must be reflective about their practice, and curious about underlying reasons for behaviours presented to them. On reflection, the teachers who taught me were unlikely to understand or know how to teach neurodiverse children in an era of banking education praxis.

1.3 Aim and objectives of the thesis

The aim and objectives of this PhD by publication are:

Aim

To apply the lens of Freire to evaluate the risk and protective factors for school exclusion, and the implications for children, young people and families.

Objectives

1. To determine the protective factors that buffer the likelihood of school exclusion
2. To determine the risk factors that increase the likelihood of school exclusion
3. To evaluate the impact of school exclusion on the child and family

1.4 The commentary

To justify the award of PhD by publication, 12 publications (Appendix 1) from a body of 25 published works (Appendix 3) were selected. Reflexive thematic analysis of the publications results, discussion, conclusion and recommendations was undertaken. A quantitative analysis of the coded references from phase 5 of the thematic analysis was carried out. The philosophies of Paulo Freire validated the findings and contributed to the knowledge in this body of work, namely the risk, protective factors and implications of school exclusion on CYP and their families. This included Freire's ten characteristics of the 'banking model of education', defined as: 'an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories, and the teacher is the depositor... this is the 'banking' concept of education' (Freire, 1996, p. 53). The teacher's role is to deposit knowledge as a, 'gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing' (Freire, 1970, p. 72). The commentary structure is as follows:

Chapter Two

Chapter two contextualises the 12 publications, which include four peer-review funded research reports (publications 1-4), three policy briefs (publications 5, 6 and 8) and five peer-reviewed journal articles (publications 7 and 9-12) (Appendix 4, Table 2). The publications show the development of research on [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities](#) (SEND), school exclusion and childhood adversity, contributing to knowledge and advancement of the discipline. Chapter two reflects my role as the sole author of nine publications, co-author of two policy briefs (publications 5 and 6) and co-author of one research report (publication 1). These publications were commissioned and funded by various local and national organisations from 2016-2022 (Appendix 5, Table 3).

Chapter Three

Chapter three describes the theoretical perspective used while using Freire's lens to evaluate risk and protective factors for school exclusion and the implications for CYP and their families.

Chapter Four

Chapter four outlines the methodological approach taken, setting out the philosophical position underpinning the published works, and explaining how and why phenomenology was employed to conduct a thematic analysis of lived experiences. It describes the development in my research methods from 2016-2022 and how my personal experiences shaped the approach.

Chapter Five

Chapter five describes the benefits of thematic analysis and presents the approach to determining themes that give the publications their defining coherence as a body of work. Themes and subthemes are quantified and considered. The outcome of thematic analysis is scrutinised, applying Freire, to evaluate the risk and protective factors for school exclusion and the implications of encountering challenges at school on the child and family.

Chapter Six

Chapter six concludes the analysis of the published works, providing evidence for the need to re-evaluate and reflect on education provision and practice, and how education provision marginalises some CYP, leading to exclusion by default.

This PhD submission is aptly summarised by the following quote from Schön (1984, p. 42):

> *'In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high, hard ground overlooking a swamp. On the high ground, manageable problems lend themselves to solution through application of research-based theory and technique. In the swampy lowland, messy, confusing problems defy technical solution.'*

Using Freire's position, the 'high, hard ground overlooking a swamp' reflects the plethora of education policies applied to schools over several decades. Schools can decide whether to implement policy guidelines that penalise children and young people (CYP), rather than formally recognising and assessing for underlying SEND. The impact of national and local policies on individual CYP is varied. Some can follow the banking model of education, while others cannot. Freire (1996, p. 53) defined 'banking education' as: 'an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories, and the teacher is the depositor. Those who struggle to adhere to the high ground directives seek to survive 'in the swampy lowland' (education provision/classroom), displaying 'messy, confusing problems' that 'defy technical solution', thereby increasing risk of school exclusion.

1.5 The role of Alternative Provision (AP)

Statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE, 2013, p. 3) describes alternative provision as:

> *'Education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour.'*

In the 1990s, New Labour increased access to AP and introduced targets to reduce exclusion (Ogg and Kaill, 2010). Initially, this policy decreased exclusions between 1998/1999 and 2011/2012 (Menzies and Baars, 2015).

It is widely accepted that there is a correlation between SEND designation and exclusion from school in order to improve a provision's performance indicators (Speilman, 2017; McShane, 2020; Martin-Denham, 2020c). Education Datalab (2018) discovered that when a school transitions to academy status, CYP exclusion increases. Ofsted (2018) also expressed concern regarding academy trusts' considerably higher exclusion rates. Adolescents are being sent to AP by academies and maintained schools in an effort to boost examination scores, as reported in the media (Morgan-Bentley, 2018). According to the amended Ofsted inspection framework (2019b), schools found to be offrolling would be deemed to have inadequate leadership. The Children's Commissioner for England (2019) reported that academies referred more CYP for home schooling than maintained schools. This may be related to the stigma surrounding AP, whereby home schooling is a preferred choice (Martin-Denham, 2020c). The DfE (2022a) schools white paper outlines steps to provide local authorities with more authority to act in the best interests of children, including academy trusts. This is required because local authorities cannot compel academies to

operate in a child's best interests (Ball, 2018). Presently, schools are incentivised to permanently exclude CYP because the LA funds placements for those with permanent exclusions (DfE, 2018a).

1.6 Children and young people in the AP sector

The DfE (2018b) identified four categories of CYP who access AP. First, for isolated instances, such as violence, bringing a prohibited substance to school, being new to the area, or awaiting reintegration into mainstream school. Second, for CYP who require an alternate curriculum or learning environment for reasons other than school exclusion. Third, for vulnerable CYP who may have been neglected or abused at home, or who have mental health issues. Last, CYP with low rates of school attendance, who have been unable to attend school due to a variety of factors, including family challenges, the care system, and engagement with the criminal justice system.

In 2018, the DfE estimated that there were at least 32,083 pupils being educated across at least 761 AP settings in England. Over the past five years, the number of primary-age CYP referred to AP has increased from 5,600 (2017/18) to 7,000 (2020/2021) (DfE, 2022b). Ofsted (2022) reported that approximately 7,000 primary age CYP attend unregistered, state-funded independent AP schools. Children and young people in AP are six times more likely to have identified SEND needs (81%) than those in mainstream schools (14%) (DfE, 2019a). The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2018) identified the over-representation of CYP with disabilities among those who are excluded from school as a global concern. DfE (2019b) data also reveals that certain ethnic groups are overrepresented in state-maintained AP. For instance, 3.3% of students are Black-Caribbean, 4% are White and Black Caribbean, and 1.2% are Gypsy Roma, as opposed to 1.1%, 1.5%, and 0.3% respectively in mainstream schools. Recent Ofsted (2022) research acknowledged that some CYP exhibited aggressive behaviours stemming from difficult family environments and, in some circumstances, undiagnosed SEND needs.

1.7 The quality of AP

In 2011, Ofsted released survey results that revealed major deficiencies in the use and quality of AP provision. Although some CYP enjoyed their placements, their achievement was below national expectations. In response, then-Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, commissioned Taylor (2012) to review AP provision and provide recommendations to improve outcomes. Taylor presented several recommendations, including early assessment and identification of individual needs, reintegration strategies for the child's return to mainstream school, and a broad curriculum. Ofsted (2016), the Timpson Review (DfE, 2019c) and IntegratED (2022) raised concerns around the varying quality of AP across England as a result of discrepancies in performance and practices, resulting in some CYP having little to no chance of receiving a good education. Ofsted (2019a) revealed that nearly one in five CYP in AP are enrolled in schools deemed inadequate or in need of reform, compared to one in eight in mainstream schools.

The Sutton Trust (2011) has emphasised for some time the significance of high-quality teaching for CYP from disadvantaged families. However, the percentage of unqualified teachers in the AP sector is higher than in mainstream schools (17% versus 8%). According to the Timpson Review on School Exclusion (DfE, 2019c), the AP sector is experiencing a teacher recruitment crisis. Gill, Quilter-Pinner and Swift (2017) also expressed the concern that the chance of being taught by an unqualified teacher in AP diminishes the value of non-mainstream education.

1.8 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed my positionality and interest in school exclusion. The commentary's aim and objectives were shared alongside the structure and focus of the thesis. The role and quality of AP was examined with reference to policy and practice.

Chapter 2. The individual publications

2.1 Chapter overview

This chapter contextualises the 12 publications as individual pieces of work and demonstrates how they make a significant and coherent contribution to knowledge and advancement within the discipline. The publications not submitted for this award have not been referenced within the commentary. The 12 publications show the development of research emphasis and individual and collaborative contributions to knowledge, and advancement of the discipline in education.

Section 2.2 explains how the 12 publications were tailored for publication and my role in this process. Section 2.3 presents the contribution to knowledge of the individual publications. Section 2.4 evaluates the influence and impact of the published works (described in Appendix 6, Tables 4–19). A chapter summary is provided in section 2.5.

2.2 Tailoring of the publications and my role within the published works

Six organisations funded the research leading to the published works (Appendix 5, Table 3). The application of a methodological framework and structure needed to consider the funders' preferences. Together for Children (TfC) was interested in the experiences of those excluded from school and mental health prevalence. Their position accorded with my phenomenological stance. The identification of themes and commonalities through an interpretative approach was adopted; promoting understanding of 'the world of human experience' (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 36) and incorporating the lived experience of participants (Thanh and Thanh, 2015, Creswell and Poth, 2018). Publications 1-4 emulate the funder's request for a monograph approach, reflecting their diverse audience. Policy briefs 5, 6 and 8 were tailored to a national policymaker and analyst audience. Although succinct, these briefs were based on in-depth statistical data analysis. The publication type was adaptable based on the needs and compatibility of various audiences, including funders, national organisations, and journals with varying aims and scope. Publications 7, 9-12 were edited to meet the requirements of the journal and were drawn from unreported

data from the Martin-Denham (2020a-c) study. All 12 publications had identifying information removed before publication (during interview transcription or data cleaning).

My role varied across the research projects and publications (Appendix 7, Table 20). In the co-authored works (publications 1, 5, and 6), I obtained funding, designed and directed the research, served as principal author, and disseminated findings.

2.3 The contribution to knowledge of the individual publications

This section evidences how the individual publications made a significant and coherent contribution to knowledge and advancement of the discipline (Appendix 6, Tables 4-19). Communication and dissemination of the research to diverse audiences have been vital in showing the significance of the publications individually and as a body of work. The publications represent a unique contribution to knowledge because, unlike most research on school exclusion (Appendix 8, Table 21), they focus on CYP, their caregivers, and education and health professionals to recognise various perspectives (Rose, 2009). McLaughlin (2009) argues that service users have a unique viewpoint, insights, views and understandings based on their lived experiences. Swigonski (1994) claimed that oppressed people experience a different reality. In summary, service users bring valuable first-hand knowledge (Ramon, 2003).

Throughout the published works, legislation and policy were interrogated and reflected upon. While not be explicitly stated in such policies, these would include the United Nations Convention Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). The UK ratified the UNCRC in 1989 not as a singular directive but as core principle underpinning all future legislation and policies from that time. The importance of UNCRC (1989) is also illustrated in the published works by providing the child's voice, thereby recognising the importance of the Convention. In this way, the published works also include these important rights, principles and articles.

The individual publications are presented outlining their contribution to knowledge.

Publications 1-4 and 6-12 add to the weight of evidence highlighting that children excluded from school have an increased risk of poor educational outcomes (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998; Daniels *et al*., 2003; Taylor, 2012; Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2017; Timpson Review (DfE), 2019c) and low social mobility (Levitas *et al*., 2007; Gill, Quilter-Pinner and Swift, 2017; McCluskey *et al.*, 2019). The publications support Oxley (2015) and McCluskey *et al*. (2016), that school exclusion is ineffective in modifying children's behaviour as it does not identify or address the underlying causes. The contribution to knowledge of each publication will be presented.

2.3.1 Publication 1: Prevalence of SEND

This publication examined the prevalence of SEND among Sunderland's 3-16-year-olds. Quantitative analysis of school census data held by the LA, geographical mapping of CYP with a diagnosis of autism and semi-structured interviews with two health professionals were analysed. The impact of this publication is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 4. This funder report:

- Highlighted the high number of school exclusions in the City of Sunderland
- Reported a higher prevalence of autism in particular localities in Sunderland; though could not determine the reason
- Located CYP with autism in the city
- Speculated increasing numbers of CYP with autism could be due to the widening of diagnostic criteria in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)
- First geographical mapping by postcode of CYP with autism in a local area

In addition,

- Recommendation 1 led to local multi-disciplinary school training as indicated in TfC's SEND policy (0-25 years)

- Recommendation 3 led to the creation of two assessment hubs to provide assessment and identification of SEND and Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) needs for CYP on the edge of exclusion

- Recommendation 5 led to training provided by TfC to improve the timely identification of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

- Recommendation 11 resulted in £1.5m of funding for a new school for CYP with autism in Sunderland

- Recommendation 16 resulted in an update to the local offer on the Sunderland LA website

- Recommendation 19 enabled a single point of access for CYP to access mental health support services

- Recommendation 21 resulted in templates for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) to apply for education, health and care plan needs assessments to the LA

- Recommendation 25 led stakeholders across health, education and children's social care in a successful bid to link health, education and children's social care data

The findings confirmed autism prevalence in Sunderland was rising, as identified elsewhere (Myers *et al*., 2019; McConkey, 2020). The publication identified 31.03% of CYP with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) in Sunderland had a primary need of autism, compared to 25.9% nationally; for SEN support, 7.25% compared to 4.7% nationally (+ 2.55% higher). These findings contributed to the discussion of whether prevalence data establishes an actual increase in autism, or is due to variations in diagnostic criteria or broadening of assessment criteria in recent years (Brugha *et al*., 2011; Isaksen *et al*., 2013, American Psychological Association, 2013; Baxter *et al*., 2015; McConkey, 2020). Alternatively, the increase could be due to increased public and professional awareness, or service availability (Hansen, Schendel and Parner, 2015; Lundström *et al*., 2015; Hayes *et al*., 2020).

Significantly SpLD were lower (-3.63%) than national averages for those with a Statement of SEN or EHCP. However, SEMH needs were +14.03 higher than nationally at 12.3% (26.3%) for those with a Statement of SEN or EHCP. These findings could explain the high rates of suspensions and permanent exclusions reported.

The study identified the need for timely assessment and identification of autism, SEMH needs, SpLD, moderate learning difficulties, and speech, language and communication needs, particularly in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and primary phase of education. The publication contributed to TfC's 5-year SEND strategy.

2.3.2 Publication 2: Barriers and enablers to mainstream school in England

This seminal research is the largest and most comprehensive qualitative research of English school exclusion. It includes 174 semi structured interviews, with CYP (55 aged 5-16), caregivers (41) and education and health professionals (78). The impact of this publication is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 5.

This funder report:

- Provided detailed evidence of the views, feelings and wishes of CYP and their caregivers who experienced school exclusion
- Provided detailed evidence of the views of education and health professionals on the reasons for, and impact of, school exclusion
- Provided detailed evidence of the detrimental impact of isolation booths on physical, social, emotional and mental health alongside academic outcomes of CYP
- Upheld evidence that caregivers felt mainstream schools were unable to meet their child's needs
- Provided new knowledge that some children were held in isolation booths for up to three years of their mainstream schooling, affecting all aspects of their holistic development

- Evidenced that large class sizes, academic expectations and the National Curriculum, coupled with unidentified learning and health needs, were detrimental to CYP at risk of school exclusion in mainstream contexts
- Highlighted inconsistencies in the provision of reasonable adjustments for CYP with disabilities (Equality Act, 2010)
- Identified how failed relationships with teachers and inflexible behaviour systems increase the risk of school exclusion
- Evidenced that mainstream school is an unsuitable provision for some CYP due to multi-faceted SEND requirements
- Evidenced how some teachers are ill-equipped to meet the diverse SEND needs of CYP at risk of school exclusion
- Identified a lack of vocational pathways in education to meet the needs of a range of diverse students
- Highlighted the need for health pathways for timely assessment and identification of SEND
- Highlighted difficulties for CYP in need of support via the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) special circumstances list
- Highlighted that CYP at risk of school exclusion require a paediatric assessment to identify any underlying learning disabilities, neurodiversity or genetic factors

Supporting evidence for the significant contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 5. This publication supported evidence that isolating children can increase harmful behaviours and health effects, including substance abuse, self-medication, anxiety, loneliness and dysregulated behaviours (Hall-Lande *et al.*, 2007; Osgood *et al.*, 2013; Martin-Denham, 2020a; 2020b; 2020c). This contradicts claims that removal rooms and internal exclusions improve behaviour (Hallam and Castle, 2001; Ofsted, 2003; Ofsted, 2006).

The practise of isolation contradicts DfE (2016) safeguarding advice for schoolchildren's health and welfare. Giving schools the option to isolate children can make schools less inclusive (Gazeley 2010; West and Bailey 2013; Gorard 2014; Martin-Denham, 2020a; 2020b; 2020c). One significant outcome the publication contributed to was: seclusion/isolation rooms for disciplinary purposes have been eliminated from the revised

behaviour in schools' guidance (DfE, 2022d). The guidance has replaced 'isolation' (DfE, 2016) with 'removal', allowing for a limited time out of class that should 'allow for continuation of the pupil's education in a supervised setting' (p. 24). This opposes DfE (2016) guidance, which allowed schools to determine what 'pupils may and may not do during the time they are in there' (p. 12).

This publication collectively captures the child's, carers' and professionals' voices, which are limited in other research (Appendix 8, Table 21). Other publications on school exclusion tend to include little research investigating CYP's and caregivers' perspectives, or typically includes the perspectives of *either* CYP *or* their caregivers (McDonald and Thomas, 2003; Parker and Ford, 2013, Atkinson and Rowley, 2019).

2.3.3 Publication 3: Managed moves

This publication is the most extensive qualitative study regarding managed moves, generating, through semi-structured interviews, the views of CYP (20), caregivers (12), SENCOs (11), two health professionals and four teachers; collectively, 49 participants.

There is limited research on the efficacy of managed moves (Bagley and Hallam, 2015). Until this publication, there was little research documenting CYP's experiences of managed moves (Vincent *et al.,* 2007; Chadwick, 2013) and those of their caregivers (Embeita, 2019). Earlier research indicated that managed moves offered a planned route to education (Abdelnoor, 2007). This monograph provided seminal research on the factors that make an unsuccessful/successful managed move from the perspective of CYP and their caregivers. The impact of this publication is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 6.

 This funder report:

- Provided detailed evidence of the views, feelings and wishes of CYP and their caregivers who experienced managed moves
- Contributed to literature exploring the importance of a sense of belonging for children undergoing a managed move (Nind, Boorman and Clarke, 2012)

- Strengthened the importance of engaging with caregivers as fundamental to integrating CYP into school (Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Lawrence, 2011; Levinson, 2016)
- Evidenced that caregivers can be pressurised into accepting a managed move
- Contributed to revised DfE (2022c) proposed 'suspension and permanent exclusions guidance'
- Evidenced how the managed move system did not work for the children; many had multiple failed placements
- Supported evidence caregivers feel mainstream schools are unable to meet their child's needs
- Provided new knowledge that a leading enabler to successfully moving to a new school was leniency in behaviour sanctions
- Provided a new managed move model, emphasising the importance of enduring relationships, collaboration with child and caregivers, and attention to CYP's individual needs (Figure 1)

The managed move model shows the role of the advocate to 'scaffold' the CYP as they reintegrate into schooling. The research demonstrated the need for advocacy, for example, from the SENCO, pastoral lead, teacher or a member of staff the CYP forms a connection with. Supporting evidence for the significant contribution to knowledge can be found in Appendix 6, Table 6.

Figure 1. The managed move model

1. In school advocate to build positive relationships between child, caregiver and school staff.

2. Advocate gathers information from previous school.

3. Advocate invites child and cargiver to a site visit.

4. Advocate, child and caregiver create a bespoke package of learning, pastoral and behavioural support (with leniency), and discuss graduated approach to SEN.

Future communication strategy agreed.

5. Identification and implementation of staff training needed to address stigma and support successful transition.

Whole staff briefing to disseminate the support package, pupil passport and SEN support/EHC plan.

6. Advocate, senior leaders, child and caregiver meet to agree proposed support package.

7. Advocate meets with the child to identify a suitable peer or staff mentor.

Placement commences

8. Advocate provides daily updates to child and caregivers, moving to weekly updates where appropriate, to share successes and to address arising concerns.

Advocate agrees and communicates any modification to support plans with school team

Sense of belonging in a managed move

This study showed that stressful transition experiences can affect self-efficacy, academic achievement and motivation. As detailed in this publication, important friendships in the child's life can be experienced as non-finite loss. After exclusion, many children develop unstable and disorganised attachments, hindering their ability to form stable and enduring relationships.

The publication was provided to the HM consultation group reviewing guidance on behaviour in schools (DfE, 2020a) and 'suspension and permanent exclusion guidance' (DfE, 2020b). It showed that CYP and caregivers felt a 12-week trial period was ineffective and contributed to a managed move failing.

2.3.4 Publication 4: Review of school exclusion

This publication is the most extensive qualitative study to date, eliciting through semi-structured interviews the views of 165 participants on the process and impact of school exclusion, including; CYP (55), caregivers (41), HTs, (55) and SENCOs (14). The impact of this publication is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 7.

This funder report:

- Provided detailed evidence of the views, feelings and wishes of CYP and their caregivers who experienced the process of school exclusion
- Highlighted the need for an update to DfE statutory guidance on school exclusion by changing the terminology of 'should' to 'must', to ensure schools identify and assess underlying causes of behaviours
- Strengthened evidence suggesting caregivers feel mainstream schools are unable to meet their child's needs
- Strengthened evidence suggesting school staff need training and support to identify, assess and effectively respond to the diverse needs of CYP in their care
- Evidenced that CYP at risk of school exclusion benefit from small classes, flexible behaviour policies and a vocational curriculum
- Evidenced the significant short and long-term effects of school exclusion on CYP and their families
- Identified that during a school exclusion, CYP are often not doing anything purposeful with their time (sleeping, gaming)
- Evidenced that caregivers struggled to maintain employment or good mental health due to the stress and frequency of being called into school at short notice
- Evidenced the impact of school exclusion on siblings, an area of minimal previous discourse
- Evidenced the need for better information regarding support and available options for caregivers following a school exclusion
- Evidenced gaps in legal duties outlined in the Equality Act (2010) being met for CYP with disabilities

Supporting evidence for this publication's significant contribution to knowledge can be found in Appendix 6, Table 7. Along with publications 8 and 9, this publication has contributed to the revised DfE (2016) Behaviour and Discipline in Schools guidance with the following update (in consultation):

'The terms "must" and "should" are used throughout the guidance. Where the text uses the word "must", the person in question is legally required to do something. Where the text uses the word "should", the advice set out should be followed unless there is good reason not to' (DfE, 2022d, p. 4).

The publication contributed to the evidence for the SEND review (HM Government, 2022), which acknowledged caregivers do not feel confident mainstream schools can meet their child's needs (p. 10); that intervention happens too late, and teachers are ill-equipped to identify and support CYP's needs (p. 15). The DfE (2022d) behaviour in schools guidance advises that schools should include detail on staff induction, development and support – including regular training for staff on behaviour (p.9), although this is not currently mandatory.

2.3.5 Publication 5: The category 'other' as a reason for exclusion from school

This policy brief examined the percentage of 'other' as the reason for suspension and permanent school exclusion from 153 LAs in England in 2017/18 (DfE, 2019d). This seminal research directly contributed to the removal of 'other' in policy guidance (school census data capture) as a category for an exclusion.

When a CYP is excluded from school, the school reports the reason in the spring school census return. Schools could assign the category 'other' for exclusions when the reason does not conform to the descriptions available. The exclusions statistics guide stated that 'the descriptions should be used as a guide and are not intended as a tick list for exclusion decisions' (DfE, 2017a, p.17). The school census guidance 2018-19 stated that 'the "other" category should be used sparingly' (2019e, p. 96). The impact of this publication and supporting evidence of its contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 8.

This policy brief:

- Evidenced prolific use of 'other' as the recorded reason on school census data for why a child has been given a suspension or permanent exclusion (57% of fixed period exclusions and 67% of permanent exclusions in some LAs)
- Evidenced that 'other' was not used sparingly as per the DfE (2019e) guidance
- Was recognised and commended by The Cabinet Office behaviour insight team and Office for the Children's Commissioner for identifying a previously unknown issue
- Contributed to the removal of the category 'other' in the school census return

This policy brief was pivotal in policy change in the DfE school census return, when 'other' was removed in August 2020 and the change was reflected in the subsequent data collection period of spring 2021. The second recommendation was for schools to be able to record multiple reasons for excluding a CYP, reflecting a more realistic 'why' reasoning. This enables schools to provide a more holistic insight into data capture.

2.3.6 Publication 6: Number of and success rates of managed moves

This policy brief used Freedom of Information data from 149 LAs. They were asked about the number of children who had one or many managed moves, the success rate of managed moves, and reasons for unsuccessful managed moves. The impact of this publication and supporting evidence for its significant contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 9.

This policy brief:

- Identified that less than half of LAs gather data on managed transfers or success or failure and, where data existed, it was typically unreliable and inconsistent
- Evidenced that the efficacy of managed moves in England is unknown
- Identified that the success rate of managed moves varies from 3% to 100%
- Provided evidence that managed moves are increasing but prevalence rates are unknown

- Identified variability in the success of managed moves as a strategy for education provision in England
- Identified the need for adjustments in national data to clarify managed move occurrences and reasons for unsuccessful moves, similar to school exclusions

Legally, schools (including maintained schools and academies) are not required to collect or share data on managed moves (DfE, 2021b). Schools are not accountable as there are no set standards to adhere to (Centre for Social Justice, 2011). Hutchinson and Crenna-Jennings (2019) raised concerns that there is no transparency over the cause and prevalence of managed moves. They added that nationally, they do not know how many children were 'managed moved' to a different school, why they moved, how long they stayed, or with what effectiveness. This policy brief strengthened the argument that data must be captured on the frequency of managed moves and their success. Since publication, the SEND Review (HM Government, 2022) acknowledged that a review of how children move around the school system, including managed moves, was necessary, with a view to introducing a statutory framework.

2.3.7 Publication 7: Drug use as a barrier to schooling

This publication investigated if drug misuse was an indicator of barriers to mainstream schooling or a predictor of school exclusion. The article included data from four face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with carers of teenagers with suspensions and permanent exclusions who had consumed street and or prescription drugs. The article increased the research base for caregivers' opinions on drivers and ramifications of drug use. The impact of this publication is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 10.

This journal article:

- Provided evidence from caregivers of CYP excluded from school on the drivers and implications of drug use on accessing mainstream schooling
- Identified that schools are not consistently recognising, assessing and identifying SEND needs or making prompt referrals to health services

- Identified that long waiting times for health services compound CYPs' difficulties
- Supported evidence that CYP consume drugs to self-medicate, cope with grief and loss, school, and to manage social situations
- Identified further evidence for the necessity to provide timely intervention to CYP as soon as behavioural concerns become apparent
- Identified that drug use can be a predictor of future school exclusions
- Supported discourse that drug use may lead to higher classification drugs being taken, addiction, and short and long-term health adversities
- Provided supporting evidence regarding the detrimental impact on families when a CYP engages in drug use
- Supported the development of strategy for a multi-disciplinary response to identify and assess SEND needs and information sharing in Sunderland
- Provided 1:1 oral evidence and was acknowledged in the Department of Health and Social Care Independent Review of Drugs

Supporting evidence for the significant contribution to knowledge can be found in Appendix 6, Table 10. This article expands current knowledge about CYP's drivers for drug use from caregivers' perspectives. The (Department of Health and Social Care, 2021) independent review of drugs part 2 agrees, noting, 'research in many areas of addiction is underdeveloped and under-resourced, except for opioid substitution treatment.' School census data on smoking, drinking and drug usage for the National Health Service (NHS) stopped in 2019 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Their detailed data is useful, but it just provides numerical data on how many CYP use drugs. Publication 7 supports previous suggestions that young people at risk of using and experiencing harm from drugs include those with mental health issues (HM Government, 2021). The publication adds to the growing body of evidence that intersecting vulnerabilities place CYP at elevated risk of school exclusion (Gazeley *et al*., 2015; Cole, 2015; Menzies and Baars, 2015; Gill, Quilter-Pinner and Swift, 2017; Paget *et al*., 2018).

The DHSC (2021) agreed with the recommendations in this publication that high quality training is needed for teachers to support the delivery of the drug prevention curriculum.

2.3.8 Publication 8: The benefits, or not of school exclusion

This was a seminal piece of research because, at the time of publication, no previous research had interrogated HTs' perspectives on the benefits of school exclusion. This policy brief reported thematic analysis of 46 HT semi-structured interviews to explore whether or not there are benefits to school exclusion. The impact of this publication and supporting evidence for its contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 11.

This policy brief:

- Provided evidence from HTs perspectives on the benefits or not of school exclusion
- Disseminated research of HTs' views on the benefits of school exclusion
- Identified that half of HTs interviewed felt there was no benefit to school exclusion, as the practice did not modify behaviours
- Determined the main reason HTs exclude was to keep staff and CYP safe, and provide staff and CYP with respite
- Provided new evidence that exclusion can be used to punish caregivers; make them realise the seriousness of the situation; or deter others from misbehaving
- Found that some HTs utilise exclusion to inconvenience carers, while others perceive excluding CYP negatively
- Identified that some school exclusions are used to seek external support or to find alternative schools

Significantly, HTs were not convinced that excluding a CYP from school modified CYPs' behaviour, as identified elsewhere (Osler and Vincent, 2003; Dupper, Theriot and Craun, 2009; Gazeley, 2010). Some HTs utilise exclusion to inconvenience carers, while others perceive excluding CYP negatively. This publication identified the need for DfE to update statutory guidance terminology on school exclusions, advising 'should' to become 'must',

thereby obligating schools to address potential underlying causes of behaviour, including a multi-agency assessment.

2.3.9 Publication 9: Defining, identifying and recognising causes of SEMH

This research employed semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis to explore how 41 HTs define, identify and recognise underlying causes of SEMH in their schools, contributing to current knowledge and understanding. The impact of this publication and supporting evidence for its contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 12. This journal article:

- Provided evidence of HTs' views on how they define, identify and recognise SEMH needs, highlighting the variable nature of such processes
- Explored how HTs identify behavioural 'problems and difficulties' as SEN, despite this not being a category within the SEND code of practice (DfE and Department of Health (DoH), 2015)
- Identified a lack of assessment and identification structure for SEMH for education establishments to implement
- Identified CYP are under psychological pressure, particularly in mainstream schools, exacerbating any SEMH needs that are misunderstood or ineffectively responded to
- Identified secondary mainstream schools were less likely to use observation techniques to identify SEMH needs

The article recommended the DfE and DoH (2015) Code and DfE (2017) exclusions guidance would benefit from reconsidering language terminology and alter "'could' or 'should' to 'must' identify and assess SEND and underlying SEMH needs".

2.3.10 Publication 10: Alternative approaches to school exclusion

This publication draws on five semi-structured interviews with young people permanently excluded from school who consumed street drugs. It was the first study to use theographs in

this type of research, thus opening up potentially valuable new methods in the field. The study aimed to determine, through CYP's lived experiences, the drivers and implications of drug misuse and the carrying of knives into schools. This publication contributed to the current debate by providing CYP's views on the drivers and implications of drug use. The impact of this publication and supporting evidence for its contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 13.

This journal article:

- Provided evidence from CYP's perspectives on the drivers and implications of drug use
- Evidenced that some children consume drugs before school to self-medicate, cope with their inability to access learning and teaching, or aid their concentration and reduce the likelihood of sanctions
- Young people don't identify as drug users (they do not use the term addiction)
- Noted a range of factors that compound a CYP's inability to access, enjoy and remain in mainstream school, including an unsuitable and inaccessible curriculum
- Found that enduring relationships with teachers alongside prompt assessment and identification of SEND are protective factors for remaining in mainstream school and reducing drug use
- Supported previous evidence that teachers may not know the warning signs of drug use
- Reinforced the importance of early identification and support for mental health needs
- Noted that placing CYP in isolation booths and detention does not improve behaviour and can lead to deterioration of behaviour
- Noted that friends are more likely to provide drugs than dealers
- Determined that community support and extra-curricular activities could be a protective factor against drug use

Most available research focuses on adult family members who are dependent on drugs, with no searchable research, other than the NHS data capture of young people (Choate, 2015), on CYP, who have first-hand experience of drug use in schools. The findings

supported alternative studies, suggesting that CYP use drugs as a coping strategy for adversities they experience in life and school. Alongside publication 7, this journal article was presented to the Independent Review of Drugs, chaired by Dame Carol Black. The DHSC (2021) supports the findings of this publication, that 'the majority of recreational drug users do not see themselves as having a drug problem and it is a difficult population to influence.' The HM Government's (2021, p. 4) 10-year drug plan proposes to respond to the issues of CYP accessing drugs through 'a comprehensive education about the dangers of drugs. Interventions will happen earlier to stop young people getting dragged into a life of drugs and crime.'

2.3.11 Publication 11: Alternative approaches to school exclusion

This journal article reports the findings of 46 semi-structured interviews with HTs regarding alternative approaches to school exclusion that they adopted in their contexts. The impact of this publication and supporting evidence for its significant contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 14.

This journal article:

- Provided evidence from HTs of alternative approaches to school exclusion adopted in mainstream schools
- Identified that a lack of definition of 'inclusion' can lead to exclusionary practices in mainstream schools
- Documented variability in approaches to supporting CYPs' behaviour in schools, from restraint and isolating children to providing nurture and therapeutic support
- Reinforced previous debates regarding a lack of specialist schools
- Noted that inadequacies in school systems and processes could be detrimental to timely assessment and identification of SEND

In England, guidance has been provided by various Government departments, outlining approaches to preventing CYP from being excluded from school (DES, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1994d; DfES/DoH 2004; DfES, 2003a, 2007; DCSF, 2007, 2009). Few interventions exist for

behaviour difficulties to prevent school exclusion and those that do exist have not been rigorously evaluated (Obsuth *et al.*, 2017). The contribution to knowledge from this publication is that the approaches adopted by sSbools vary depending on the school attended.

2.3.12 Publication 12: Caregivers of CYP with autism and their experiences of school exclusion

This publication shares the findings of semi-structured interviews with five caregivers of CYP with autism. Theographs were used to illustrate the complex journey of seeking and getting support for their children. The impact of this publication and supporting evidence for its significant contribution to knowledge is detailed in Appendix 6, Table 15.

This journal article:

- Provided evidence from caregivers of CYP with autism of the barriers to mainstream schooling
- Supported previous discourse that carers of CYP with autism encounter barriers accessing prompt assessment and identification of SEND across education and health
- Supported evidence that CYP with autism are at increased risk of school exclusion, compounding CYPs' difficulties and stress in households
- Identified the need for training, particularly in secondary mainstream schools, through evidence-based practices for those with autism
- Documented the illegal exclusion of a child with a disability that affected her ability to self-feed, in contraction to the DfE statutory guidance (2017b)
- Utilised theographs from qualitative education data to illustrate a journey to school exclusion
- Documented that timely interventions made a positive impact, although CYP often have referral requests to some health services rejected
- Identified that some CYP with autism are being excluded from school due to unmet needs
- Further developed the use of theographs in this type of research

This was the first publication to use theographs to illustrate the journey of CYP with autism to school exclusion. The findings support those of the Autism Education Trust (2020), that CYP with autism are at increased risk of school exclusion and that early identification, assessment and response to SEND are needed. The article strengthens the evidence that CYP are being excluded not for disciplinary reasons, but due to schools' inability to meet their needs. The publication emphasised the need for inclusive mainstream schools with well-trained staff, so CYP with autism can learn and thrive.

2.4 Impact of the published works

This section summarises the influence of the published works on policy, health and wellbeing, learning and teaching, and general impact. 'Impact is the good that scholars may achieve in the world. It consists of the non-academic benefits that arise, whether directly or indirectly, from research' (Reed, 2018, p. 15).

2.4.1 Policy impact

Despite national concerns about school exclusions, qualitative research on children excluded or facing exclusion is lacking (Potts, 2020; Feingold, 2020; Martin-Denham, 2020b; Murphy, 2022). Limited research evidence prevented the DfE (2019c) from systematically examining school exclusions. Existing research evidence puts policymakers under pressure to enhance CYP outcomes (Hollands, Yilin and Escueta, 2019). They suggested there were gaps in research evidence due to the small scale and qualitative nature of studies at the time. The team leader for suspensions and permanent exclusions (DfE) requested the sum of works on school exclusion to inform their call for evidence on behaviour and exclusions statutory guidance (Appendix 6, Table 16). The published works are held in the DfE repository, where analysts and policymakers use them to inform future educational policy. The Centre for Social Justice will include my exclusion writings in policy research. Moreover, the REF external reviewer (2021) noted that publication 2 is 'rightly critical of local and

national policy regarding excluded children. The conclusions and suggestions for changes in policy and practice are well-judged, appropriate and feasible' (Appendix 6, Table 5).

Publication 2 emphasised the negative impact of isolation booths on CYP's health and wellbeing. A senior family care advisor for the CYP team in the NHS said the findings showed earlier support in schools was essential (Appendix 6, Table 5). The phrase 'isolation' has been removed from the DfE advice on behaviour and discipline and replaced with 'removal' (DfE, 2022d).

My research is gaining momentum after presentations to the DfE, NHS, Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) for England, and the National Safeguarding Disabled Children Group. As suggested by Duke, Denicolo and Henslee (2020), research impact can be sought through dissemination to policymakers, national organisations and practitioners by extending current networks and establishing new collaborations. As shown in Appendix 6, publications 7 and 10 (Tables 10 and 13) were shared with the Chair of the Independent Review of Drugs, who reshared the publications with the SEND review team, to contribute to their evidence base. Appreciation for the contribution of publications 7 and 10 was noted:

> *'I write to extend to you my sincerest thanks for your time, input and advice. Addiction is, as you know, a highly complex and difficult nut to crack, and we have a system that is largely broken and in need of repair. I very much hope that the recommendations of the Review will bring about long-lasting change. Your contribution was invaluable, and I am very grateful for it'* (Appendix 6, Table 10).

Publication 5 led to a national policy change in the administrative data collection for school exclusion. The category 'other' was removed in September 2020, following dissemination of the policy brief to Administrative Data Research United Kingdom (ADR-UK), the OCC and the Behaviour Insights Team (Cabinet Office). Regarding the over-use of the category 'other' in school census returns, the representative from Behaviour Insights stated:

> *'Fascinating and concerning the over-use of "other" and the geographical variation… The risk is that other categories are then used as the lazy next place, but it seems like that's "less-worse" than using "other"'* (Appendix 6, Table 8).

The brief evidenced the inappropriateness of the category 'other', leading to its withdrawal to ensure HTs provided a reason for CYP being excluded from school.

Presentations to the DfE led to publications 2-12 being shared across departments to support policy decisions. Preliminary findings of the research on school exclusions (publications 2-4) were shared with the DfE, to contribute evidence for the Timpson Review (DfE, 2019c). Following a request from OCC, I reviewed their national 'Big Ask' survey, suggesting changes before release. I was an invited member of the expert panel for Ofsted to review an upcoming publication. In this way, I have contributed to national and international research environments, the policy landscape, and professional practice. I have been invited to national and international conferences to share my research outputs on school exclusions.

TfC continues to use the recommendations of the findings of publications 1, 2 and 4 to inform their five-year strategy and training for schools (Appendix 6, Tables 4-7 and 16). A further impact on policy is evidenced in my work context. I identified the need for a University of Sunderland (UoS) policy to safeguard CYP and adults in research, and subsequently co-authored 'Policy and procedure for the protection of CYP and adults in research (safeguarding)'. This draft policy is currently with the UoS ethics committee for consideration.

Publication 1 highlighted the rising prevalence of CYP with a diagnosis of autism. This resulted in initial Government funding of £1.5m and a total sum of £6.3m to provide a special school to cater for the rising rates of diagnosis (Appendix 6, Table 4). The Ofsted (2021) Sunderland SEND area inspection noted that there had been significant local investment in increasing the availability of school places for CYP with SEND and SEMH. The Early Intervention Foundation (2022) agrees that the benefits of early intervention are higher-level qualifications and likelihood of employment.

2.4.2 Health and wellbeing impact

The publications reflect: 'Research that leads to better outcomes for the health of individuals, social groups or public health, including saving lives and improving people's quality of life, and wider benefits for the wellbeing of individuals or social groups, including both physical and social aspects such as emotional, psychological, economic wellbeing and measures of satisfaction' (Reed, 2018, p. 15).

Publications 7 and 10 were presented to the Chair of the independent review of drugs (Department of Health and Social Care, 2021), who discussed the significance of the research in understanding the impact schooling can have on the mental health and wellbeing of some CYP. The publications contributed to DHSC (2021) Recommendation 13 – funding for CYP and their families to access specialist substance misuse interventions (Appendix 6, Table 10), recognising that CYP are more at risk of drug misuse when excluded from school. The review also acknowledged that timely mental health support is essential. The review team shared the sum of publications with the then Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield.

The overall impact of publications 9 and 11 (Appendix 6, Tables 11, 12 and 14) includes commentary from the DfE Head of Research Knowledge and Engagement. They forwarded the articles to analysts and policy colleagues, highlighting the recommendation to change language from 'should' to 'must' in statutory guidance for schools, underpinning the need to assess underlying SEND rather than 'superficially dealing with symptoms.'

2.4.3 Learning and teaching impact

Building on policy, health and wellbeing, the publications led to a teaching and learning impact (Appendix 6, Tables 17-19), which included:

- Updating teacher understanding, leading to changed practice (Table 17):

'Sarah's extensive research on school exclusions and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) has, without doubt, been partly responsible for significantly reducing exclusions (by 80%) within my own PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) setting, as well as permanent exclusions and FTEs (eradicating isolation booths) in those schools we provide a service for' (HT).

'The research also provided colleagues with information to support staff in schools, principally SENCOs, and those working in health and social care to address workforce development issues' (HT).

- Increased reflective practice: As part of a presentation of key findings of the challenges CYP encountered in mainstream school (publication 2), a cohort of BA (Hons) primary education Initial Teacher Training students shared three words they would use to describe CYP excluded from school (pre- and post-presentation). The shift in language is detailed in Tables 18 (pre-) and 19 (post-). The findings demonstrate reflection and a developing understanding that will inform their future practice

- Underpinned understanding of evidence-based practice, informing practice for SENCOs. In 2016, I founded the UoS independent SENCO network. The collaborative network has over 200 members from schools across Northeast England and hosts an annual SENCO conference with 200 delegates annually. I have collaborated with UoS independent SENCO network members to co-author a book, which is a continuing professional development (CPD) tool that will support schools in capturing child and caregiver voices, to inform provision and practice for children with SEND

- Dissemination and continuing professional development: I have contributed to organising research conferences, symposia and other public events related to research

- In 2018, I became the Convenor of the Interdisciplinary Research Network: ACEs. Through this, I promote the UoS, leading multiple national and international teaching and research conferences (with up to 500 delegates per event)

2.4.4 General impact

Publications 8 and 9 have recently been cited in the IntegratED annual report (Wilcock *et al.*, 2022), and publication 3 in the IntegratED AP Quality Toolkit (Simms, 2022) (Appendix 6, Tables 11-12). I am an invited reviewer for Ofsted's research in education; co-chair of the National Working Group (NWG): Safeguarding Disabled Children; and an invited member of the Reducing Restrictive Interventions and Safeguarding Children (RRSIC) national group.

Due to the quality and reach of my research, I have presented at multiple conferences and events (appendix 6, Table 16). I recently presented my research on school exclusions to the executive chair of Research England and the UKRI Institutional Manager, as well as at SENCO conferences and various national organisations. These activities support, develop and promote relationships with external organisations, providing collaborative and networking opportunities. I also regularly review book proposals for Routledge and the Open University, where I am considered an expert in the field of SEND.

For the REF2021, I contributed five publications (three externally reviewed as 4* and 2 at 3*. A further two 3* publications were available but not included, due to individual submission limitations. The external reviewer commended publications 2-4 for the REF (Appendix 6, Tables 5-7).

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter contextualised the 12 publications as individual pieces of work and demonstrated how they made a significant and coherent contribution to knowledge and advancement within the discipline. The chapter explained how the 12 publications were tailored and my role in the process. The influence and impact of the published works was explored.

Chapter 3. Paulo Freire

3.1 Chapter overview

This chapter explores the educational philosophy of Paulo Freire. The thematic analysis of the 12 publications in chapter 5 uses his philosophical perspective to evaluate the themes, offering the basis for debate and conclusions drawn. Section 3.2 considers Freire's influence in education theory, including constructs of integration and inclusion, labelling and syndroming, and the stigma of exclusion. Section 3.3 explores the banking model of education, while section 3.4 provides an alternative approach, 'problem-posing education' (Freire, 1970, p. 60). Section 3.5 examines Freire's discourse dialogue and liberation, and 3.6 an exploration of the concept of conscientização or 'critical consciousness'. Section 3.7 examines Freire and assessment, and 3.8 provides a critique of Freire and a justification of the lens of Freire for the thematic analysis of the published works. This is followed by a chapter summary. Overall, this chapter provides a "pause for thought", to explore if mainstream English education is fit for the many while simultaneously disregarding the few.

Paulo Freire (1921-1997) is described as one of the most influential educational philosophers of our time (Darder, 2018). His first (1968) publication, 'pedagogy of the oppressed' is his most well-known, although many have argued that limiting his legacy to this publication will profoundly limit understanding of his work (Vandenbroeck, 2021; Darder, 2021). Freire was committed to fighting oppression, marginalisation, injustice, dehumanisation and violence (Maviglia, 2019).

3.2 Freire and education

A Freirean lens was chosen to evaluate the published works due to his legacy of critical pedagogy (Pinar, 1988; Lather, 1991; Kincheloe, 2008) for those exploring matters of oppression, inclusion, authentic expression and social justice (Connolly and Harvey, 2018). His philosophies align with the definition of inclusive education provided by UNESCO 2019, that children need an equal chance to learn and develop to succeed in their lifetime. Although Freire did not focus on school-age children, his ideas on adult education, concerns

about social injustices and educational discrimination of marginalised groups are still relevant to learning and teaching today (Ndimande and Swadener, 2021). It is essential to note the Freire's pedagogy is a way of living in the world, or ontology, rather than a method (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2012).

3.2.1 Integration and inclusion

Freire (1970) called for reform of the educational system to humanise and liberate the oppressed. In the same decade, the Department of Education and Science (DES) published the Warnock Report, which introduced the concept of "integration." Integration referred to incorporating CYP with SEN within a common educational structure (Martin-Denham, 2020a). The Education Act of 1981 stipulated that children would be placed in an 'ordinary school' when it would not be detrimental to the education of other children, be cost-effective, and accord with the parent's choice. This concept encouraged education in the mainstream for the majority (Lauchlan and Grieg, 2015). When the Declaration of Salamanca (UNESCO, 1994) urged nations to examine their policies and practises and include the principles of inclusion supporting "education for all", inclusive education and special education were combined for the first time (Tomlinson, 2015).

The notion of inclusion has remained controversial in the education of CYP with SEND due to a lack of detail on what constitutes inclusive practice (Slee, 2011; Farrell, 2010; Hornby, 2015; Glazzard, 2015). Inclusion is ill-defined, with varying definitions (Norwich, 2012), across countries and schools (Ainscow, Farrell and Tweddle, 2000; Haug, 2017). Warnock (2005) clarified her position, supporting placing a priority on the educational experience rather that the type of placement. UNESCO (2017) provides a definition of inclusive education as the process of reinforcing the capacity of education systems to welcome and reach out to all learners including those with disabilities and learning difficulties. This aligns with Freire's (1970) view that we should not seek to integrate the oppressed into oppressive structures but instead transform the structures so they can become 'beings for themselves' (p. 47).

In England, there is growing concern regarding the cost of educational support for children with SEND, as local authorities (LAs) expected a shortage of £889 million in the 2020/21 school year (House of Commons, 2020). According to their analysis, increased expenditures were believed to be a result of the expanding number of children educated outside of mainstream schools. The SEND review (HM Government, 2022) acknowledges that the current SEND system is unsustainable and that a new system is necessary. The review outlines a set of proposals to improve early assessment and identification of SEND and:

> *'To restore families' trust and confidence in an inclusive education system with excellent mainstream provision that puts children and young people first; and the need to create a system that is financially sustainable and built for long-term success'* (p. 5).

Tomlinson (2012) described how the ideology of inclusion has led to large numbers of CYP remaining in mainstream school. They proposed that those unable to succeed are either removed into other schools or segregated within the setting. The evidence presented in publications 2,3,4,7,10,11 and 12 indicates that obstacles exist when including CYP with SEND in schools, partly because of shortcomings in how effectively and promptly agencies assess, identify and respond to their needs. The published works support the notion that there are inadequacies in Government policy, teacher training, lack of multi-agency collaboration, funding limitations, and unreachable accountability measures such as Progress and Attainment 8. Tomlinson (2017) raised concerns that the Government was making GCSE exams increasingly difficult from 2015, leading to higher pass level thresholds and more failed assessments. Shor and Freire (1987, pp, 86-87) also expressed concern regarding the detrimental impact of a prescriptive curriculum and testing:

> 'They are oppressed by this race to the end of term. They are under pressure to use certain textbooks or to cover certain mandated topics in a prescribed order... with too many students. Teachers who deviate from this procedure worry about looking bad if their students do poorly on standard tests or in follow-up courses. Their reputations decline. They could be fired.'

In 2007, the Conservative party (2007) claimed that inclusion was a failing ideology and subsequently endorsed special school provision (DfE, 2011). In 2019, UNESCO defined inclusive education as an effective means of providing all children an equal opportunity to attend the same general school, learn, and develop the skills they need to succeed during their lifetime. Despite this, the DfE (2022c) suspension and permanent exclusion from schools statutory guidance includes no mention of inclusion. Similarly, the behaviour in schools statutory guidance (DfE, 2022d) only references having an inclusive behaviour policy that 'considers the needs of all staff and pupils' (p. 9).

Darder (2017) pointed out that teachers who speak out against oppressive policy and practice, or are perceived to be on the side of caregivers and CYP, are frequently met with conflict and hostility from school leaders. As stated by Freire and Shor (1987, p. 59), 'those who speak out, organize, or deviate from the official curriculum are made an example of and the example of their disappearance is not lost on those who remain.' The exodus from the teaching profession illustrates that all is not well; with two-thirds of teachers in state-funded schools in England reporting feeling stressed 60% of the timed and 44% aim to leave teaching within the next five years (National Education Union, 2022).

Non-inclusive practices and a curriculum that teaches to the test can lead to CYP not coping in school, negatively impacting mental health and increasing the probability of challenging behaviours and school exclusion (publications 2,3,4,7,10,11 and 12). The published works highlight the need for a radical transformation of mainstream schooling if CYP are to remain in that setting, thrive and achieve positive outcomes.

3.2.2 Labelling and stigma

The Education Act (1944) adopted the medical model, whereby difficulties were positioned as a 'within child' problem to be treated, a handicap (sic). The Warnock Report (DES, 1978) saw a move away from terms such as 'maladjusted and educationally subnormal' to avoid adverse labelling/syndroming, and recommended the new category of special educational

needs. In the following decades, concerns regarding the labelling of specific groups of children continued (Hart, 1996): if labels are useful (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Lauchlan and Boyle, 2007); the consequences of labelling (Billington, 2000; Riddick, 2000; Kelly and Norwich, 2004); and connotations of particular labels (Corbett, 1999; Norwich, 1999; Dunne, 2009). The SEND code of practice (DfE and DoH, 2015) attempted to remove the focus on behaviour by replacing BESD (Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties) with SEMH in the hope the focus would shift to understanding and responding to reasons for behaviours.

The danger of labels is that they can take away the focus on the individual characteristics of the child (Ekins, 2012), shifting focus onto their disabilities (Rix, 2007). Billington (2000) argued that labelling CYP can negatively affect how a person is perceived. Moreover, Glazzard et al. (2015) proposed that labels posed the risk of blanket interventions or treatments being applied to groups regardless of their unique strengths and challenges. A further concern is that labels might be disempowering, leading to learned helplessness (Peterson et al., 1995) and negatively impact how a child views themselves (Ekins, 2012; Hickinbotham and Soni, 2021). Others have focussed on the stigma of labels and the negative implications they can bring (Jones, 2003; Lauchlan and Boyle, 2007; Fredrickson and Cline, 2015) including on a child's self-esteem (Taylor, Hume and Welsh, 2010).

Publications 2, 3 and 4 concluded that CYP felt stigmatised for earlier negative behaviours and were unable to rebuild connections and relationships with teachers as a result (Martin-Denham, 2020a; Martin-Denham, 2020c). This sentiment was shared by caregivers, who described how they believed their child was labelled as misbehaving when in many cases it was due to their SEND needs (ibid). O'Connor et al. (2011), Nind, Boorman and Clarke (2012), Michael and Frederickson (2013), Sheffield and Morgan (2017), and Cosma and Soni (2019) support their view that teachers' perceptions of CYP are negatively influenced by past behaviours. Lopes et al. (2012) also found a correlation between negative labelling and entrenched behaviours. Freire characterised self-deprecation as a trait of the oppressed, who internalise the opinions of those around them and believe they are worthless (Freire, 1970; 1983). The evidence suggests that if a child is excluded from school, they and their caregivers might think they will be forever stigmatised by teachers.

Conversely, other perspectives contend that labels can be empowering, as they allow a person to understand their difficulties (Glazzard, 2010), facilitating access to support (Riddick, 2012; Glazzard et al., 2015). Thomas and Loxley (2001; 2007) present a more generalised perspective, arguing that labels are problematic, as they transfer the responsibility from the school to the child. They propose that diagnosis and intervention confine the child in a 'cocoon of professional help' (Thomas and Loxley, 2007, p. 55). Thomas and Loxley (2001; 2007; 2022) claim that labels can lead to a medical model approach of needing to be fixed, particularly for those with SEMH needs who are provided with behaviour support plans.

The ability to have a child assessed for SEND to better understand their multifaceted needs is complicated by extensive NHS waiting times (Martin-Denham, 2020c). This can result in caregivers seeking and obtaining private diagnosis in the belief that schools would then make reasonable adjustments to prevent disadvantage and to strengthen the justification for a non-mainstream placement (Broomhead, 2013; Tomlinson, 2015; Martin-Denham, 2020c).

Internationally, it is acknowledged that to achieve inclusive education, there needs to be a highly qualified and skilled teaching workforce (Mittler, 2000). Freire (1983) was a firm believer that teachers must study their field to be competent in their craft. However, knowledgeable teachers in SEND are lacking, due in part to shortfalls in the quality of some initial teacher training (ITT) providers in England (Brownlee and Carrington, 2000; Hodkinson, 2005; DfE, 2015; Driver Youth Trust, 2015). The DfE (2015) reported variability in ITT programmes relating to training on behaviour management and SEND. In response, the DfE (2019f) ITT Content Framework shifted its emphasis from labelling types of SEND, instead focussing on high quality teaching for all. Ofsted (2010) recommended a move away from categorisation of needs. To represent the priority of quality first instruction, the ITT Core Content Framework does not define techniques unique to distinct types of SEND, as stated in the advice (DfE, 2019f, p. 6).

3.3 Banking paradigm of education

Freire (1996, p. 53) defined 'banking education' as: 'an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories, and the teacher is the depositor…' The teacher's role is to deposit knowledge as a 'gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing' (Freire, 1970, p. 72). Freire (2000) noted that banking education is contradiction to critical pedagogy, as the former disregards the potential and capacity of the subject to reason, 'instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits, which the student[s] patiently receive, memorize and repeat.'

Freire expressed that the practice of dominance prevents dialogue and humility from teachers (Freire, 2018). In agreement, Chambers (2019) described the banking model as a tool of oppression that emphasises directive instruction. This approach is consistent with existing educational policy directives for schools, where it might be argued that teachers themselves are the oppressed – by Government directives, measured via national assessment tools, to monitor teacher and school performance against pre-determined assessment outcomes. Alternatively, schools could point to inspection bodies as oppressors, for example Ofsted, who determine school worth for pupils informed by performance indicators and league tables set nationally. Reflecting on the work of Freire allowed for consideration of a vast array of potential oppressed and oppressor positions, including the fact that teachers, headteachers, service providers and professionals can be both oppressed and oppressors.

The banking approach expects students to absorb new knowledge without resistance, rather than learning by reflecting on past and present experiences (Freire, 1970). Freire (1970) described a 'culture of silence', in which the oppressed are not encouraged nor equipped to know how to respond to their environment (p. 34). To this end, they are passive recipients, with educators who do not invite them to participate creatively in the process of learning (Freire, 1985).

Freire (1970, p. 54) outlined ten features of the banking model of education:

1. The teacher teaches and students are taught

2. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing

3. The teacher thinks and the students are thought about

4. The teacher speaks and the students listen – meekly

5. The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined

6. The teacher chooses and enforces her choice and the students comply

7. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher

8. The teacher chooses the programme content and the students (who are not consulted) adapt to it

9. The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with her own professional authority, which she sets in opposition to the freedom of the students

10. The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects

Snook (1972) argued that the banking model is only implemented during periods of indoctrination. In consideration of this, Goodall (2018) claimed that Freire was not making this point; rather, he was using the banking model to criticise how a school is set up to function. Freire (1985) stated that the connection between the person in power, the dominator, and the dominated reaches a breaking point within their culture and mobilisation towards liberation begins. As mobilisation increases, the dominated can become violent, intimidating those who dominated them.

Freire (1985) held the view that educators can learn from those they teach if they move away from the directive banking model. Freire described the metamorphosis of teacher and student: the teacher becomes one who learns and the student becomes one who teaches; the teacher re-enters the learning process with each new student or group of students (Freire 1994). Freire (1998a [1968], p. 74) describes this approach as, 'here no one teaches another, nor is anyone self-taught'. They are co-investigators; the student knows more about their reality and the teachers have the language to understand it (Beckett, 2017). This approach makes the teacher a 'student among students' Libertad (1998a [1968], p. 70). Dewey, however, did not view the educator as a facilitator of knowledge but as an essential part of a child's education (Roberts, 2000). Later, in Shor and Freire (1987, p. 22-23), Freire

clarified that education 'is always directive, always. The question is to know towards what and whom it is directive.'

Kohli *et al.* (2015) proposed critical professional development that offered 'critical, social justice-orientated professional development for teachers' (p. 11) to counteract the banking approaches to teaching (Freire, 1970).

3.4 Problem-posing education

Freire (1970, p. 60) proposed 'problem-posing education' as an alternative to the oppressive banking paradigm of education. Problem-posing education is a collective process to change an unjust world by challenging repressive forces (Reed, Saunders and Pfadenhauer-Simonds, 2015). Freire (2000, p. 85) elaborated '[Learners] must perceive their state not as fated and unalterable, but merely as limiting and therefore challenging' (Freire, 2000, p. 85). Problem-posing education, often known as liberatory education, is not solely advocated by Freire. Prior to Freire's standpoint, Dewey voiced concerns regarding the formality of how children are taught in schools (Dewey, 1886, 1897, 1916). Effective education, according to Dewey (1902), is achieved when content was presented in a way that allowed children to relate it to their own experiences and interests.

Since the publication of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970), inequalities of opportunity have persisted in British society (Foucault, 1977; Howarth, 2004; Parker and Ford, 2013; Cole, 2015). Symbolic power is held over disadvantaged populations (Bourdieu, 1991) such as children excluded from school.

Denying educational equity is a form of oppression (Freire, 1970), facilitated by the teacher representing the expectations set by the state (Giroux, 1983).

> *'Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his or her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence... because it interferes with the individual's ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human'* (Freire, 1970, p. 37).

'Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it' (Freire, 1970, p. 79).

In Britain, opportunity gaps have existed for decades (Foucault, 1977; Howarth, 2004; Parker and Ford, 2013; Cole, 2015). Inability to conform to behavioural expectations, racial inequality, disability discrimination, and social inequality are other factors (Rollock, 2008; Timimi, 2010; Cole, 2015, Goodley, 2017). The focus on the child and their behaviour distracts from the absence of inclusive teaching, communication and culturally sensitive relationship building (Daniels *et al*., 2003; Lawrence, 2011; Pirrie *et al*., 2011). Freire (2000), spoke of the oppressed not being free to speak about their social and historical reality because the oppressors hold the power. The focus from schools on CYP's atypical behaviours distracts from issues of non-inclusive teaching, negative communication and culturally sensitive building of relationships (Daniels *et al*., 2003; Lawrence, 2011; Pirrie *et al*., 2011). Bagley and Hallam (2015) agreed that some schools focus on presenting behaviours, rather than teaching approaches and social issues compounding inequality in education. As Darder (2018) stated, 'Freire considers pedagogical dialogue as indispensable to developing relationships of cooperation and collective action within school and society' (p.113).

Inequalities, especially disability, are sometimes blamed for challenging classroom behaviour (Rollock, 2008; Cole, 2015; Martin-Denham, 2020-2022). The DfE recognised that CYP could be excluded from school without considering context or experience (Graham *et al*., 2019). For example, where there is violence, disruption or failure to attend school (Russell, 2016; Office for National Statistics, 2019). Unmet needs may contribute to classroom dysregulation (see Caslin 2021; and Martin-Denham, 2020-2022).

Freire (2000) described the foundations of liberative teaching as valuing and acknowledging a CYP's lived experience; through a dialogical-based classroom, you can shift the oppressed-oppressor relationship. Freire commented that all classroom students have disparate and shared histories that influence their worldview (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2012), proposing that teaching must be culturally responsive and inclusive, and this can only occur through

understanding the lived realities: 'What is important in teaching is not the mechanical repetition of this or that gesture, but a comprehension of the value of sentiments, emotions and desires … and sensibility, affectivity and intuition' (Freire 2000, p. 48). Giroux (1985) concurred with Freire (1985), arguing that education should begin with an appreciation for the experiences children bring to school by providing them with opportunities to express themselves. Through critical consciousness, they can change their reality; an outcome Freire (1984) described.

Freire proposed that liberatory education pedagogy would challenge traditional learning and teaching approaches that ignored voice (Cortina and Winter, 2021). The right to be heard is one of the four general principles (Article 12) in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The voices of CYP (publications 2-4 and 10), caregivers (publications 2-4, 7 and 12) and professionals (publications 2 and 4, 8-9 and 11) are embedded into the published works (Appendix 8, Table 21), highlighting the limited research that captures this triangulated voice approach. Despite this, Lundy (2006) reported that children's rights were often ignored or underplayed by policymakers and schools.

3.5 Dialogue and liberation

Freire (1970) proposed enabling dialogue between the student and educator, where the oppressed can make choices and actively participate in their learning experiences. Only through dialogue would 'authentic liberation' occur, as they are enabled to move away from naïve to critical consciousness (Freire, 1984, p. 66).

Freire sought to strike a balance between the traditional function of the teacher (directive teaching) and an approach to education (dialogic teaching) in which CYP self-teach and become advocates of justice against structural oppression (Shor and Freire, 1987; Berk and Winsler, 1995; Piaget, 2013; Chambers, 2019). Freire (1985, p. 55) was unwavering in his belief that the purpose of the educator is to help students become critical of their reality through problematising dialogue. Through this dialogue, Shor and Freire (1987) claimed new knowledge would be created; 'dialogue is a challenge to existing domination' (p. 14).

As Freire (1975) put forward, hope was necessary for establishing a dialogue in learning and teaching. Hope is achieved when teachers are optimistic about the future and instil potential for positive life outcomes (Indah, 2021). Hope is at the core of new beginnings as, without hope, efforts to improve expectations would be weak (Freire, 2021). Freire later expressed the importance of hope:

> *'Without a minimum of hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle. But without the struggle, hope as an ontological need dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness. And hopelessness can become tragic despair. The current situation with the oppressor and the oppressed is dehumanising for all parties. Hence the need for a kind of education in hope'* (Freire, 1992/2014, p. 3).

Monologues, all too often the dominant discourse in education, create closed relationships, whereas dialogue enables trust between two or more people (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2012). Freire (2000) advocated dialogue to build emotionally connected relationships, 'founding itself upon love, humility and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence' (p. 91). Freire (1970; 1998b) advocated educational programmes that were co-designed through dialogue. If dialogue is not available, the oppressed adapt to their situation, '*the more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them'* (Freire, 1970, p. 73).

Freire believed that the oppressed need to lead liberation. Through this, both the oppressed and the oppressor achieve humanisation; 'this, then is the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well' (Freire, 2000, 44). For Freire the goal of education is to humanise and to have faith in humanity 'I hope at least the following will endure; my trust in the people, and my faith in men and in the creation of a world in which it will be easier to love' (Freire, 1972; p. 19). Freire (1998b) rejected the notion that educators should control thinking, instead proposing that learners needed to be 'authentically liberated', so they can be developed and transformed. In earlier works, Freire suggested this was through 'words, ideas, conditions and habits central to their experience' (1970, p. 31). The task of the progressive educator is to 'unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be (Freire, 1994, p. 3).

Freire (1970, p. 26) proposes that the oppressed must not become the oppressor; instead, to 'regain their humanity,' they need to restore the humanity of themselves and the oppressor. Freedom can only be achieved through conscientisation and dialogical education, whereby the teacher and the CYP are jointly responsible for learning (Govender, 2020). This approach leads to the oppressed feeling in control of their education, thinking and conscientisation (Freire, 2000). Shaull (2003) observed that a man's reality is not static or closed but instead 'is a problem to be worked on and solved' (p. 32).

3.6 Conscientização

Dialogue alone is not enough to understand social reality; together people need to act upon their environment through critical reflection to transform their reality, known as conscientização or 'critical consciousness', the praxis of knowledge and reflection (Freire, 1970; Freire Institute, 2022). When people lack a critical understanding of their reality, apprehending it in fragments, which they do not perceive as interacting constituent elements of the whole, they cannot truly know that reality (Freire, 1970). Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy focused on developing and provoking thinking and practices that enable learners to critically and collectively analyse their experiences and reality.

Freire (1970, p. 19) wrote that without epistemological curiosity, people are unable to 'apprehend and comprehend the object of knowledge'. To transform lived experiences into knowledge and unveil new knowledge, dialogue is needed 'as a process of learning and knowing'.

Reflecting on the works of Freire, Shaull (2003) talked about how those who are oppressed:

> *'Come to a new awareness of selfhood and begin to look critically at the social situation in which they find themselves, often take the initiative in acting to transform the society that has denied them this opportunity of participation. Education once again is a subversive force'* (p. 11).

Freire called for opportunities for 'praxis', 'a dialogical manifestation of critical knowledge and creativity, rooted in reflection and action for transformation' (Darder, 2018, p. 125). Freire (1996a, p. 53) stated that 'knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful enquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world and with each other.' His later works underpin this concept of praxis (action and reflection) and conscientisation (developing a critical awareness of social reality) (Vandenbroek, 2021). Without inquiry and praxis, 'individuals cannot be fully human' (Freire, 2000, p. 73). For Freire, critical pedagogy has been about education for both teachers and students to enable them both to act upon the world:

> *'A correct way of thinking knows, for example, that the practice of critical teaching is not built as if thinking correctly were a mere given. However, it knows that without a correct way of thinking, there can be no critical practice. In other words, the practice of critical teaching, implicit in a correct way of thinking, involves a dynamic and dialectical movement between "doing" and "reflecting on doing"'* (Freire, 1998c, p. 43).

Freire (1985) clarified the concept of conscientisation as a human process of reflecting upon 'itself and knowing itself living in the world', to question relationships within that world. He describes that humanising the world is transforming it as beings of praxis (p. 68).

Freire (1989) proposed that, as part of the process of critical consciousness, you need awareness of your situation. It is only through realising your situation that you can break the cycle and transform reality (Taylor, 1993). However, considering that 'to think correctly means to try to discover and understand what is found to be hidden away in things and in facts that we observe and analyze' (Freire and Macedo, 1987, p. 87), if we do not understand the reasons for behaviours and distress, there will certainly be harm.

3.7 Freire and assessment

Freire emphasises the principle of the 'politicity' of education – that is, education is political (Lima, 2021). Teachers are accountable to a system that makes them perform to meet standards, losing their inner self and their reason for being a teacher (Ball, 2003). The education system devalues teaching and teacher values. 'The struggle to bring dignity to the practice of teaching is as much a part of the activity of teaching as is the respect that the teacher should have for the identity of the student, for the student himself or herself, and his or her right to be' (Freire, 1998d, p. 64). Freire (2012) was explicit that the role of education was to understand the cultural, ideological, political and social context of CYP, their reality and cultural identity. However, the homogeneous curriculum in England does not meet the needs of all CYP, only the interests of the neoliberal state. Because of this, it de-professionalises teachers (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2012).

Freire (1970 and 1983) said academic assessment procedures created complacency by making CYP passive learners. Standardisation in schools limits CYP's ability to contribute, produce and share knowledge (Raby, 2014), and creates "banking education" models (Freire, 1970; Kirschner, Sweller and Clark, 2006; Bath *et al*., 2020), oppressing teacher and child (Bybee, 2020). Standardisation hinders the development of lasting relationships and critical thinking (Cilliers, 2005). Freire (2000) claimed such strategies limit learning because the recipient learns facts, not their significance, perpetuating oppression. This narrowing of education has been widely criticised (Freire, 1970; Harris, 2005; Brighouse, 2007; Osberg and Biesta, 2008; Fielding and Moss, 2011; Sahlberg, 2011; Bath e*t al*., 2020). Current performance pressures encourage schools to exclude CYP (Goodley, 2017; Deakin, Taylor and Kupchik, 2018; Martin-Denham, 2020a; 2020b, 2020c). The power to exclude children from school is set out in 'Behaviour in schools: Advice for HTs and school staff' (DfE, 2022d). This allows HTs to write and implement their own behaviour policies, causing discrepancies across schools (Caslin, 2021).

Teachers can be seen as oppressed by their sense of being, as they are bound by regulations (Freire, 1970). Freire (1970) described this as 'cultural conquest', as value systems and standards give way to align with those of the oppressor. In this context, they are programmed to conform to the 'values, standards, goals of the invaders' (national and local

policies) (Freire, 1970, p. 153). Teachers are continuously learning and need opportunities to practice and reflect on practice (Freire, 1998d), as theory and practice are interlinked (Freire, 1998e).

3.8 Critique of Freire

Freire, like all philosophers, had his critics. Hendricks (no date, p.3) described him as 'pompous, inaccessible, elitist and portentous', who overlooked the fact that simultaneously you could be in a powerful position while also being oppressed by others of higher rank. Au (2009) disliked his universal use of the term 'man'. Others attributed a lack of understanding of Freire's philosophy to insufficient scholarship and trying to use it as a method rather than in a critical way (McLaren and Leonard, 1993; Glass, 2001).

Dale and Hyslop-Margison (2010) criticised the absence of formulae or methodological examples demonstrating how to implement Freire's problem-posing approach. Furthermore, Freire did not suggest how to become a critical thinker (Nols *et al.*, 2019). He acknowledged that conscientisation was the weakest aspect of his writing, as it neglected to consider social class or the political nature of education (Freire, 1985). Freire (1970) only ever intended for his writings to be a way of living in the world, or ontology. Freire et al. (2014) specified that in order to understand him, you needed to reinvent him 'experience cannot be exported, it can only be reinvented' (p. 17). Freire himself stated his own work was evolving (Freire and Torres, 1994) as he challenged his own understanding of the importance of dialogue.

I acknowledge Freire's limitations in not providing examples to illustrate his suggested approaches to eliminating oppression. However, through engaging with his philosophy I was able to identify that his ideas were of value to the thematic analysis of my published works and the nature of school exclusion. Freire specifically requested that he be reinvented in order to address social problems (Macedo, 1997). Through reflecting on his concepts, I was able to identify emerging themes that underpin and progress the published works. Although Freire's work focussed on adult education and illiteracy of marginalised groups, rather than children, its significance is relatable. The justification for drawing on Freire for this

commentary was that he remains valuable in aiding reflection of the oppressive forces at work in education. Freire's views were pertinent to the thematic analysis of the published works, since he emphasised the significance of examining context in order to 'recreate and rewrite my ideas' (Macedo, 1997, p. 3). My aim was to become Freirean in my thinking, to be progressive (Freire, 1997) in comprehending the nature of school exclusion.

3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter examined Freire's educational philosophies, constructs of inclusion, including the labelling and syndroming of CYP, and the stigma associated with school exclusion. The influence of Freire on education discourse and the limitations of the 'banking education' approach was explored. The 'problem-posing education' approach was presented as an alternative to the banking approach. Freire's discourse on dialogue and liberation was shared and the concept of conscientização, or 'critical consciousness', was critically discussed. Freire's views on assessment were highlighted with a critique of aspects of his philosophy.

Chapter 4. Research framework (methodology)

4.1 Chapter overview

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommend presenting your worldview, including philosophical decisions, to justify quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodology approaches. Section 4.2 sets out the philosophical position underpinning the published works. Section 4.3 presents the research approach (methodology). Section 4.4 analyses the complexity of adopting competing methodologies in mixed methods research. Section 4.5 outlines the research design for the published works, while 4.6 discusses how issues of validity and reliability were addressed. Section 4.7 shares the ethical considerations for the published works, and 4.8 provides a chapter summary.

4.2 Building a framework for research: Ontology and epistemology

The nature of research is shaped by philosophical positions, reflecting the ontology and epistemology of not only the researcher but also the participants (Bhatta, 2018). Maynard (1994, p.10) explains, 'epistemology is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure they are both adequate and legitimate.' Freire (1985, p. 100) proposed that knowledge is 'not something that is made and finished' rather, in humanistic terms, 'knowledge involves a constant unity between action and reflection upon reality'. Therefore, to seek knowledge, our presence in the world must be the focus of critical analysis.

Crotty (1998, p.10) argues that ontology, the "study of being", influences and is influenced by our philosophical stance or epistemology. Ontology in research provides insight into how the researcher sees the world, abstract beliefs and principles, and can often be reflected in their choices of methods for research and data analysis (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) noted, philosophical assumptions inform the methodology selected based on the ontological and epistemological position. They argue, it 'is not methods but ontology and epistemology which are the determinants of good research' (p. 4).

Philosophically, I am grounded in the phenomenological foundations established by Husserl and other existentialists. The 'human science' approach of hermeneutics and phenomenology are rooted in philosophy and reflective disciplines (van Manen, 2016). For van Manen (2014, p. 2), 'human science' can be used interchangeably with 'phenomenology' or 'hermeneutics'. Through this epistemological and ontological position, the thematic analysis of the published works lent itself to a phenomenological interpretive stance, taking the standpoint that the world is, 'culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world' (Crotty, 1998, p.66). This reflects Weber's (1970) theoretical perspective supporting an interpretive theoretical framework. To understand the world of school exclusion it was vital to examine the views of children, young people, their caregivers and professionals engaged with them to capture their experiences. These different groups would have different interpretations of their lifeworld.

Compared to other disciplines, phenomenology does not aim to *'explicate meanings specific to different cultures (ethnography), to certain social groups (sociology), to historical periods (history), to mental types (psychology), or an individual's life history (biography)'* (Van Manen, 2016, p. 11)**.** Instead, phenomenology strives to explicate the meanings as experienced in the everyday existence of our lifeworld (Husserl, 1970; Schutz and Luckmann, 1973) from the perspective of the person experiencing it (Moran, 2000).

Although Husserl is seen as a founding father of phenomenology, many present-day philosophers (Moran, 2000; Moran and Mooney, 2002; Smith, 2016) suggest that in fact, the origins of phenomenology existed centuries before. Smith (2016) proposed Buddhist and Hindu philosophers practised phenomenology when they reflected on states of consciousness. Husserl (1859-1938) proposed 'pure phenomenology', as a procedural approach that examines your consciousness by removing assumptions of external causes to discover the source of human knowledge (Collinson and Plant, 2006). This view was in opposition to Cartesian thinking and ideas in the 1500s that the mind and everything external to the mind are separated (Vagle, 2018). The phenomenological philosophical position instead suggests:

> *'Consciousness is always directed toward some object… When we*
> *experience something, it is experienced as something which has meaning*
> *for us. A person doing phenomenological research is interested in the way*
> *that consciousness grasps an object or event as something, as it is meant'*
> (Dahlberg, Drew and Nystrom, 2001, p. 56).

Husserl (1970) introduced the term 'lifeworld' to distance from the positivist philosophy, recognising that the lifeworld is changeable, depending on experiences, relationships and time. He rejected positivist ideas that human experience could be separated from the person living the experience to be 'objective'. The research undertaken adopted the position that life is not lived objectively or subjectively but phenomenologically through intentional relationships (Vagle, 2018). In opposition to Husserl, Heidegger (1927/1962, pp. 191-192) argued:

> *'Whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will*
> *be founded essentially upon the fore-conception. An interpretation is never*
> *a pre-suppositionless apprehending of something presented to us.'*

This philosophical view aligns with my view, that we bring our prior experiences, preconceptions and assumptions to research. Husserl coined the term 'bracketing' to describe gaining authentic insight by stripping back pre-conceptions of how you see the world (Hammond, 2021). Heidegger recognised the importance of not allowing fore-conceptions (pre-conceptions) to create obstacles to interpretation (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). He also talked about the notion of 'being in the world' (Heidegger, 1996). My philosophical position aligns with Heidegger and his ontological focus on 'what it is to be'. He held the view that phenomenology is concerned with understanding the phenomena itself. I support the view of Vagle (2018) that phenomenology is a craft; it isn't a singular, unified philosophy or methodology.

4.3 Research approach (Methodology)

Varied realities shape the relationships with participants and the methods of data collection and analysis (McLaughlin, 2007). Lather (1986) outlined that the research paradigm reflects the researcher's beliefs. However, in published research, philosophical ideas remain largely hidden (Slife and Williams, 1995).

An interpretative orientated phenomenology was crucial to thematic analysis to understand CYP's exclusion from school, accepting that knowledge is formed through interpretation and social construction (Morton, 2006). Guba and Lincoln (1994) explain that relativism holds the view that reality is subjective and varies depending on the person. Unlike positivism, reality can be mediated through our senses as we engage with phenomena through our consciousness (Crotty, 1998). Postmodernist researchers have begun to push these boundaries, leading to 'questioning of paradigm constraints' and 'applying eclectic methods to expose contradictions and fluidity between different paradigms' (Lewis and Keleman, 2002, p. 253).

Epistemologically, interpretivism is subjective in that it is based on real world interpretation, developed through participation (Heron and Reason, 1997). An interpretivist theoretical framework was adopted to align with the phenomenological position and understand the human experience. This methodology balanced the positivist single reality paradigm with the idea that multiple realities exist for researcher and participants (Harrison *et al*., 2017). The published works (1-4, 7-12) recognise that different CYP, caregivers family members and education professionals may construct reality distinctly and discretely. The research supports a social constructivist and social constructionist ontology that the lifeworld we encounter shapes what we know. A phenomenological approach enabled distinctness of reality to emerge, providing knowledge and evidence of the relationship between individual reality constructs. During the interviews and conversations with CYP and their caregivers it was apparent they were conscious of how their experiences had shaped their realities. For example, reflecting on the impact of exclusion on encountering ongoing challenges with reading and writing and the legacy of bereavement and loss.

Three qualitative approaches were considered for thematic analysis of the published works: phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and case study. Phenomenology was applied to the publications that focus on lived experiences of school exclusion. Other viable approaches were considered but discounted for the following reasons: Narrative inquiry is suited to understanding experiences through lived stories (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007). Although narrative inquiry examines stories (Polkinghorne, 1995), it was discounted since a storied format wasn't fitting with the research approach. The participants were not sharing 'stories' but sharing their lived experiences of school exclusion and while this could be reported as a 'story' of lived experience the funders' analytical requirements needed to be incorporated into the research design. A case study approach could have focused on detailed experiences of participants, by exploring a 'case', using data from a range of sources (Robson and McCartan, 2017); however, due to the geographical reach and multi cases involved, case study did not readily reflect the publications and would risk elements of the research being narrowed down to reflect the case study approach within the timescales for the research project overall.

Employing a Freirean lens to the thematic analysis provided a basis of meaning to understand the data. Freire (1985, p.101) argued, 'it is not important whether educators are conscious of following a domesticating practice, since the essential point is the manipulative dimension between educators and students, by which the latter are made passive objects of action by the former.' Considering this, the publications bring together both constructivism and constructionism by reflecting individual and collective meaning making. Constructivist frameworks acknowledge that every person's perspective is affected by their lived reality, their interactions, historical and social contexts (Dale and Hyslop-Margison). However, constructivism is sometimes interchangeable with *constructionism*. Crotty (1998) provides a distinction - constructivism is individual, constructionism relates to collective meaning-making. The publications incorporate elements of both. Examining the publications through thematic analysis will allow for interrogation of the individual and collective meanings of risk and protective factors, and the impact of exclusion.

4.4 Applying competing methodologies

Mixed methods approaches have developed since the 1990s (Kansteiner and König, 2020), growing in popularity, especially in social sciences and educational research (Shan, 2022). Historically, combining quantitative and qualitative methods was viewed as being incompatible due to their differing approaches (kelle, 2015). A quantitative approach was seen as positivist (Comte, 1830; Quetelet, 1835; Pearson, 1900), unlike a qualitative research approach, which aligned to constructivist/interpretivist positions (Dilthey, 1883; Weber, 1904; Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This view was supported by Mahoney (2001) who reflected that qualitative researchers were concerned with concepts and theoretical frameworks with little consideration of quantitative findings.

Some view different paradigms as 'irreconcilable' because of 'ontological and epistemological dichotomies' (Mingers and Gill, 1997, p. 13). Weaver and Gioia (1994) disagree, arguing that while central concepts of paradigms are not reconcilable, the principles nearer to the 'boundaries' of the paradigm exist in a 'transition zone'. This argument corresponds with earlier work by Gioia and Pitre (1990), calling on researchers to construct bridges across paradigm boundaries. Some have proposed combining methodologies to better understand a phenomenon being explored (Creswell, 2003), despite differing ontological assumptions (Atieno, 2009). Kelle (2006) noted that 'paradigm wars' have traditionally restricted qualitative and quantitative method integration and argues that opportunities to use both types of methods should be pursued 'in order to compensate for their mutual and overlapping weaknesses' (p. 293).

More recently, it is accepted that researchers can be flexible in their choice of positivist and constructivist/interpretivist positions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004), selecting methods and procedures that best support the purpose of the research (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Johnson (2017) defined such an approach as the metaparadigm, dialectical pluralism, whereby:

> *'The process, in several words, is to carefully, systematically, and*
> *thoughtfully listen, understand, appreciate, and learn from multiple*
> *paradigms, disciplines, values, methodologies, standpoints, ethnicities, and*

perspectives; try to come together on projects that we care about (while

keeping many of our differences), and practicing deliberative democracy

focused on helping all stakeholders' (p. 156).

In short, dialectical pluralism synthesises different research methodologies, methods, positions and standpoints, respecting all major paradigms (Tashakkori *et al.,* 2021) with recognition of differing perspectives (Greene, 2012; Johnson, 2017). This accords with the view of Shan (2022), that dialectical pluralism accepts that there are multiple realities and ways of conceptualising reality.

Johnson (2017, p. 167) advocated that social researchers should 'dialectically listen and consider multiple methodological concepts, issues, inquiry logics, and particular research methods and construct the appropriate mix for each research study.' The approach of combining mixed methods of phenomenology and dialectical pluralism was applied to publications 1-4. This metaparadigm provided a unique approach to exploring challenging topics with multi-faceted elements to 'overcome philosophical incompatibilities between divergent methods' (Binne et al., 2021, p. 4045). Through dialectical pluralism all worldviews are supported (Johnson, 2017), with an ontological position that recognises truths are provisional and subjective (Johnson 2012; Johnson, 2017).

My dialectical and phenomenological epistemology accords with this metaparadigm, as multiple standpoints are valued. Publications 1-4 drew upon mixed methods research; they combined thematic analysis (phenomenological and interpretivist) with descriptive statistics (positivist) to give additional clarity to the phenomenon that is school exclusion.

4.5 Research design

Publication 1 adopted the metaparadigm of dialectical pluralism, combining analysis of school census data on the prevalence of SEND with semi-structured interviews, to provide the quantitative depth other approaches often fail to capture. This sequential exploratory design, where quantitative data builds on qualitative data or vice versa, is used to identify critical and unknown variables between the datasets (Creswell and Clark, 2017; Johnson and

Schoonenboom, 2016). Two further quantitative publications submitted for examination include: publication 5, an analysis of the national school census data return, and publication 6, the outcome of a freedom of information request to share the % of children and young people who received a managed move. Although qualitative, publications 2-4 included counting the number of responses relating to each subtheme. In these publications, a mixed methods approach validated claims, and allowed for expansion of the study and broader interrogation of the data.

The quantitative analysis of school census data in publication 1 led to the commission of the qualitative study (publications 2-4), as it illustrated a higher than national average rate of SEMH needs that required further investigation. Using semi-structured interviews to generate data in publications 1-4 and 7-12 provided the 'child and caregiver voice' that is the fundamental purpose of these publications. Practical aspects of access to gatekeepers, alongside ethical considerations, are detailed in the publications. Access and sample selection was in a geographically specific region, reflecting a non-probability sample. However, extending the study to beyond the scope of the funding to increase external validity would have potentially compromised the study overall (Cohen *et al*., 2002). Furthermore, external validity is limited due to the ontological and epistemological framework, as well as researcher bias, due to my researcher position and employment.

The following section shares the development of the research methods employed, from constant comparative analysis (publication 1) to IPA (publication 7). Publication 1 was the first externally funded research commission with two in-depth interviews. Constant comparative analysis requires comparing arising codes, categories, and concepts across the interviews (Denscombe, 2010). From the outset, interviews embedded the principles of IPA, with participants being treated as co-producers of knowledge rather than as passive attendees (O'Dell *et al*., 2016).

My knowledge, understanding and application of different qualitative analysis methods has developed over my last six years of designing and leading research projects. Publications 2-4 had higher numbers of participants (n=174), (n=49) and (n=165) compared to publication 1 (n=2). Thematic analysis was applied to reflect the higher numbers, provide data organisation and summarise findings (Chadwick, 2013). Due to the volume of qualitative

data gathered in the original study (Martin-Denham, 2020a), a blend of thematic analysis and IPA analysis was applied. Soon after the publication of Martin-Denham (2020a; 2020b; 2020c), it became apparent there was a lack of published research on the lived experiences of CYP with autism (Pellicano, Dinsmore and Charman, 2013; Bölte, 2014), and the drivers and implications of drug use (Department of Health and Social Care, 2021). Smith *et al*. (2009) suggested that approaches suited to larger samples do so at the expense of understanding in-depth individual experiences.

The move towards IPA as a sole methodology was driven by the need for a credible approach that could be used with fewer interviews (MacLeod, 2019). The philosophical position of IPA suited the phenomenological stance that caregivers and children are experts in their own experiences (Smith and Osborn, 2008). IPA was identified to reflect participants' interpretations of their lived experiences by enabling a focus on the particular (MacLeod, 2019; Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). The use of IPA also requires a caution, in that the participant provides their interpretation of events while the researcher, through analysis, brings their interpretation to their work. This double hermeneutic must be acknowledged if researcher bias is to be avoided during analysis (Smith and Osborn, 2008).

Reflexive thematic analysis was chosen as a 'flexible, straightforward and accessible' method (MacLeod, 2011, p. 146) and an accepted phenomenological approach (Joffe *et al*., 2011; Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012). A reflexive approach was chosen as it values subjective, aware, situated and questioning researchers (Braun and Clarke, 2019). Both inductive and deductive orientation was used during the coding, theme development and write up of the thematic analysis. Thematic analysis comprises six phases (Appendix 9, Table 22). During phases 1-5, a latent approach was used to understand the underlying meaning of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2022). Phase 6 included a deductive approach as the analysis was considered with consideration of the writings of Freire. This combined philosophical approach of phenomenology coupled with the lens of Freire aimed to gain insight into the world of school exclusion. A six-step induction process akin to the method described by Braun and Clarke (2006) was adopted to read, code and understand the data. The reflexive nature of thematic analysis allowed movements between phases during interpretation (Terry *et al*., 2017).

First outlined by Merton (1975), varying versions of thematic analysis have been proposed (Aronson, 1995; Boyatis, 1998; Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Braun and Clarke, 2006). Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 113) suggested that a 'more informed' awareness of competing constructions would be achieved through constructivism. However, Clarke and Braun (2018) expressed confusion about 'what it is, what philosophy underpins it and what 'best practice' looks like' (p. 107). Furthermore, Braun and Clarke (2020a, p. 2) noted, 'articulating 'universal' quality standards and criteria for TA is challenging', as it is used within qualitative and quantitative paradigms with differing conceptions of qualitative research. Braun and Clarke (2022) oppose using frequency counting to report themes (2003). However, they do advocate frequency counting if it is not the standalone approach (Braun *et al.*, 2019; Clarke *et al.*, 2019).

Themes and patterns in the dataset were identified through inductive analysis – reading and re-reading the data (Patton, 2002), insomuch that the reflexive researcher can 'step back and take a critical look at his or her own role in the research process' (Guillemin and Gillman, 2004, p. 275). DeSantis and Ugarriza (2000) proposed themes as the active creations of the researcher that do not emerge but are identified. Clarke and Braun (2018) clarified that themes must not be domain summaries of responses on topics but should be conceptualised through a central organising concept that 'underpins and connects the observations', the 'so what' of the data (Clarke and Braun, 2018, p. 108-109). Throughout my thematic analysis, refining was continual, as Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 22) urged, 'one test for this is to see whether you can describe the scope and content of each theme in a couple of sentences. If you cannot do this, further refinement of that theme may be needed'. Application of theory is not optional in TA (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Clarke and Braun, 2018). Subjectivist epistemology, influenced by participant interactions and revisiting interviews, was used to identify meaning in the publications (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The analysis maintained an inductive 'bottom up' approach, as no existing theory was pre-considered to fit the data (Smith *et al.*, 2017, p. 564).

4.6 Validity, reliability and bias

All researchers, as humans who have experienced a wide range of interactions in their life to date, have an element of bias in their views, perceptions and understandings. The key narrative for the publications reflected the 'voice' of pupils who had experienced formal school exclusion. As a pupil who struggled to 'fit in' at school, I was conscious of the position of 'power' I held within the research, both as an academic and as an adult the pupils were unfamiliar with. As a phenomenologist, I had to question the extent to which I was able to elicit the CYP and caregiver's experiences if I was to achieve the focus of the research project overall and provide these pupils with a voice that represented them in their own words. Consideration of the terminology used was crucial to succeeding in the project. It was important not to assume the pupils themselves identified as being excluded from school; they all had different experiences and perceptions of who they were (Camp et al., 2002; Lyons et al., 2006). During interviews, I was aware that due to my own negative experiences of school, my own bias may misrepresent the data by focusing on negative similarities rather than any positive indicators these young people wished to explore and vocalise. I was mindful of my influence on the research process (Guillemin and Gillman, 2004) and, to address this, included questions that asked the CYP and caregivers about what they enjoyed about school, and who helped them and how; while simultaneously repeating key words and clarifying understanding from the CYP rather than using my own interpretation of what I presumed wording meant.

I was transparent with all participants, CYP, caregivers and education and health professionals that I hoped by sharing their experiences, we could inform those in a position of change how school exclusions affected CYP and their families. Every CYP had a trusted adult in our conversations, who helped explain what I was trying to achieve. The CYP seemed to understand that I would be going to 'big meetings' and wanted to share their stories. I also shared that I had problems at school, to highlight that a change narrative was possible. During conversations with the CYP in particular, it soon became apparent that our experiences of school were different; exclusionary but in many ways dissimilar. My powerlessness may have been due to lack of knowledge, understanding and recognition by my teachers of my Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and ADHD, and the impact this had on my ability to participate and learn. Through sharing my experiences, I believe I provided a

safe space for them to have a voice and through this enabled them to feel less powerless. It has been important since the original research (publications 2-4) to share updates with the schools so they can tell the CYP and caregivers the impact their voice has had.

To ensure I was representing the participants authentically, I held advisory group meetings (for publications 2 – 4), to ensure I did not misrepresent their accounts and experiences in the early stages of analysis (Lyons and Coyle, 2007). This was also important as I held a position of power as a researcher in a university. I knew there was national interest in publications 2-4, as these would be the largest qualitative study to date exploring the nature of school exclusion.

I was preoccupied during the analysis that I did not want the publications to fuel negative perceptions in the media of CYP excluded from school. This was particularly the case when reporting on the drivers and implications of drug use (publications 2, 7 and 10). This concern was unfounded as, if anything, the response to the publications has been overwhelmingly one of concern for the wellbeing of the participants. Similarly, I had some concerns that the funder of the research might receive some negative publicity when publications 2-4 were in the public domain. However, the response was positive and the research was influential at local and national levels (Appendix 6, Tables 5-7).

The validity and reliability of the research findings were strengthened through triangulation. Three strategies were applied to validate the qualitative conceptual themes and to ensure the participants were fairly represented: peer debriefing (Creswell, 2007), member checking (Merriam, 1998) and analyst triangulation (Patton, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 308) defined peer debriefing as *'the process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and to explore aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer's mind.'* In contrast, member checking is returning to the participants to solicit feedback on interpretations of the data (ibid.) to verify the trustworthiness and establish credibility (Doyle, 2007; Birt *et al.*, 2016). Analyst triangulation required quality assuring the data analysis with another person (Creswell, 2007). As recommended by Silverman (2000), and to enhance credibility, recursive analysis was applied throughout the thematic analysis of the works.

4.7 Ethical considerations

The UoS Ethics Committee approved the research projects (Appendix 10, Table 23). General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) guidelines were adhered to throughout, with informed consent, the right to withdraw and safe data storage, although this is not 100% assured due to potential technical breaches. Identifiable characteristics of participants were replaced with pseudonyms (Information Commissioner's Office, 2020). The British Educational Research Association guidelines for educational research (2018) were adhered to.

This section shares ethical considerations of leading research with CYP and caregivers. It highlights the importance of a phenomenological methodological framework that would allow an insight into their experiences. My ethical positionality aligns with O'Garry (2016, pp. 339-340), that 'research should be seen as an interaction between the researcher and participants that is characterised by complex and nuanced power dynamics.'

Following meetings with gatekeepers (alternative provision headteachers), it was agreed to refer to interviews for both CYP and caregivers as 'conversations'. The term conversation was less formal than 'interview', which could be viewed as threatening and invasive. My aim was to ensure the conversations were humanising; giving those from 'oppressed' communities a voice, to create a more harmonious world (Freire, 1970). It was important to acknowledge the position of power I held by virtue of my ethnicity and academic position (Wallerstein et al., 2019). I tried to address the power dynamic by sharing with participants that I too experienced difficulties at school and because of this I wanted to help school staff better understand why some children find school hard. I shared that I worked in a university, meaning I might be able to evoke change at national and local level.

In preparation for conversations with caregivers, meetings were held with gatekeepers (headteachers of the school where their child attended). The purpose of the meetings was to share information sheets and consent forms and to discuss accessibility issues and co-create solutions. It was decided that the information sheets approved by the ethics committee would be inaccessible to some caregivers who had challenges with reading. The risk would be that caregivers would sign to participate without understanding what they agreed to. To overcome this, and in collaboration with gatekeepers, a shorter information

sheet was prepared (maintaining critical information). The letter was sent home with the CYP and emailed out to all caregivers in the setting. In the following days, individual class teachers phoned the caregivers to talk through the information sheet and to answer questions. Contact details for those who agreed to take part were shared (with agreement).

I contacted consenting caregivers by phone and/or email to arrange a date/time for a conversation and to answer any questions they might have. In many cases, there were informal text/email exchanges and this was taken as an opportunity to build a relationship. I also attended playgroup/coffee mornings to meet caregivers of children (4-7 years old), which allowed me to talk about the purpose of the research and to find out if they would like to take part.

All caregivers were invited to bring a friend or family member to the conversation or for a member of the school staff to accompany them. They were given the choice of date/time and venue, and all chose their child's school. An informal room that was familiar to them was chosen for the conversation to take place; refreshments were provided. I wore casual clothes and welcomed them as they arrived. Before beginning the conversation, consent was reaffirmed and their right to not answer particular questions or to withdraw by a future date was reiterated. The conversation began with questions of care: how are you today? Can you tell me about your child? And ended with checking how they felt and, where necessary, signposting to support. Following the conversations with caregivers, consent from them for their child to participate was sought.

As outlined in the published works, involvement of CYP was safeguarded and NSPCC guidelines were adhered to (NSPCC, no date). To ensure no CYP was excluded, all were invited to take part (NSPCC, 2020). Both caregiver and child consent were secured for any CYP to participate in the research. A comic strip was used to explain the research as this was felt to be more accessible than a formal information sheet. All CYP were given alternative ways to participate (for example, using art) rather than talking to me. It was of utmost importance that alternative approaches to gathering their views were available, as supported by O'Garry (2016).

All CYP were accompanied by a trusted adult from school or their caregiver. Any CYP who needed support after the interview received it (counselling, additional conversations with staff, and support from external organisations).

4.8 Chapter summary

This chapter set out the philosophical position underpinning the published works and the research approach (methodology). The complexity of adopting competing methodologies in mixed methods research was explored and justified. The research design for the published works was shared and issues of validity and reliability were discussed. Ethical considerations were outlined, including management of power dynamics and developing accessible materials to improve informed consent.

Chapter 5. Findings and results of thematic analysis of the 12 published works

5.1 Chapter overview

This chapter presents the themes that give the 12 publications their defining coherence as a body of work. Section 5.2 signposts samples of raw data from which the publications drew their conclusions. Section 5.3 shares phase 6 of the thematic analysis of the 12 publications; evaluated through the lens of Freire, which strives to advance understanding through his discourse (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2017).

Appendix 11 contains sample raw data, along with the thematic analysis method, process and outcome (Figures 2-8). Appendix 12 shares phases 1-5 of the thematic analysis of the published works (Figures 9-28 and Tables 24-34), and Appendix 13 gives a quantitative representation of the occurrence of the themes and subthemes (Figures 29-31, Tables 35-37). Freire's writings are applied as a lens alongside the thematic analysis to evaluate the risk and protective factors for school exclusion, and the implications for the child and family. A chapter summary is provided in section 5.4.

5.2 Presentation of raw data from a sample of individual publications

Sample raw data and analysed data can be found in Appendix 11 (Figures 2-8).

- Figure 2: Publication 2 – Nvivo (Thematic Analysis)
- Figure 3: Publication 7 – Microsoft Excel (IPA)
- Figure 4. Publication 8 – Microsoft Excel (Thematic Analysis)
- Figure 5. Publication 9 – Microsoft Excel (Thematic Analysis)
- Figure 6. Publication 10 – Microsoft Word (IPA)
- Figure 7. Publication 11 – Microsoft word (Thematic Analysis)
- Figure 8. Publication 12 – Microsoft word (IPA)

5.3 Presentation of the thematic analysis of the 12 publications

The following section shares phase 6 of the thematic analysis of the 12 publications; evaluated through the lens of Freire. Appendix 12 concludes with Figure 28, the final theme presentation of the thematic analysis of the published works.

Figure 28. Representation of thematic analysis of the 12 published works
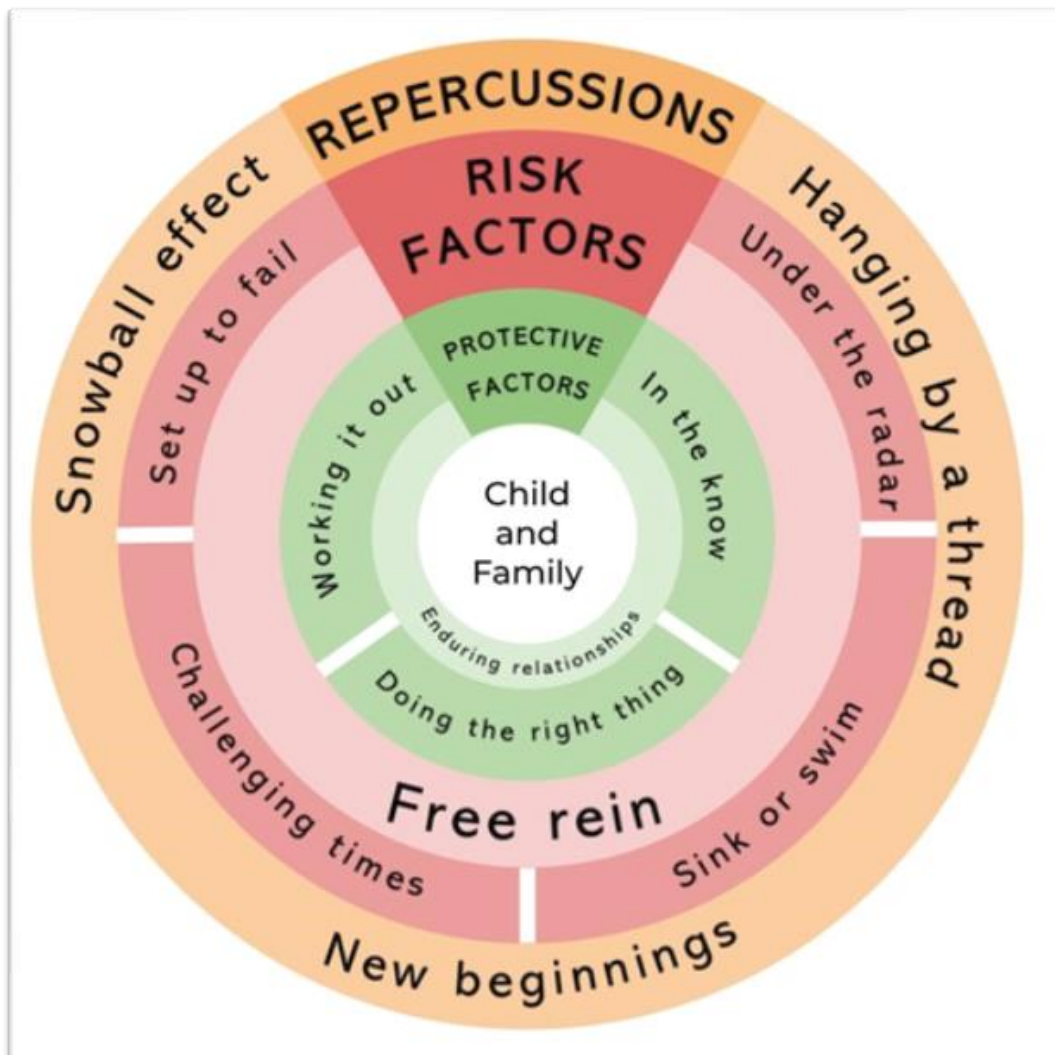
5.3.1 What protective factors buffer the likelihood of school exclusion?

Four themes were identified as protective factors, buffering adversity: 'enduring relationships,' 'working it out', 'in the know' and 'doing the right thing'. Protective factors against school exclusion include maintaining home-school relationships, assessing and identifying SEND needs, knowledgeable staff who understand and meet their legal obligations, multi-agency collaboration across education, health and care, and classroom adaptations to meet needs.

If the likelihood of school exclusion is to be reduced, enduring relationships with CYP and their caregivers are crucial. Enduring relationships with family, school staff, peers, and multi-agency health and support service teams are vital to the other protective factors (Figure 27).

Appendix 13, Table 35 and Figure 28 reveal that 'doing the right thing' had the most coded content, indicating that school staff acting in the best interests of CYP, and giving support to regulate their behaviour, was the most effective safeguard against school exclusion. Sustained relationships with caregivers as partners, positive child-teacher relationships, and training for staff were the second-highest coded references. As the quantified data suggests, providing support to regulate behaviour was the most crucial factor in protecting against future school exclusion.

Enduring relationships

The findings suggest positive child-teacher relationships, caregivers as partners and fostering a sense of belonging protect against school exclusion. Children believed they developed meaningful relationships with teachers when they were listened to, including:

> *'One good teacher. She was the head of the year base. She was always the one who actually listened. She would sort out problems if you had one. None of the other teachers cared'* (publication 2, p. 49).

'Canny... most of them. Most of them are proper sound. They get that you are not going to be good all the time. That you are not going to be perfect, but they help you with that' (publication 10, p. 545)*.*

Freire (1989) said critical consciousness was achieved when people knew the causes of their situation and what they and others needed to do to transform their reality. Despite UNCRC article 12, the right to be heard (UNICEF, 1989), most CYP and their caregivers expressed that they were not listened to, and this was detrimental to forming or sustaining enduring relationships. Their position resonates with Freire's (1970; 2000) suggestion that valuing lived experiences through dialogue prevents oppressed-oppressor relationships.

Caregivers expressed positive relationships with providers who fostered a sense of belonging, such as:

'He finished at the school [AP] two years ago, but I still come back to help them out as much as they help me. They kept me on the straight and narrow there's not much help out there' (publication 4, p. 61).

'I had a good relationship with his teacher. We spoke quite regularly because I picked him up from school. His teacher was also the SEND coordinator, so that was helpful and we just had an eye on it' (publication 12, p. 135).

Comparatively, early years and primary schools fostered longer-lasting relationships with caregivers than mainstream secondary schools. This may be attributed to increased opportunities for staff-caregiver conversations in the earlier years of schooling, when caregivers are on-site for drop-off and collection; *'I am on the yard at night and morning so they can tell me things quickly'* (publication 11, p. 13). Freire (1970; 1998b) placed importance on dialogue to humanise, liberate and transform realities. This suggests that to prevent exclusion, authentic dialogue between CYP, their caregivers, and professionals needs to be promoted. A positive first interaction was important for caregivers feeling valued; *'the first day, we came in to speak to the HT about moving him to the school. The HT knew everything about him. So, he obviously read the care plans'* (publication 4, p. 67). This reflects Freire's (2012) position that knowing a person's reality lies at the heart of the role of

education. As noted by one HT, *'we involve the parents as much as possible. Look, your child is struggling with this…'* (publication 11, p. 13). Several variables facilitated positive school relationships: non-judgmental views regarding parenting, empathy for the child's situation, awareness about SEND, and time to understand their child's abilities, learning, and mental health needs.

In the know

The findings reinforced the importance of knowledgeable school staff adhering to their legal duties to promote an ethos of inclusion (Children and Families Act, 2014; Equality Act, 2010). Complying with the Equality Act (2010), establishing co-produced reasonable adjustments decreased the likelihood of exclusion, as did understanding EHC needs assessment rights. Freire's (2005) concept of adaptation and integration recognises the importance of knowledgeable staff and argues that integration is achieved when knowledgeable staff are employed. Many CYP on the verge of exclusion, or who have been excluded, from school cannot adapt to schools where their SEND or SEMH needs are neither understood nor catered for. Teachers who understand a child's needs and make adjustments are more likely to integrate and transform their reality and protect from school exclusion. Freire (1998d) proposed this requires two actions: practice and reflection.

Many of the mainstream secondary schools included in the publications did not uphold inclusive practices and adopted isolation booths as a sanction for behaviours. In the Equality Act (2010), anticipatory duties should have resulted in reasonable adjustments when the definition of disability was met, rather than segregation. Unfortunately, many of the CYP had 'undiagnosed' disabilities that seclusion often exacerbated; a health professional commented, "*What is the impact of isolation on children with regulation needs? Isolation is not a reasonable adjustment"* (publication 2, p. 65). The revised DfE (2022d) behaviour in schools advice replaced the term 'isolation' with 'removal', but does not clarify the environment the CYP is removed to and fails to mandate recording and reporting the use of this sanction. Freire (2005) described integration as a 'distinctively human activity', which isolation prevents, leading to CYP who were unable to adapt to the segregated environment

and were powerless to transform their reality (p.4), consequently impacting on their physical and mental wellbeing.

Freire (1985) and Giroux (1985) argue, professional development for education should begin with a critical examination of the influence of CYP's lived experiences, disabilities and SEN. Contrary to this, none of the DfE's statutory guidance for schools mandates teacher professional development. Freire (1985) noted that critical pedagogy and a dialogical approach within professional development is essential if teachers are to fulfil obligations. The importance of this finding for policy is that without mandating professional development for teachers on SEND and SEMH, teachers may not develop the critical consciousness to question practices and protect CYP from exclusion.

Working it out

Assessing and identifying SEND and SEMH needs, defined health pathways and multi-agency working, contributed positively to supporting CYPs' needs and protected against school exclusion. Similarly, Freire (1970; 1973) recognised the importance of identifying the problem, analysing the cause and finding solutions, so realities can be transformed, also noted by HTs, for example:

> *'Unpick the root causes behind the behaviours, the way a child interacts with others, or it could be something to do with a child's inability to manage their responses, maybe some inhibition going on there. Sometimes it can just be indefinable almost, but you know there is something very, very wrong that is presenting itself as a barrier to engagement, compliance, to happiness'* (publication 9, p. 198).

The findings suggest that "praxis" – reflection and action (Freire, 2000) was employed to cultivate a critical understanding of social reality, identify needs and protect against school exclusion. The onus was not on the child to transform their reality, as many interviewees did not understand why they has difficulties at school, contrary to Freire's (2000) view that the

oppressed understand reasons for oppression and are best placed to lead their liberation and humanisation.

Most schools that effectively 'worked out' the root causes of behaviours were AP providers, with caregivers describing how they effectively identified SEND, implemented support plans, provided small classes and built positive relationships, preventing further school exclusions; *'They decided to help. Get evidence. Get an educational psychologist. Did all the groundwork. We had meetings; my son inputted; everyone put everything together'* (publication 12, p. 136). The findings reflect Shor and Freire (1987), in that dialogue facilitates partnership working by fostering the creation of new knowledge. However, many of the CYP interviewed experienced years of not coping and then exclusion prior to assessment and identification of SEND/ SEMH in an AP.

The EYFS statutory framework (DfE, 2021) establishes criteria for identifying personal, social and emotional development needs so children can be referred to multi-agency professionals. No such framework exists to support schools in the primary and secondary phases of education. Nevertheless, to protect against exclusion, schools need frameworks for identifying SEND and SEMH in a timely manner, and to encompass Freire's (2012) suggestion that the purpose of education is to understand the reality of learners.

Schools have no option other than to commission expertise to assess and identify SEND and SEMH; *'we involve CAMHS or Children and Young People Services (CYPS), depending on what's appropriate for the needs of that child'* (publication 11, p. 13). A health professional stated there were, *'very clear pathways about who gets picked up and when'* (publication 1, p. 161). Defined health pathways are protective factors for supporting caregivers in seeking timely assessment. However, timely assessment is more likely to occur when a child has complex physical needs, premature birth or is in crisis; *'after his crisis [being restrained by seven adults], the psychiatrist came out to the house to discuss medication with us'* (publication 12, p. 136). This supports debate for early intervention to identify underlying SEND and SEMH needs, to prevent disadvantage.

Doing the right thing

Providing an adapted curriculum, small class sizes, flexible systems and processes, and supported transitions protects many CYP on the verge of or exclusion or being excluded from school. Nursery schools used physical touch to soothe distressed CYP; *'we'll sit together and rock until she's calmed down'* (publication 2, p. 62). Caregivers also identified when schools were 'doing the right thing' by their child, *'they taught him how to understand his belly bubble, meaning he's going to have an explosion, so he can manage it'* (publication 4, p. 67).

> *'They know the children and the signs of each child. How they react'*
> (publication 4, p. 69)*.*

These quotes illustrate a problem-posing, dialogic approach, set out by Freire (1970; 1972; 1973), that involves responding with humility and love. Applying Freire's philosophy (1970) highlights the potential for transformation occurring through the teacher and child's epistemological curiosity about the child's lived experiences and signs of dysregulation. Transformation was achieved by providing staff, via dialogue, the information they needed to understand how to reduce the dysregulation as a process of learning and knowing (ibid).

To prevent school exclusion, personalised learning environments (calm rooms and nurture spaces), small class sizes, shorter days, flexible behaviour sanctions, a tailored curriculum, and self-regulation support were provided. Such conditions for CYP resonate with Freire's (2005) concept of integration rather than adaptation. Most schools (except mainstream secondary schools) were integrative and transformed structures to accommodate diverse needs (Freire, 1970). For instance, AP recognised and responded to the need for a vocational rather than a homogeneous curriculum, relieving the pressure of a purely academic offer. *'We have got placements on offer in construction, a farm and in-house here, which is the best thing about moving into here. We have sport, maintenance and nursery placements'* (publication 11, p. 14).

Some mainstream schools were keen to find ways to integrate CYP into their provision to meet the child's best interests. *'We have a young man at the moment on a transfer. He needs one-to-one support, and we will appoint a TA to do that'* (publication 3, p. 39).

Transfers across schools were most effective when there were similar teaching styles and empathetic staff; *'they teach in a similar way, and the staff are very good at listening. It has meant they have gone on to do their GCSEs and go on to college'* (publication 3, p. 40). Schools that listen to and respond to the child's voice are more likely to comprehend situations and needs, thereby preventing exclusion; *'sticking with it and giving a little bit of leeway, supervising enough and pulling back when he's not doing what we expected him to do'* (publication 3, p. 38). To protect against exclusion, schools need to have the resources to provide environments where voices are heard and responded to, allowing for humanisation and staff that are highly trained. The evidence from the analysis revealed variability in the responses directed towards CYP depending on their age and type of provision they attended.

5.3.2 What risk factors increase the likelihood of school exclusion?

As shown in Figure 28, five themes were identified as risk factors for school exclusion: 'free rein', 'under the radar', 'set up to fail', 'sink or swim' and 'challenging times'. Free rein is the overarching factor that increases the risk of the other adverse themes.

'Free rein' identifies critical risk from shortfalls in national and local policies that allow schools to impose systems and processes detrimental to physical or mental wellbeing. Such practices increase risks of CYP remaining 'under the radar', and to 'sink or swim'. 'Challenging times' and 'set up to fail' also increase when there is no buffer from the protective factors of in the inner circle.

Appendix 13, Table 36 and Figure 30 show that the leading risk factor for school exclusion is being 'set up to fail' through exposure to unattainable expectations (a limited number of sanctions in one day, for example). Children who cannot meet school expectations of behaviour are more likely to receive further sanctions, leading to placement in isolation booths, detentions and ultimately, exclusion. The thematic analysis shows a spiralling decline in behaviours as sanctions rather than approaches to meet needs further compound behaviours. The next highest theme was 'sink or swim', which is inextricably linked to 'lack of in-school support'. If there is a lack of in-school support for children with SEND, they are

less likely to be able to conform to behaviour expectations, as their needs are unmet. If the needs are not made visible through assessment and a plan of support, teachers are less likely to provide the right support at the right time. This results in unmet needs, with children unable to meet behaviour expectations. 'Under the radar', coupled with 'inadequate assessment and identification of SEND', results in the perfect storm.

Free rein

A risk factor for school exclusion is shortfalls in national policy. Freire emphasised 'politicity' of education – that is, education is political (Lima, 2021). National policy directives for schools influence provision and practices in schools. For instance, a secondary mainstream HT described using exclusions for *'trivial reasons'* (publication 8, p. 7). Another commented that school exclusions were encouraged by the Government, stating, *'I think the Government should have another look at this; it's encouraging schools to permanently exclude so that they were no longer responsible'* (ibid).

The lack of accountability diminishes some schools' inclination to be inclusive of those presenting with challenging behaviours. The SEND code of practice (DfE and DoH, 2015) fails to clearly define 'inclusion', only referencing 'schools have wider duties to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations' (p. 93). The statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (DfE 2021) fails to define or refer to 'inclusion'. In addition, the National Curriculum framework for key stages 1-4 (DfE 2014) omits a definition of inclusion, suggesting that teachers *'should'* set suitable challenges, respond to pupils' needs and overcome barriers. These omissions in the statutory guidance could explain why the evidence in this study suggests some schools are exclusionary in their systems, processes and practices, as there is no mandated statutory duty to be inclusive.

The Children and Families Act (2014, s. 23) places a legal duty on LAs, not schools, to 'identify all CYP in their area who have or may have SEND'. Despite this, the SEND code of practice (DfE and DoH, 2015, p. 94) fails to mandate schools to identify and respond to SEND needs; 'all schools should have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN'. The Code (p.97) states, 'a detailed assessment of need *should* ensure that the full range of an

individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need'. The current description of SEMH in the Code (DfE and DoH, 2015) is ambiguous and fails to provide any criteria or thresholds for schools to determine if a child has SEMH needs or when to refer to other agencies. The revised behaviour in schools guidance (DfE, 2022d), and guidance on exclusion from maintained academies and pupil referral units for schools (DfE, 2022c) fail to mandate schools to identify underlying causes of disruptive behaviour or consider the use of a multi-agency assessment. This is reflected in some research participants' comments; *'what they do is just kick you out of mainstream instead of speaking to you, instead of getting to know what's wrong'* (publication 10, p. 545), and *'I had a death, as you can understand, I didn't bother with school. I felt like I coped, but I went into school, just cried my eyes out, I just blew up at a member of staff'* (publication 3, p. 23). The lack of directive suggests that the Government does not see the value in mandating early assessment and identification of SEND. This reinforces injustice and inequalities and causes oppression.

Freire's writings can assist in understanding the implications of not requiring schools to recognise and address underlying behaviours (1985). He explains that the relationship between dominator and dominated eventually reaches a breaking point and the dominated mobilises towards liberation. Many of the CYP who were unable to cope in mainstream school behaved in a way that would cause their exclusion. This would repeat as needs continued not to be met, compounding behaviours in different contexts, with some becoming violent and intimidating those who dominated them.

Set up to fail

Risk factors for school exclusion include substance abuse, exposure to bullying, and possession of a knife. Due to exposure to adversities and/or SEMH/SEND, many CYP were incapable of achieving behavioural expectations in mainstream schools. Not concentrating in class and being unable to sit still was often due to ADHD, autism or SEMH needs. It was not that they didn't want to participate and learn; some could not without adequate support.

Those who were unable to function in class were frequently segregated in an isolation booth; some for up to three school years. Despite some mainstream schools adopting isolation booths, many acknowledged that they did not address the child's underlying needs. One described it as *'a sticking plaster over a haemorrhage'* (publication 2, p. 63)*.* The analysis identified that isolation as a sanction was dehumanising and consistent with Freire's (2018) practice of domination, as CYP are frequently ignored while isolating. When in isolation, the CYP expressed they had no control over the situation, irreparably damaging relationships with teachers. It removed their right to education, exemplified by, *'if you don't do the work, then they put you in isolation. And it's horrible like'* (publication 10, p. 10) and *'not taught, just worksheets; just had to figure that shit out for myself'* (publication 2, p. 51). This concurs with Freire's (1970) notion of a 'culture of silence'. Their world was stolen from them, they felt oppressed and school became their enemy, compounding the likelihood of exclusion. They had to adapt to the oppression; as Freire (1970) wrote, we shouldn't integrate people into oppression but instead transform the structure, so they become 'beings for themselves' (p. 60). They did not have the power to lead the liberation of themselves and their oppressors to achieve humanisation (Freire, 2000). Liberation comes when they reach a breaking point and are permanently excluded from school.

Dialogue was generally not permitted in isolation, preventing Freire's (2000) belief in the power of conscientisation. Without dialogue, the adversities in CYP's lives remained unheard. These findings remind us of the importance of authentic dialogue between teacher and child (Darder, 2017; Freire, 2000). Authentic dialogue requires an enabling environment that fosters the voices of CYP and teachers to be heard; this does not happen when CYP are segregated.

Teachers do not set out to oppress CYP or silence their voices through isolation. School policies, based on national statutory guidance, enable sanctions that oppress children. Through a Freirean lens, teachers can be seen as oppressed by their sense of being, as they are bound by regulations (Freire, 1970). In this context, they are programmed to conform to national and local policies.

Some HTs confessed to setting CYP up to fail, so they could exclude them as a deterrent to other children; *'I would use it, also it's for other children to see. This child has punched this child and that child knows we have dealt with it. Do I overuse it? I don't think so'* (publication 8, p. 4), and *'it's a way of showing pupils that if you do something wrong or display negative behaviour, this is potentially what could happen'* (ibid)*.* One HT remarked they excluded children as it can *'really inconvenience the child or the family'* (publication 8, p. 6)*.*

Sink or swim

A lack of in-school SEND support and insufficient SEND schools increased the risk of school exclusion. Caregivers and CYP said SEN support was needed in mainstream schools, but it was not forthcoming. Many caregivers claimed that reasonable adjustments, as required by the Equality Act, 2010, were not applied, leading to school exclusion:

> *'They didn't put any support in place; they didn't put any time-out breaks in place, no sensory support in place. So, he was dumped into a classroom with 30-odd, it went downhill drastically. There were lots of things that we talked about the day before they excluded him, putting in place for him, an individual visual timetable which he didn't have'* (publication 12, p. 120).

Health professionals echoed the views of caregivers that, despite their efforts, schools were not applying suggested adjustments:

> *'When I write back to SENCOs I say 'Please make adjustments now based on this'. This family has come along to me to say that SENCO said we can't do anything until we have a diagnosis' and I turn that back and say, 'no the school should be doing what they need to do based on the needs instead of waiting for labels'* (ibid).

Failing to recognise children as human beings and denying them educational equity could be considered oppression as described by Freire (1970). The CYP said mainstream schoolteachers couldn't help with learning; for example, *'it would be an hour and a half later before I got seen. So, I would just sit there and do no work. Then I would get wrong for*

doing no work and saying I was stuck' (publication 10, p. 545). The CYP and caregivers were frustrated by the lack of SEN support, and several recognised teachers' burden in mainstream schools, due to large class sizes and accountability measures. Freire (1998d) also talked about teachers' struggle to ensure the dignity of those they teach. Large class sizes prohibit teachers from meeting the needs of their students, preventing them from being fully human. In Freire's problem posing education, he described a collective process to challenge repressive forces in an unjust world. However, he believed that learners need to see their situation not as fated but as limiting and challenging (Freire, 2000).

Transition processes are a risk factor for school exclusion, namely, *'they expect you to know everything [about how the school works]'* (publication 3, p. 27). Caregivers said a transition support plan was crucial:

> *'From my perspective, the underlying issue was the support plan that was*
> *in place in the infant school did not follow him adequately to junior school.*
> *The junior school did not put any support in for him from day one. They*
> *didn't find out from the infant school how they managed him'* (publication
> 12, p. 130).

Caregivers typically noted a need for staff training to understand CYP behaviour. Without training, children would continue to sink or swim depending on their school.

Many caregivers feared there were not enough SEND schools; *'ultimately you're almost dying inside 'cos I'm sending him somewhere that's not able to meet his needs'* (publication 4, p. 56). HTs acknowledged that for some CYP, their school wasn't acceptable; they needed special provision; *'the school isn't right, and they need to go to AP for specialist support'* (publication 4, p. 74). A health professional said the area needed a clear framework to identify children who would benefit from specialist education (PRU, AP or special school). The lack of specialist provision led to CYP becoming lost in the education system; *'dropping off the radar, particularly those in a young offender institution'* (publication 1, p. 168). The analysis revealed that the state does not provide an education fit for all. A homogenous curriculum in mainstream schools is not accessible for some. Insufficient specialist provision causes some schools to permanently exclude children to expedite AP placement:

'If we have a learner and we are really struggling with them, and we feel we are getting nowhere, we've been turned down for an EHCP. CAMHS and CYPS are engaging but perhaps taking forever to get support; I think we do feel that exclusion is the only way for something to happen, for them to accept that this learner needs support' (publication 4, p. 72)*.*

Under the radar

Schools failing to identify and assess or refer for SEND and SEMH; barriers to accessing assessments from health services; and lack of a multi-agency approach, were identified as risk factors for school exclusion.

Most CYP said they had SEND or SEMH issues that their mainstream school didn't recognise; *'A teacher was shouting, "go to your classroom", they didn't understand what was going on in my head'* (publication 3, p. 23). Caregivers agreed that not identifying their child's SEND or SEMH needs contributed to school exclusion, for example, *'rather than just say that the answer is to exclude him; get to the bottom of what was the root cause of the anger and outbursts'* (publication 4, p. 53). Managed moves also failed as a mechanism to integrate CYP into mainstream, as their SEND and SEMH remained unknown:

> *'My eldest child went on a managed move, but the root of the problem was not recognised or supported. How is anything going to change? That is exactly what happened with his managed move. He came back because it wasn't working. But he wasn't diagnosed, and he had nothing in place for his dyslexia'* (publication 3, p. 33).

The analysis implied that CYP are more exposed to Freire's banking model of education (1970). They were expected to learn passively as 'the teacher teaches and the students are taught... the teacher speaks and the students listen, meekly' (p. 54). Those with underlying SEND and SEMH difficulties can't adapt to this model of teaching. Teaching is not culturally responsive or inclusive if their lived realities are not understood or considered. As Freire (2000) noted, intuition is important in teaching, not mechanical repetition. Teachers want a

humanistic education, but schools dehumanise children to the point of exclusion (Freire, 1985). When needs aren't assessed, teachers can't create inclusive classrooms.

The caregivers felt the onus was on them to persuade the school to support identification and assessment of underlying SEND, for example, *'we suspected that something else is wrong; was she autistic or something? We had to push the school because she wasn't like the other children.'* Another HT said, *'we cannot meet his needs. He will never reach the thresholds for an EHCP'* (publication 12, p. 130). And:

> *'We went to the school and said that we would like to go ahead and try and get an EHCP. The headteacher tried to laugh it off. He said, 'he hasn't got a learning difficulty, so I don't think he will be able to get a statement'. They were reluctant to apply for one, to do all that work'* (ibid).

Schools that discourage EHC needs assessments lack awareness of the Children and Families Act legal requirements (2014). 'The child or young person has or may have SEN; and special educational provision may be required' (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice, 2020). Freire (1975) noted that hope and optimism for the future are achieved through dialogue; without dialogue, all parties become dehumanised. The findings support the need for an 'education of hope', proposed by Freire (1992, 2014).

According to caregivers, timely health assessments would have decreased the likelihood of school exclusions; *'you need experts to diagnose children quicker. We had to pressure them; if she had been diagnosed earlier, then she would have got that support, she could have gone to a specialist school'* (publication 12, p. 115).

> *'We had to really fight for it. It took a long time; we kept getting turned away from the GP (General Practitioner). We took an educational psychologist report from the nursery. We took the report to the GP about three times, but they wouldn't look at it'* (publication 2, p. 82).

Health professionals were concerned about capacity difficulties causing delayed assessments; '*There is a limit to what paediatricians can do. As I said at the outset, I think there are major capacity issues with CYPS*' (publication 2, p. 86). Caregivers agreed; '*I was told to wait until he was five; he was only three. As soon as he was five, he was permanently excluded*' (publication 2, p. 78). The special circumstances list, which excludes some CYP from CAMHS due to disabilities or adversities, was another risk factor for exclusion; '*the special circumstances involve a lot of different factors... The exclusion list is a barrier*' (publication 3, p. 87). Also, assessments for ADHD are not carried out until age nine; '*if they get some referrals like that, underage, we will pass those over to them. After that, we triage them and get them on the waiting list*' (publication 2, p. 87). These findings confirm national reviews that schools have major resource challenges in supporting early identification of SEND (DCSF 2008; DCSF 2009; DCSF 2010; Ofsted 2010; DfE 2019).

Challenging times

Exposure to adversity including bereavement, challenges accessing learning, and victimisation are risk factors for school exclusion. Freire (2000) described the foundations of liberative teaching as valuing and acknowledging a CYP's lived experience.

Many of the CYP experienced historic or ongoing challenging times. For some, this led to the use of street drugs. The reasons CYP gave for drug use included, to aid concentration, '*people smoke it before they go in, they get stoned. Because it makes them concentrate more*' (publication 10, p. 542) or to avoid teacher discipline '*I've done it before school, I would just be able to sit in my lesson*' (ibid). These comments imply they were exposed to the banking model of education, in which 'teacher teaches and the students are taught' and the 'teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined' (Freire, 1970, p. 54). Taking drugs to comply indicates a dehumanised education system due to the fear of liberation (Freire, 1985). Through the lens of Freire (1970) these findings suggest the children were consuming drugs to adapt rather than integrate into school. A liberative education with dialogue between the teacher and child should lessen the likelihood of exclusion, as the oppressed can make choices and actively participate in learning.

All CYP believed cannabis would lead to harder drugs, for example, *'I started smoking in Year 5 (tobacco). The green was Year 6. From Year 7-8, I started doing all the pills (MDMA)* (publication 10, p. 544). Caregivers described drug use escalating to addiction; *'he was taking anything he could get his hands on. He says you can walk down the street and you have walked past a dozen dealers without knowing'* (publication 7, p. 11-12). In some cases, drug use caused lasting disability, criminal records, and family breakdown. As Freire (1985) suggested, the purpose of the educator is to support others to become critical of their reality. These findings are relevant to Freire (2000), who suggested teaching must be culturally responsive and inclusive, and this can only occur through understanding lived realities.

Some children disclosed that they were bullied in school; *'I did not enjoy anything about that school, everyone was being mean to me'* (publication 2, p. 48). For some, bullying led to them taking a knife into school for self-defence; *'I got sick of the bullying. It went on for like 3 or 4 years. So, when I nearly got hit by the car, I decided I had had enough. So, I took a knife'* (publication 10, p. 544). Some CYP had techniques to avoid victimisation, for example, *'I would wear the wrong skirt, knowing that I would get put there. I would just do anything'* (ibid).

Caregivers of CYP with autism said being different led to victimisation, for instance, *'he was being teased, but because of his condition he was being bullied; he was seen responding to that … and it just snowballed really rapidly'* (publication 7, p. 132).

Bullying had a significant psychological impact on the children and was a contributing factor to their exclusion from school, as they would eventually retaliate. In reference to Freire (1985), the relationship between the person with authority (the bully/dominator) and the dominated (the child) reached a breaking point, as the child sought to escape those dominating and oppressing them. The analysis indicates that some CYP will act against their oppressors, which Freire would describe as 'praxis' as they reflect on their situation and take action to prevent it from re-occurring through liberation.

5.3.3 What is the impact of school exclusion on the child and family?

This section discusses the themes 'hanging by a thread', 'snowball effect' and 'new beginnings', under the umbrella of repercussions of school exclusion. As shown in Appendix 13, Table 37 and Figure 31, hanging by a thread was the most common theme, followed by snowball effect and new beginnings. This reveals that the main repercussion of school exclusion was the detrimental impact on the mental health of the CYP and their families. Mental wellbeing was compromised by school exclusion and the years leading up to it, spanning many key stages of education.

Hanging by a thread

Being on the edge of school exclusion, or excluded, caused psychological trauma to CYP and their families. It was not uncommon for caregivers to reflect on suicidal comments by their children, such as, *'I want to live in heaven where I can be away from all the nastiness in school'* (publication 12, p. 132) and *'he didn't want to be here. He didn't fit in. Nobody liked him; he had no friends'* (ibid). One caregiver's child attempted suicide, *'the overdose was just before he started here (AP). When he wasn't really in education'* (publication 4, p. 65). Others realised their children's suicidal thoughts through their artwork or writings; *'he drew pictures on a piece of paper of him wanting to die, of him shooting himself, him stabbing himself'* and *'it reached its peak when he wrote on a piece of paper that he had had enough'* (ibid). These comments illustrate the detrimental impact of not coping in mainstream school on emotional wellbeing. Freire (2005) claimed school was a place for friendships and liberation. However, on reflection of Freire (1992, 2014), the CYP had no hope for the future; as an ontological need, the hope had dissipated into despair. They had become fully dehumanised and only hope would enable them to transform their situation.

HTs noted that repeated exclusions and managed moves harmed CYPs' mental health; *'You've been to two primary schools and two secondary schools that throw in a managed move and exclude them anyway; it's no wonder they have trust issues and attachment issues'* (HT, publication 3, p. 42). Caregivers agreed that failed school placements caused their children distress; *'He found him in bed, fully dressed, shoes and backpack still on'*

(publication 3, p. 35). Most couldn't understand why they were excluded from school. Per Freire (1970), ongoing rejection by schools will adversely affect CYP's ability to apprehend their reality. Freire (1989) proposed that as part of the process of critical consciousness, you need awareness of your situation.

A child on the verge of exclusion, or excluded, left families strained. Caregivers spoke of the psychological impact; *'The family was broken. We were broken. Our family has been broken. Things just got worse and worse'* (publication 4, p. 58)*.* One caregiver shared that her husband attempted to take his life due to the stress of school exclusion; *'he had left me a suicide note. I had my son to look after, a husband and my other children. It was just impossible'* (publication 4, p. 59)*.* For others, the ongoing worry led to being prescribed antidepressants, *'I was on Sertraline because I felt like I was going to have a heart attack. I said to my dad, I felt like I wasn't going to wake up on a morning'* (ibid)*.*

Most caregivers with physical and mental health problems didn't associate with their child's adversities. Relating to Freire's (1985) concept of conscientisation as the human process of reflection, caregivers and CYP were too distressed to reflect on the failed relationships that contributed to their dehumanisation. Freire (1970) believed the oppressed need to liberate themselves. Families and CYP are rendered powerless by their situation and declining mental, and in some cases, physical health.

Another repercussion of difficulties in mainstream school and exclusion was disempowerment and the loss of self; *'he has very low self-esteem. He's got no confidence in himself. If you ask him what he can do, he will say nothing. If you ask him to write, he'll say he can't, and he says he can't read'* (publication 3, p. 33).

> *'Irreparable damage has been done. He has lost education, lost all those*
> *life skills. He has a record now. The school rang the Police; they didn't*
> *legally have to. He had paid the price, the ultimate sacrifice, he was*
> *permanently excluded. He was devastated'* (publication 4, p. 64)*.*

Some excluded CYP supported HTs and caregivers' assertions; *'I was disoriented like no tomorrow. I was like Tom Hanks in Castaway. I had no one'* (publication 4, p. 49)*.*

Snowball effect

The repercussions of living with a child unable to cope at school had a snowball effect on the day-to-day lives of CYP and their families.

Repeated exclusion from school harms academic outcomes; *'I forgot how to read and write, how to add and take away, it was hard when I started my next school. I wouldn't do any work. I still can't read properly yet'* (publication 4, p. 49). Illegal exclusion meant some CYP were unsupervised at home, as their caregivers worked. *'Halfway through year 7, I got fixed-term excluded… I was only allowed in once a month; they brought me a computer home. I was home for two and a half years; mum and dad worked. I would just fall asleep'* (publication 2, p. 52). Excluding CYP for extended periods of time interfered with their 'ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human' (Freire, 1970, p. 37), as without education, they become progressively marginalised and unable to transform their reality. For example, some children talked about having work set by the school, but most would play on computer consoles or take part in non-academic activities. They were powerless to change their situation. For Freire (2000), exclusion is a form of dominance that removes dialogue and humility, placing them into a culture of silence. This culture of silence extends from school to exclusion, because CYP are passive recipients unable to respond to their world.

Caregivers struggled to maintain employment or training; *'I want to go to university to be a nurse. Obviously, I'll have to get him settled and sorted before I do anything'* (publication 4, p. 55). Some took early retirement or resigned; *'I would go to work and the phone would be ringing about my son. I just couldn't concentrate. I wanted to throw the towel in. I had to retire'* (publication 4, p. 59)*.* Thus, caregivers and children were oppressed. As Freire (2000) proposed, the oppressors (in this case the schools) hold the power. The ability to maintain employment or training became hopeless (Freire, 1992; 2014). Caregivers had to be available should the schools summon them, negatively affecting family life; *'we were called*

in that much. We had to make sure one of us was always available; she works 12 hours and I work 12 hours (night work). We had to do this to hold down jobs and to bring money in' (publication 4, p. 55). Rarely did supportive employers reduce stress; *'I work full time. Luckily, work has been very supportive. But obviously, I don't want everyone at work to know what my circumstances are, so it has been quite difficult'* (publication 4, p. 58).

New beginnings

For some (or a minority of) CYP and their caregivers, being excluded from school had more positive effects. Due to the quality of AP in the area, exclusion offered a new beginning. Caregivers and CYP agreed that AP transformed their reality by assessing, identifying and responding effectively and empathetically to their individual needs. By discovering the CYP's historical context and identifying SEND to enable reinvention and transformation, the AP's approach aligns with Freire's (1996a) beliefs in hope. Through critical consciousness or conscientizaço, APs, CYP, carers and, where appropriate, multi-agency professionals became aware of the circumstances that led to exclusion from school; A caregiver illustrated this notion:

> *'They started the EHC needs assessment application when he arrived at the school: They decided to help. Get evidence. Get an educational psychologist. Did all the groundwork. We had meetings; my son inputted; everyone put everything together'* (publication 12, p. 136).

Praxis enabled the provision to meet individual needs, for instance, *'smaller classes, so you aren't feeling crowded, the teachers get round to helping you instead of just helping someone else'* (publication 10, p. 546). This is a move away from the banking model to problem-posing. Exemplifying Freire (1985), teachers learned from the CYP how best to teach them, as illustrated by this caregiver's reflection: *'Here he's got the confidence to ask for help if he does need it, whereas before he just... he would rather flip the tables, so he got took out. That was just his way of saying, 'I'm not gonna ask for help''* (publication 4, p. 67). This metamorphosis required the CYP to teach the teacher; they enter the learning process together, as described by Freire (1994).

As Freire (1998b) advocated, educational programmes were co-designed through dialogue with CYP and caregivers, resulting in the CYP engaging in schooling in a way the caregivers had never imagined: *'he runs into school. If we get here 5 or 10 minutes early, it's a struggle to keep him in the car. He does run into school, so, yes, he does enjoy school'* and *'I've genuinely never seen him more settled than he is now'* (publication 4, p. 66). A less prescriptive, more practical curriculum helped several CYP re-engage with learning, giving HTs hope they might stay in school, *'they are going to get him into placements. Because they know that is something he is interested in. More hands-on work than classroom work'* (publication 4, p. 68).

Inclusive schools had a common sense of hope for the future. As they moved to AP, they no longer had a 'culture of silence', as they came to understand how to respond to their new world through dialogic encounters (Freire, 1970, p. 33). As Freire (1975) put forward, hope was necessary for establishing a dialogue in learning and teaching. The CYP and their caregivers talked eloquently about their transformation, as the oppressor/oppressed relationship shifted to acknowledgement and response to lived experiences, as advocated by Freire (2000). For many, liberation and transformation led to a renewed reality, for example a caregiver shared, *'he passed a Year 11 test in Year 10. He is ahead of his work than what he would be if he was in mainstream. Because he is getting the support in this school'* (publication 4, p. 68).

5.4 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the themes that give the 12 publications their defining coherence as a body of work. Samples of raw data from which the publications drew their conclusions were used to evidence the process leading to the publication conclusions. Phase six of the thematic analysis of the 12 publications was shared and evaluated through the lens of Freire.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

The published works and this commentary evidence that I have created a body of work worthy of the award of PhD by existing published or creative works. The publications and thematic analysis as part of this commentary contribute significantly to the limited research that captures the voices of those who have experienced school exclusion. Using a phenomenological approach, the lived experiences of CYP, their caregivers and professionals provided insight into the complex world of school exclusion.

The journey to school exclusion is unique for every child; the commonality was that the period prior to exclusion was fraught with adversity. With rising school exclusions, we need to find ways to reduce preventable exclusions and re-integrate those excluded into education. For some traditional schooling approaches, homogenous curriculum and academic pathways are not in their best interests. To this end, the following conclusions are shared.

The three dialogic phases of a problem-posing education (recognising challenges, analysing causes and finding solutions) put forward by Freire (1970; 1973) accorded with the research findings. However, a fourth problem-posing dialogic phase was found to be necessary: 'enabling relationships' forged on trust and mutual respect. Through unwavering and enduring relationships, re-integrating into schooling became not only possible but, in time, a vehicle to transform CYP's lived reality. Listening to and hearing CYP and caregivers discuss challenges with schooling was key to uncovering adversities in their lives. There is an argument for moving away from the oppressive, for some banking model of education, often found in mainstream schools because of national policy directive, to a relationship-based problem-posing approach. What is important is positive interactions between adults and children that are committed to equality and freedom.

There appears to be a tension between Freire's commitment to transforming education to achieve equity through critical pedagogy and the education system in England that controls schools, policies, teachers and CYP. Teachers must act on state mandates and directives of their educational establishments, which for some conflicts with their professional duty to act in the child's best interests. Standardisation is incompatible with the ill-defined national

inclusion agenda. If mainstream schools are bound by standardisation, they will be more inclined to adopt the banking model.

The causes of school exclusion are complex and multifaceted. Critically, there needs to be a clear Government directive to create inclusive environments within all school communities to prevent oppression and marginalisation. Achieving this requires consensus on the meaning of inclusion and what it looks like in practice. Considering the lack of clarity in national statutory guidance it is not surprising that some schools are not inclusive of CYP with SEND.

The current approach focussed on integrating those who have been excluded to return to mainstream schools rather than, as Freire (1970) suggested, transforming the structures that for many, were the underlying cause of the exclusion. Some schools blame caregivers for their child's behaviours rather than recognising the cause as underlying SEND. The varying perspectives indicate that having a label of SEND can empower or disempower the person depending on how the label is perceived and acted upon. There is the risk that labels impact children's self-esteem and negatively affect how they view themselves and their capabilities. The majority of the children in my research were not on the SEN register, nor did they have a diagnosis of a disability at the time they were excluded from school. Caregivers were driven to seek a label in the hope it would open doors to support in school. Until all schools understand their anticipatory duties under the Equality Act (2010), this situation will not change. The thematic analysis of the publications found timeliness of assessment and identification of SEND to be of vital importance, so behaviours can be understood and responded to.

Problem-posing education in the AP, rather than the traditional banking model, increased engagement and learning. It was not that the teachers relinquished their role as teachers, but instead created learning opportunities in an accessible environment. Freire described the metamorphosis of student and teacher, each learning from the other. Ideally, solutions are co-constructed through dialogue about how best to overcome barriers to support participation and learning. Solutions should not be fixed but instead should be cyclical and continuous, and responsive to the lived experiences of children and their families. As Freire (1994, p. 3) suggested, 'one of the tasks of the progressive educator... is to unveil

opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be.' The findings indicate some teachers are not fully aware of their legal obligations in part due to frequent changes in policy directives; this negatively affects their ability to understand and respond effectively to those with SEND. Affording teachers sufficient time to reflect, plan and act, rather than react could reduce preventable exclusions. Due to the structure, function and specialism of staff in effective AP, it could be argued they are more able to overcome obstacles than mainstream schools with larger class sizes.

Holding CYP in isolation for prolonged periods of time could be considered emotional abuse, using the definition provided by the NSPCC (2022b). Some mainstream schools unknowingly act as oppressive forces, dehumanising and removing CYP to isolation rooms where their mental and physical health and attainment is detrimentally affected. The DfE statutory guidance for schools continues to afford schools the free rein to exclude CYP who they cannot or will not include. These punitive measures escalated minor issues into significant, more disruptive and more frequent behaviours. Such non-inclusive approaches increased the risk of exclusion due to compounded adversity and increased SEMH difficulties. The implications of a child being on the verge of, or excluded, from school had repercussions for the whole family. Psychological distress of CYP and caregivers was not uncommon; for some this led to suicide attempts and long-term medicated support.

If we are to protect the academic outcomes, mental health and wellbeing of CYP and their families, a re-model of the current education system should be considered. AP effectively provided for CYP's needs through timely assessment and identification, prompt reasonable adjustments, a flexible curriculum, small class sizes and supported transitions underpinned by positive relationships. The quality of AP in the localised study was good; this is not always the case in other areas. The broader evidence highlights justified concerns regarding the increased use of exclusion in schools that are part of multi-academy trusts. Where there is an effective AP provision, it should be questioned why this cannot happen sooner, rather than wait for the inevitable exclusion from school. It was largely AP that provided the new beginnings, upholding Freire's view that humans can transform their existential possibilities. Unfortunately, the CYP in the original study were not able to transform their reality in mainstream education. With the current mainstream system, a segregated AP was the only way for those who took part in the study to become liberated and thrive. They were

liberated from an oppressive education system that was unable to assess, identify or respond to the underlying causes of their behaviours. Their AP schools did understand and respond to their diverse needs, enabling them to feel safe, participate in learning, achieve a sense of belonging and thrive. Appendix 13, Table 38 re-imagines Freire's (1970) banking model to a problem-posing approach, to reduce preventable exclusions by transforming realities.

Teachers should be highly trained through dialogical critical thinking approaches, to deconstruct and question learning and teaching methods. The implication for national policy is that without mandating professional development for teachers on SEND, they will not develop the critical consciousness to question provision and practice. To achieve this, investment in training for the education workforce should be prioritised nationally if we are to change responses to behaviour and turn the tide on exclusions.

6.1 Limitations

The thematic analysis of the published works and individual publications cannot claim certainty. The original research (Martin-Denham, 2020a) was conducted in a single city in the Northeast of England, so publications 2-4 and 7-12 solely represent residents of one geographical region in 2018-2020. To address issues of validity, these publications underwent member checking, quality assurance and peer review (Angen, 2000). The quantitative publications (4-6) were also quality assured by members of the research team.

6.2 Future research

Dialogue with CYP, caregivers, professionals and policymakers is the only way to alter deficit opinions of those at risk of, or who have experienced, school exclusion. Ongoing and participatory 'voice' research is needed to capture and represent CYP's, caregivers' and professionals' views, wishes and feelings, to co-construct a solution-focussed approach to minimising the use of school exclusion. Appendix 15 outlines the conferences, events and workshops disseminating my research to date on school exclusion.

The dissemination strategy for this thesis is to present the key findings and Figure 28 through a series of presentations in my sphere of influence. Access to the thesis has already been requested by policymakers in the community and education sectors (Government departments, schools and charities), some of whom will act as intermediaries to those in power. The dissemination events will be followed up with a series of roundtable events to promote the research findings and to support further grant applications.

Since the submission of this thesis, I have led funded participatory research with 213 CYP excluded from school. We co-created nine films and I wrote a free training resource for schools based on Freire's (1970) dialogic phases of problem-posing education (recognising challenges, analysing causes and finding solutions). The name of the project is #pullupachair, chosen by the CYP during a series of workshops inspired by four local artists and a theatre director (https://www.sunderland.ac.uk/more/research/interdisciplinary-research-networks/adverse-childhood-experiences/). #pullupachair highlights the importance of enabling relationships and listening to and hearing the voices of CYP to shape provision and practice based on what they need. A funding application has been submitted for me to lead #pullupachairparents. This project will mirror #pullupachair but will give parents of CYP excluded from school a platform to share, from their perspective the challenges and successes of the schooling system in England.

The theographs in publications 10 and 12 have been positively received. National and local organisations have fed back that these are an effective way of visualising a CYP's journey to school exclusion and identifying missed opportunities to intervene. I have been commissioned to lead a service evaluation that will utilise linked education, health and social care data to better understand the factors and service involvement of those excluded from school. Theographs will be used as a method to visualise the findings, to show the importance of timely assessment, identification and response, to reduce school exclusions, the demand on alternative provision, and to address their detrimental impact on CYP and their families.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

The 12 published works (appended separately)

Appendix 2

Number of schools interviewed out of all schools in Sunderland

Table 1. Number of schools interviewed out of all schools in Sunderland

Type of School	Number of schools in Sunderland	In Sample	Number of headteacher	Number of assistant heads	% of Schools
Mainstream Nursery	8	4	4	0	50%
Mainstream Primary	62	28			45%
Mainstream Secondary	18	10			56%
Special School	7	4			57%
Alternative Provision	6	4			66%
Additional Resourced Provision	15	3			20%
Total	116	53			46%

Note. Headteachers were interviewed for all types of provision except for alternative provision where 1 class teacher and 3 teaching assistants were interviewed in addition to 5 headteachers.

Appendix 3

Complete publication list

1. Martin-Denham, S. (2015) *Teaching children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities 0-25 years.* London: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
2. Martin-Denham, S., Saddler, H. and Donoghue, J. (2017) *The prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16, across the City of Sunderland:* School of Education. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
3. Martin-Denham, S. and Watts, S. (2019) *SENCO handbook: Leading provision and practice*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd.
4. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020) *What is the prevalence of primary and secondary types of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the City of Sunderland? A national comparative analysis of school census data.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
5. Martin-Denham, S. (2020) *An investigation into the perceived enablers and barriers to mainstream schooling: The voices of children excluded from school, their caregivers and professionals* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
6. Martin-Denham. S. (2020) *The enablers and barriers to successful managed moves: the voice of children, caregivers, and professionals.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
7. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020) *A review of school census data on fixed-term and permanent school exclusions in the City of Sunderland.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
8. Martin-Denham, S. (2020) *A review of school exclusion on the mental health, well-being of children and young people in the City of Sunderland.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
9. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020) *Excluding children for no real reason: what is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England? A Policy Brief.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
10. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020) *Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
11. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020) 'The impact and measure of adverse childhood experiences: reflections of undergraduates and graduates in England ACEs', *Journal of Public Health* (Berl), pp. 1-12. Available at: https://doi:10.1007/s10389-020-01359-z.
12. Martin-Denham, S. (2020d) 'Riding the rollercoaster of school exclusion coupled with drug misuse: the lived experience of caregivers', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 25(3-4), 244-263. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2020.1848985.
13. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) *Alternative approaches to school exclusion: perspectives of headteachers in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.
14. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) *The benefits of school exclusion: research with headteachers in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

15. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) *'Walking on eggshells': an interpretative phenomenological analysis of service-users' perspectives of domestic abuse support services.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

16. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) *Family Group Conferencing: a local area research evaluation.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

17. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) 'Defining, identifying, and recognising underlying causes of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties: thematic analysis of interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* 26(4) pp. 187-205. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1930909.

18. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) School exclusion, substance misuse and use of weapons: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children. *Support for Learning*, 36(4), pp.532-554. Available at: https://doi:10.1111/1467-9604.12379.

19. Martin-Denham, S. (2021) 'Alternatives to school exclusion: interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*', pp.375-393. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1983326.

20. Martin-Denham, S. and Scott, N. (2021) *A research review of the impact of 'how to argue better' and domestic violence advocates.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

21. Martin-Denham, S. and Scott, N. (2021) Research evaluation of therapeutic support services for children: a local area study. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

22. Martin-Denham, S. (2022) 'Marginalisation, autism and school exclusion: caregivers' perspectives', *Support for Learning, 37(1),* pp. 108-143. Available at: https://doi: 10.1111/1467-9604.12398.

23. Martin-Denham, S. (2022) '15 years on: my reflections of the influence of a master's module, 'Coaching for Change', on leading research on child and adult adversities. A think piece working paper', in Lofthouse, R. *Working Papers from CollectivED: The Centre for Mentoring, Coaching and Professional Learning A University Research and Practice Centre where collaborative conversations create powerful professional learning.* Leeds: Leeds University, 32-34.

24. Rees, J. and Martin-Denham, S. (2022) *Investigating the demand on the children's home accommodation provided for the looked after population in Sunderland City.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.

25. Martin-Denham, S. (2022) *Co-producing SMART targets with children and caregivers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.* London: Routledge.

Appendix 4

Publication type, paradigm, participants, methods and contribution

Table 2. Publication type, paradigm, participants, methods and contribution

Publication number	Type of Publication	Research paradigm	Participants/data sets/method	My contribution
1	Funder report	Quantitative and qualitative	School census data 2 in depth interviews **Method:** Monograph developed from 2 Semi-structured interviews; Constant comparative analysis (interviews) descriptive statistics (school census data)	37,957 words (83.54%) of the 45,336 word publication
2	Funder report	Qualitative	**174** participants (55 Children, 41 Caregivers, 69 Education Professionals and 9 Health and Support Professionals). **Method:** Monograph developed from semi-structured interviews; interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis	100% of the 45,436 word publication
3	Funder report	Qualitative	**49** participants (13 Children, 12 Caregivers, 11 SENCOs, 2 Health Professionals, 4 Headteachers and 7 children from an advisory group). **Method:** Monograph developed from semi structured interviews, interpretative phenomenological	100% of the 23,210 word publication

			analysis and thematic analysis	
4	Funder report	Qualitative	**165** participants (55 Children, 41 Caregivers, 55 Headteachers and 14 SENCOs). **Method:** Monograph developed from semi structured interviews, interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis	100% of the 28,295 word publication
5	Policy brief	Quantitative	**153** National school census data **Method:** Descriptive statistical analysis	881 words (70%) of the 1,258 word publication
6	Policy brief	Quantitative and qualitative	**71** Local Authorities (LAs) holding data on managed moves. **Method:** Thematic analysis and descriptive statistical analysis	1,121 words (75%) of the 1,494 word publication
7	Journal article	Qualitative	**4** caregivers **Method:** Semi structured interviews, interpretative phenomenological analysis and thematic analysis	100% 9.035
8	Policy brief	Qualitative	**46** headteachers **Method:** Semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis	100% 3,291
9	Journal article	Qualitative	**41** Headteachers retrospectively selected because they answered a specific interview question	100% 7,071

			Method: Semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis	
10	Journal article	Qualitative	**5** children **Method:** Semi-structured interviews, interpretative phenomenological analysis	100% 6,456
11	Journal article	Qualitative	**46 headteachers** (27 Primary school, 10 Secondary school, 4 Special school, 5 Alternative provision) **Method:** Semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis	100% 8,831
12	Journal article	Qualitative	**5** caregivers **Method:** Semi-structured interviews, interpretative phenomenological analysis	100% 7,257
Total word count				**189,236**

Appendix 5

Research funders, award and commission details

Table 3. Research funders, award and commission details

Funder	Commissioner	Commission	Amount	Year
External awards				
Sunderland City Council		Analysis of the prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16 in Sunderland	Withheld for publication	2016
Together for Children		Investigating the factors that impact upon social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people from 3-16 years	Withheld for publication	2018
Research England Quality-related Research Strategic Priorities Fund 2019/2020		To write two policy briefs on school exclusion	Withheld for publication	2019/2020
Research England Quality-related Research Strategic Priorities Fund 2020/2021		To write three journal articles and one policy brief for DfE on school exclusion	Withheld for publication	2020/2021
Department for Education	Together for Children	Research evaluation of the 'Transformation Programme'	Withheld for publication	2020/2022
Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities	Together for Children	Research evaluation to identify how we can better identify and meet needs at a younger age, improving attainment and reducing expulsions and social exclusion over the longer term	Withheld for publication	2021
UKRI Policy Support Fund 2021-2022		Four research projects to understand the risk and protective factors for school exclusion	Withheld for publication	2021
British Academy of Childhood Disability		To analyse if children identified in school census and children in need administrative data as having learning disabilities/learning difficulties had appropriate	Withheld for publication	2022/2024

	paediatric clinical assessments completed and reported across agencies		
Internal research funding			
Interdisciplinary Research Network: Adverse Childhood Experiences	Developing the network, public events and raising awareness of the impact of adversity on children and young people	Withheld for publication	2018/2022
Faculty of Education and Society Research Institute	Writing a journal article on school exclusion	Withheld for publication	2021
		Total awarded: 569,160	

Appendix 6

Impact of the individual publications

Table 4. Impact of publication 1

Martin-Denham, S., Donoghue, J. and Saddler, H. (2017) *The prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16, across the City of Sunderland: School of Education.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland. https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/8853/

Date	Evidence source	Detail/impact
April 2018	Income generation for additional research commission	Commissioned by Together for Children (TfC) to 'investigate the factors that may lead to exclusion from school.'
2019	External review feedback for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 REF 2021 external review	Publication rating 3*
2019	TfC Strategy for SEND 0-25 years 2019-2022	Inclusion of findings Section 6: Population: some key facts (pp. 18-19).
Recommendation 1: To examine with SENCos their knowledge and understanding of Moderate Learning Difficulties and to use this information to plan CPD to support educational contexts in accurate assessment and identification to meet the needs of children and young people with Moderate Learning Difficulties.		
2019	TfC Strategy for SEND 0-25 years (2019-2022). A statement is included in the strategy relating to recommendation 1 in the monograph	'Ensure that all multi-disciplinary training and coaching opportunities 0-25 are in place, effectively co-ordinated, relate to the specific areas of need identified in the recent University of Sunderland research and are of high quality across the borough' (p. 34).

Recommendation 3: Due to increase in prevalence of SEMH between 2016 and 2017, it is recommended that there is a focus on early identification of SEMH and ensure that all educational settings in Sunderland are equipped to support children and young people with this primary need.		
Oct 2020	SEND Strategic Partnership Minutes reference in the minutes to the setting up of two assessment hubs in the City of Sunderland in response to recommendation 3 in the monograph.	'Two assessment hubs have been set up, one for primary and one for secondary. 12 place units. Educational psychologists, mental health counsellors, reintegration staff teachers have been pulled together looking to carryout intervention before a child gets to crisis' (p.2). 'Hubs will be evaluated after a year to check if having the impact, we want and if successful they may be extended across the city (p.2).'
Sept 2021	The positive impact of new assessment hubs recognised as a strength in the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission CQC Sunderland SEND Area Inspection.	'New assessment hubs in schools for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs have contributed strongly to timely identification of their needs. Here, children and young people attend a hub for a specific period of time in order that their exact needs are identified (p.2). 'Leaders have a realistic picture of the area's effectiveness in identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND. The area's self-evaluation clearly identifies what needs to be done. Improvement plans are in place that are designed to further improve the area's effectiveness' (p. 2).
Recommendation 5: To work closely with nursery/school leaders and SENCos to ensure that all children with SpLD have their needs assessed and identified by an Educational Psychologist or other trained professional.		
Oct 2020	Reference in the SEND Strategic Partnership Minutes	'Training for newly qualified teachers. Half termly training for SENCos. Sensory teams are picking up training on dyslexia' (p. 7).
Recommendation 10: To ensure the timely transfer of all 322 children currently in receipt of a Statement of SEN to an EHC plan by April 2018.		
Jan 2019	Response to recommendation 10 in local guidance for Sunderland City Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Special Educational Needs and	'Sunderland fully converted all of its statements of special educational needs to EHCPs within the statutory timeframe. There is evidence that health and education services routinely contribute to the EHCP process but that input from social care is less consistent. A recommendation from the University of Sunderland research is to examine ways of

	Disability to inform the commissioning of services	consistently engage social care to promote effective multi agency working' (p. 8).
Sept 2021	Relating to recommendation 10 the timeliness of administering applications for education, health and care needs assessments identified as a strength in the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission CQC Sunderland SEND Area Inspection.	'Area leaders have renewed the format of EHC plans' (P.6). 'The timeliness of completing education, health and care (EHC) plans is above the national average. The newly formed 'SEND panel' is increasingly effective at administering applications for EHC plans. Area leaders are confident about the quality of evidence that is gathered for EHC assessments' (p.4).

Recommendation 11: A high number of children identified with autism have been awarded Statements/EHC plans. This is indicative of a particularly high prevalence of autism in Sunderland. It is important that the Council reviews all provisions for children identified with autism to inform future planning and CPD needs of staff over the next five years.

Sept 2019	Article in the Chronicle – comment from Councillor Louise Farthing https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/new-63m-sunderland-specialist-autism-17457809.	'The council netted £6.3m in grant funding to develop the academy, which is being built by the Kier Group and is due to be completed in January 2021.' 'Cabinet member for Children, Learning and Skills, Councillor Louise Farthing, said: "Demand for school places for children with autism has been rising. These are children with complex, social, behavioural and emotional needs. As there is increasing demand for specialist school places, it is right and correct that they are met locally.'
Sept 2021	Ofsted and Care Quality Commission CQC Sunderland SEND Area Inspection.	**Main findings Ofsted 2021** 'There has been significant investment in increasing specialist provision for children and young people with SEND. New schools have been opened, and there has been an increase in the number of ARPs within schools. Some of these settings have been opened in response to the growing number of children and young people with autism and those with SEMH difficulties in the area' (p. 5)

Recommendation 16: To use the Local Offer to make it easier for parents and carers to compare the quality of early years services, including childcare for children before the start of Reception.

Jan 2019	Response to recommendation 16 in local guidance for Sunderland City	'Research conducted by the University of Sunderland recommends that the Council should use the 'Local Offer' to make it easier for parents and carers to compare the quality of early years

	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Special Educational Needs and Disability to inform the commissioning of services	services, including childcare for children before the start of Reception' (p, 8).
Recommendation 19: Identify a key person with responsibility for promoting multi-agency working between CYPS, Paediatricians and CAMHS, to undertake initial assessments of children presenting with SEMH difficulties concurrently, wherever possible. This will ensure that needs are clearly understood and plans swiftly drawn up to meet them.		
Oct 2020	SEND Strategic Commissioning Plan 2020-2023	Support the CAMHS Partnership to design a Single Point of Access (SPoA) into mental health services (p. 15).
Recommendation 21: To devise and distribute an exemplar Education, Health and Care Plan and accompanying evidence to support SENCos. This will have the added benefit of improving the efficiency of the SEN Panel meetings.		
2019	TfC Professional Portal. Website Link: https://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/services/professional-portal	The portal includes templates for EHC needs assessment requests.
Oct 2020	SEND Strategic Partnership Minutes	TfC have developed an electronic provision map/intervention to go into EHCP to support SEND panels.
Recommendation 25: Review current data-sharing policies to enable sharing of data, where appropriate, between CCG, NHS Digital, LA and DMO to inform better identification of needs and local decision-making around SEND. A meeting should be arranged with Horridge (2016a) to discuss the outcomes of her research into recording the multifaceted needs of children and ways in which this information can be ethically shared.		
March 2022	Invitation to meet with NHS England & NHS Improvement	
May 2022	Invitation to meet with Social Finance	

Table 5. Impact of publication 2

Martin-Denham, S. (2020a) *An investigation into the perceived enablers and barriers to mainstream schooling: The voices of children excluded from school, their caregivers and professionals*. Sunderland: University of Sunderland. https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/11941/		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
May 2020	External review feedback for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 REF 2021 external review	Publication rating 4*

Dec 2020	Blog post: British Educational Research Association 'Isolation booth to school exclusion: We need to find a better way'	BERA publications Available at: https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/isolation-booth-to-school-exclusion-we-need-to-find-a-better-way 'Your blog has, to date (Sept 2021), received 970 page views and 883 unique page views'.
March 2021	Email confirming submission to the Research Excellence Framework	'Dear Sarah, on behalf of the REF Working Group I am pleased to confirm that the following output was selected for the institutional submission to REF2021.
July 2021	Email from NHS England representative	'Enormous thanks to Sarah for her clear, enlightening, challenging and important presentation; her work is opening up debate about isolation and how children are seen and how they are affected by being treated in these ways is critical in informing other practitioners about what may be happening behind closed doors in schools and how current guidance about isolation booths may be misinterpreted. We need to work together across organisations to raise awareness and increase understanding about what all children need, listen to children and young people and find out what their behaviour is telling us. They need us to individualise responses and support teachers and teaching colleagues, parents and carers. Sarah's work led to highly productive discussion and is presented in ways that so succinctly map the missed opportunities to get earlier help in, to work together and to better understand what is going on for each child who needs and has a right to our attention'
Jan 2022	The publication contributed to the review of behaviour in schools guidance (DfE, 2022a) Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools--2	Reference to seclusion/isolation rooms has been removed as a method of discipline. The guidance has replaced 'isolation' (DfE, 2016) with 'removal' allowing for a limited time out of class, that should 'allow for continuation of the pupil's education in a supervised setting' (p. 24). This is a change from the DfE (2016) guidance that allowed school to determine what 'pupils may and may not do during the time they are in there' (p. 12).
Nov 2022	Cited multiple times in Ofsted study 'Alternative provision for primary-age pupils in England: a long-term	Available at: www.gov.uk

	‘destination’ or a ‘temporary solution’?	

Table 6. Impact of publication 3

Martin-Denham. S. (2020b) *The enablers and barriers to successful managed moves: The voice of children, caregivers, and professionals.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland. https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/11942/		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
2020	Findings of the publication resulted in the writing of a policy brief funded by Research England Quality-related Research Strategic Priorities Fund 2019/20.	Martin-Denham, S and Donaghue, J. (2020) Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England (policy brief) Available at: https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/11883/. Circulated to Porticus, IntegratED, Office of the Children's Commissioner and Department for Education.
Jan 2021	External review feedback for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 REF 2021 external review	Publication rating 4*
March 2021	Email confirming submission to the Research Excellence Framework	'Dear Sarah, on behalf of the REF Working Group I am pleased to confirm that the following output was selected for the institutional submission to REF2021.
Jan 2022	The publication contributed to 'suspension and permanent exclusions guidance.' Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion	Contributed evidence to the proposed change that 'Ofsted will consider any evidence found of a parent being pressured into a managed move as off-rolling and is likely to judge a school as inadequate' (p. 20). Contributed evidence to the same consultation that CYP and caregivers felt a trial period of 12 weeks was an ineffective part of the managed moves process as many were told they had failed the placement at the end of the period. Many children felt the school were waiting for them fail due to the stigma of being on a managed move.
March 2022	Findings of the publication cited in the Integrated	Available at: https://www.integrated.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/AP-Quality-Toolkit-2022-compressed.pdf

	Alternative Provision Quality Toolkit	

Table 7. Impact of publication 4

Martin-Denham, S. (2020c) *A review of school exclusion on the mental health, well-being of children and young people in the City of Sunderland.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland. Available at: https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/11940/		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
Jan 2021	External review feedback for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 REF 2021 external review	Publication rating 4*
March 2021	Email confirming submission to the Research Excellence Framework	'Dear Sarah, on behalf of the REF Working Group I am pleased to confirm that the following output was selected for the institutional submission to REF2021.
Nov 2022	Cited multiple times in Ofsted study 'Alternative provision for primary-age pupils in England: a long-term 'destination' or a 'temporary solution'?	Available at: www.gov.uk

Table 8. Impact of publication 5

Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020a) *Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England? A Policy Brief.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland. Available at: https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/11472/		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
The national recommendation 1. The reasons headteachers choose the 'other' category when reporting school exclusions needs to be better understood. If specific reasons were known, similarities could be identified to inform new and relevant descriptions of why children are excluded from school. These additional reasons may highlight new patterns of behaviour among groups and reduce or eliminate the need for the 'other' category.		
Jan 2020	Email circulation and responses to the policy brief from national organisations including ADR-UK, DfE, Office of the Children's Commissioner	'Sarah Martin-Denham is doing great work in Sunderland to better understand the pathway children take through the education, health and care systems. One of the many issues with gaining that better understanding is the

		and Behaviour Insights Team (Cabinet Office).	use of "other" as a reason for exclusion. Please find attached a paper produced by Sarah on that issue. Three things strike me immediately. First, the rate of use of 'other' is much higher than might be expected, especially as the official guidance is to use it sparingly, if at all. Second, the variation of use of 'other' by Authority is extraordinary. And third, at the Local Authority level of analysis it is impossible to tell if use of 'other' is sanctioned at the LA level and a common practice across the majority of the schools in that area; or whether within an Authority there is just one or two schools that are using 'other' all the time, and none of their neighbouring schools do at all. All of which argues for analysis at the school, or even pupil-level level of detail. Otherwise, how can we look in any meaningful way at outcomes for children who are excluded?' (Name and organisation withheld).
			Hi Sarah, I forgot to add the "other" issue - the missing reasons for exclusion. But I did mention it today to the Behaviour Insight Team which is a significant part of the Cabinet Office's work to improve evidence-based policy making. He was suitably appalled! I also took the chance to point out that this use of the "other" category suggests that DfE and schools are not able to even properly describe those many reasons for an exclusion that are out with the direct control of the school. Hence the need for linking data across domains. (Name withheld) and the BIT team are going to be very interested in your work and may even be able to assist in it both practically and politically' (Name and organisation withheld).
			'This is super interesting, thank you for sharing. I have forwarded to colleagues in CCO, wondering if there is something we can do from the evidence side to dig into this a little more' (Name and organisation withheld).
			'Thanks for getting in touch and including me in this discussion. Fascinating and concerning the over-use of "other" and the geographical variation. I wondered whether there was

		more detail available on the reason that isn't being well categorised? i.e., is the "other" just because that's the only option, or is it a bucket for "tricky stuff we couldn't categorise"? (I'd love to see the raw data on this.) Also, with my current hat on wondering whether there's something "nudge-y" that could be done to prevent use of "other" through, e.g., adding friction to put "other" somewhere else / require more clicks to do? The risk is that other categories are then used as the lazy next place, but it seems like that's "less-worse" than using other' (Name and organisation withheld).
Sep 2021	Confirmation email from DataOps.ServiceDesk@education.gov.uk detailing category 'other' removed from national school census data capture.	'Good morning, Sarah, we last collected 'other' in autumn 2020 for the previous year exclusion data. It became invalid in schools from September 2020 when new codes were introduced (collected for the first time in spring 2021). Details were first published in the school census guidance around 1 July 2020 and we point data providers to the guidance in readiness bulletin no 2 on the 7/9/20. Following the expansion of the categories and the collection of multiple reasons, 'other' is no longer recorded as a category.

Table 9. Impact of publication 6

Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020b) *Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland. Available at: https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/11883/		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
Jan 2022	Contributed evidence to HM (2022) SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time	Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-and-ap-green-paper-responding-to-the-consultation/summary-of-the-send-review-right-support-right-place-right-time

Table 10. Impact of publication 7

Martin-Denham, S. (2020d) 'Riding the rollercoaster of school exclusion coupled with drug misuse: the lived experience of caregivers', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*,

25(3-4), pp. 244-263. Available at: https://https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2020.1848985		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
Oct 2020	Contributed evidence to the Independent Review of Drugs for the Department of Health and Social Care	Commented my findings from the two articles on drug misuse are different from other evidence presented to her, as my work suggests children are using drugs to help them cope/comply/concentrate in school. They requested permission to share my research with the Children's Commissioner for England.
Nov 2020	Email from the Independent Review of Drugs for the Department of Health and Social Care	'I write to extend to you my sincerest thanks for your time, input, and advice. Addiction is, as you know, a highly complex and difficult nut to crack, and we have a system that is largely broken and in need of repair. However, I very much hope that the recommendations of the Review will bring about long-lasting change. Your contribution was invaluable, and I am very grateful for it.'
Jan 2021	External review feedback for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 REF 2021 external review	Publication rating 3*
March 2021	Email confirming submission to the Research Excellence Framework	'Dear Sarah, on behalf of the REF Working Group I am pleased to confirm that the following output was selected for the institutional submission to REF2021.
July 2021	Influence of the publications in the Department of Health and Social (DHSC, 2021) Acknowledged in the DHSC (2021) annexes	The influence of the publication: - Children do not identify as drug users (don't use the term addiction). - Schools need to provide mental health support early - Children are more at risk of drug misuse when not in education (excluded) - Early intervention and support to avoid drug misuse is important - Dealers are pushing drugs to young children - Expand and improve services for children and young people - There is a lack of evidence on what would deter them from taking drugs

		Recommendation 13: funding for specialist substance misuse services for young people and family interventions (I talked a lot about the impact on siblings).

Table 11. Impact of publication 8

Martin-Denham, S. (2021a) *The benefits of school exclusion: Research with headteachers in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland. Available at: https://sure.sunderland.ac.uk/id/eprint/13506/		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
June 2021	Contributed evidence to DfE	'Hi Sarah, many thanks for this brief. I have passed it to colleagues - I sent it on to the analytical colleagues you've spoken to before but also copied in a couple of their policy colleagues as well. I saw your following email, and I'd be happy to have a catch-up chat anyway. No worries about delaying the next couple; that's totally understandable. I'll follow up with people about whether they have been useful, and I did specifically highlight the recommendation you made in the last briefing about changing "should" to "must" to embed the need for considering causes and not just superficially dealing with symptoms' 'You are providing an evidence base to challenge policy. Your work highlights the role and consequence of exclusions'. A meeting with (Name withheld) Specialist Advisor would be beneficial.'
April 2022	Findings cited in IntegratED annual report 'Fewer exclusions. Better alternative provision' (Wilcock *et al*., 2021).	Available at: https://www.integrated.org.uk/

Table 12. Impact of publication 9

Martin-Denham, S. (2021b) 'Defining, identifying, and recognising underlying causes of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties: Thematic analysis of interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* 26(2), pp. 187-205. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1930909		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**

May 2021	Email comment from a representative for the DfE	'I sent it on to the analytical colleagues you've spoken to before but also copied in a couple of their policy colleagues as well. I saw your following email, and I'd be happy to have a catch-up chat anyway. I'll follow up with people about whether they have been useful, and I did specifically highlight the recommendation you made in the last briefing about changing "should" to "must" to embed the need for considering causes and not just superficially dealing with symptoms'
June 2021	Email comment from Headteacher of an AP	'Thanks a lot for sharing this. Really interesting findings. Probably everything that I experience on a daily basis, but great to see it written down and backed up with collaborative evidence from across Sunderland. Will be good to see where this eventually goes and the impact it makes. Congratulations on another brilliant research publication!'
April 2022	Journal article findings cited in IntegratED annual report 'Fewer exclusions. Better alternative provision' (Wilcock *et al.*, 2021).	Available at: https://www.integrated.org.uk/
Nov 2022	Cited multiple times in Ofsted study 'Alternative provision for primary-age pupils in England: a long-term 'destination' or a 'temporary solution'?	Available at: www.gov.uk

Table 13. Impact of publication 10

Martin-Denham, S. (2021c) 'School exclusion, substance misuse and use of weapons: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children', *Support for Learning*, 36(4), pp. 532-554. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12379		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
Oct 2020	Contributed evidence to the Independent Review of Drugs for the Department of Health and Social Care	Commented my findings from the two articles on drug misuse are different from other evidence presented to her, as my work suggests children are using drugs to help them cope/comply/concentrate in school. They requested permission to share my research with the Children's Commissioner for England.
Nov 2020	Email from the Independent Review of	'I write to extend to you my sincerest thanks for your time, input, and advice. Addiction is, as you know, a

	Drugs for the Department of Health and Social Care	highly complex and difficult nut to crack, and we have a system that is largely broken and in need of repair. However, I very much hope that the recommendations of the Review will bring about long-lasting change. Your contribution was invaluable, and I am very grateful for it.'
Jan 2021	External review feedback for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 REF 2021 external review	Publication rating 3*
March 2021	Email confirming submission to the Research Excellence Framework	'Dear Sarah, on behalf of the REF Working Group I am pleased to confirm that the following output was selected for the institutional submission to REF2021.
July 2021	Influence of the publications in the DHSC (2021) Acknowledged in the DHSC (2021) annexes	The influence of the publications: • Children do not identify as drug users (don't use the term addiction). • Schools need to provide mental health support early • Children are more at risk of drug misuse when not in education (excluded) • Early intervention and support to avoid drug misuse is important • Dealers are pushing drugs to young children • Expand and improve services for children and young people • There is a lack of evidence on what would deter them from taking drugs Recommendation 13: funding for specialist substance misuse services for young people and family interventions (I talked a lot about the impact on siblings).

Table 14. Impact of publication 11

Martin-Denham, S. (2021d) 'Alternatives to school exclusion: interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 26(4), pp. 187-205. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1983326		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
May 2021	Email comment from a representative for the DfE	I sent it on to the analytical colleagues you've spoken to before but also copied in a couple of their policy colleagues as well. I'll follow up with people about whether they have been useful, and I did specifically highlight the

		recommendation you made in the last briefing about changing "should" to "must" to embed the need for considering causes and not just superficially dealing with symptoms.
Nov 2021	Email comment from a representative at The Difference	'Thank you for sharing your 'Alternatives to exclusion' article - really interesting synthesis of key learning and areas for further development. If you are interested, I'd be keen to link up on a call and share the work we are doing at The Difference to establish core principles of a universal approach to Inclusion and the practice and systems which school leaders can develop to establish this in their schools.'
Nov 2021	Email comment and request from a representative for the DfE	'Thank you for sharing this. I'd be very interested in seeing the other articles when they are published, and anything else you come out with in future.'
April 2022	Findings cited in IntegratED annual report 'Fewer exclusions. Better alternative provision' (Wilcock *et al*., 2021).	Link to publication https://www.integrated.org.uk/

Table 15. Impact of publication 12

Martin-Denham, S. (2022) 'Marginalisation, autism and school exclusion: Caregivers' perspectives', *Support for Learning, 37(1),* pp. 108-143. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12398		
Date	**Evidence source**	**Detail/impact**
July 2021	Email from a representative at the Ann Craft Trust	'I am just writing to send a huge thank you from us all for your great presentation yesterday – it was so good to hear about your work and its significance for young people. Thank you for all

		the hard work you put into sending us materials and thinking through the key issues for autistic children and those with learning needs, and their families. It is so important to have this; we all really appreciated the wonderful diagrams and way you expressed the timelines of missed opportunities to provide the help and support they need. these will help us raise issues and take awareness further.'
July 2021	Email feedback from a representative at NHS England	'Sarah's research is very timely and impactful for teams and work in relation to the implementation of the NHS Long Term Plan as they relate to children and young people who are autistic, have a learning disability and their families.'
Sep 2021	Delegate comments, individual paper presentation of the article at the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Conference 13-16 September 2021.	'Thank you for this presentation. As a parent of a child with SEND I was not surprised to see how schools turned down parents' requests for EHCP assessments as I know this frequently happens (though of course it is not their role to do this as you say). I wondered if you had any thoughts/information about why schools felt that they were able to be the gatekeeper to an EHCP assessment in this way, and what can enable parents to effectively challenge things like this in the future?' 'I love this paper, although I agree that is very sad how predictable some of the findings are - that we have school system that seems unable (unwilling?) to adapt to the needs of all learners. Especially sad when you think about how many adjustments for SEND would actually benefit all pupils.' 'Thank you, Sarah - I found this extremely interesting, and it does tie closely to my own research. I agree - we should expect that in a classroom of 30 we have children who are on the spectrum, some who have dyslexia and so on, and be flexible in our learning and teaching - current Government priorities and the curriculum (alongside the individual nature of the SEND system) is not conducive to this.'

Table 16. Impact of the sum of publications

Date	Evidence source	Detail/impact
Oct 2020	Request for inclusion of monographs and policy briefs on IntegratED knowledge hub.	Link to my exclusions monographs and policy briefs on integratED website Available at: https://www.integrated.org.uk/research
Nov 2020	Discussion representative at the Centre for Social Justice regarding my sum of works.	'I just wanted to say thank you for taking the time to speak with me and share your insights and expertise last week. I'd love to keep in touch as things progress and I have a better idea of the direction/scope of our policy research'.
Dec 2020	Email following presentation to DfE (behaviour, exclusions, and AP teams) 35 DfE policymakers and analysts. Findings of the 2020 school exclusions monographs and subsequent journal articles.	'In terms of next steps, I think it would be good to have a chat with you and a few others from the research / analytical side in DfE. I recalled our discussion last week touched on the need for greater alignment between education and health on definitions of learning difficulties. I wanted to put you in touch with (Name withheld) cc'd, who is one of the analysts in my unit working on the DfE's SEND Review, as this is also an issue, she has been working through with policy colleagues. If you had the time Sarah, I think a chance to discuss this in more detail would be really valuable. If so, if you could give us an idea of your availability' (name withheld).
Jan 2021	Comments from Presentation to DfE (behaviour, exclusions, and AP teams) 35 DfE policymakers and analysts. Findings of the 2020 school exclusions monographs and subsequent journal articles.	'Thanks again for a really interesting talk Sarah, you gave us a lot to think about, and we'll definitely get back in touch to talk to you further' (name withheld). 'The work is extraordinarily complementary to the Timpson review. Are you finding what you're looking for?' (Name withheld) '[Name withheld] is going to share them with NE and Yorkshire teams. New projects coming through are looking at exclusions and transition back into mainstream education. Schools and colleges say they get mixed messages re: exclusions, mental health. Acknowledged that there isn't statutory guidance so *can't* say stuff like 'must' (Name withheld) 'I loved it, liked the visuals. Institute of race relations argue against "mainstreaming" AP because it creates a two-tier education system. How do you square that and provide what they would benefit from, but not

		making them feel like they're excluded? How do teachers get to the point where they think isolation is ok? How do we support teachers them to give them a trauma-based understanding of behaviour?' (Name withheld)
		'I am interested in a study in the whole family, are you going to study a family?' (Name withheld
		'Are you looking at kids' interactions with social care?' (Name withheld).
July 2020	Emails from Acting Head of Statistics and Data Collection Office of the Children's Commissioner	'I have been raving about your work with Sunderland LA in the office (the Director of Evidence) has asked me to invite you to the office on a date convenient for you to give a relatively informal presentation of your work. Your research covers so many of our current projects that I think a lot of people in the office would find it really valuable to hear more about it and have an opportunity to discuss it with you.'
		'This is super interesting; thank you for sharing. I have forwarded to colleagues in CCO, wondering if there is something we can do from the evidence side to dig into this a little more'
March 2021	Verbal dissemination of research findings	Discussed research findings with Team Square Peg
July 2021	Request for a podcast for the Ann Craft Trust 'Working with neurodiverse children with special educational needs and disabilities'	The podcast and Ann Craft Trust website signposts to my research.
Aug 2021	Email and meeting notes with DfE (Team Leader Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions).	'As the call for evidence asked specific questions, I encourage you to submit your views/evidence through this online process as we will be analysing all responses together. As I mentioned when we last spoke and through email your research will be considered alongside other research in this space. We are looking to hold a series of stakeholder roundtables/conversations and will bear you in mind when we firm up the details'
		'The research you are doing on school exclusions would be great. Please can you send me your publication list on school exclusions and behaviour to support the call for evidence? My team is working

		through the plans for roundtables for the consultation in the Autumn to inform legislative changes that we might need. We will be in touch.'
Aug 2021	Email request for sum of works on school exclusions from Team Leader Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions: Department for Education.	'The research you are doing on school exclusions would be great. Please can you send me your publication list on school exclusions and behaviour to support the call for evidence. My team is working through plans for roundtables for the consultation in the Autumn to inform legislative changes we might need. We will be in touch' Call for evidence https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/behaviour-management-strategies-in-school-units-and-managed-moves-call-for-evidence
April 2022	Invited member to the Reducing Restrictive Interventions and Safeguarding Children (RRSIC) by the Children and Young People Policy Lead at the Challenging Behaviour Foundation	Available at: https://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rrisckeymessagesnov2019.pdf
Oct 2019	Minuted DfE, Together for Children Publication strategy meeting for Together for Children (TfC) commissioned research	'Together for Children (TfC) want to rethink how we deliver, reconfigure inclusion, special education and relationships providers and commissioners. This is an opportunity for the first time. We should be using research as a tool to be positive and progress.'
Feb 2020	Email sent to DfE policy makers to invite them to attend a presentation arranged in London to the Children's Commissioner Office for England (cancelled due to COVID-19) travel restrictions.	'I have been raving about your work with Sunderland LA in the office, the Director of Evidence has asked me to invite you to the office on a date convenient for you to give a relatively informal presentation of your work. Your research covers so many of our current projects that I think a lot of people in the office would find it really valuable to hear more about it and have an opportunity to discuss it with you.'
April 2020	Funded £100,000 by Department for Education, commissioned by TfC based on the quality of the outputs for a research evaluation of	5 outputs 4 monographs (3 published) 1 upcoming

	the Transformation Programme in Children's Social Care, Sunderland.	
July 2020	UoS press release with the funder of the research: 'Study into local school exclusions hopes to inform national guidelines' Article includes comment from Academic Dean (UoS) and Director of Education (TfC)	Available at: https://www.sunderland.ac.uk/more/news/story/study-into-local-school-exclusions-hopes-to-inform-national-guidelines--1347
Oct 2020	Minutes in response to presentation to 21 members of Sunderland SEND strategic partnership (Headteachers, NHS, Sunderland Parent Carer Forum, Children's Commissioning Sunderland)	'Learning and moving forward: TfC reports are publicly available. Hopefully, the work has been picked up by other organisations, local authorities and can be used to improve things for children in Sunderland and beyond. The significant outcomes from the research go across all agencies. We don't want this to be just another piece of research. This needs to be incorporated into all of our training, including Senior Leadership level. Schools Forum may need to look at this (p.2).' Action: Sub-group to be set up to develop SEMH research action plan to follow through recommendations. Action: SEMH research to be included as a standard agenda item.
Nov 2020	Email from IntegratED Programme Data Analyst, The Centre for Social Justice.	'Hey Sarah, I've just read through a couple of your reports, and they're fascinating. I was especially interested in the review of school exclusion on the mental health of children in Sunderland. We're just about to launch a big policy piece on mental health and exclusions at the CSJ, and it would be great to talk about how we can incorporate your work and learn from your expertise. I'd definitely like to use the APPG to showcase key pieces of research, but we're just at the stage of building momentum on their first inquiry at the moment and so won't be doing presentations on research until that is established. There's definitely a lot here which would make a brilliant and well-evidenced submission in the APPG's first call for evidence, but there may be further

		opportunities to link you in with our upcoming projects.

March 2021	Request from Head of Statistics and Data Collection, Children's Commissioner for England to review 'The Big ASK survey' for 13-17 years olds	'Hi Sarah, the new Children's Commissioner for England will be launching a survey of all children in England next month 'the big ASK'. The aim of the survey is to understand what children and young people think will be important in the future, and what barriers they think might impact their ability to achieve those things. I was wondering if you might take a look at the proposed questions and share any thoughts/feedback? I'd be particularly interested in your thoughts on how the response options might be perceived by children and young people with SEND:
		  * Are they all likely to be relevant?
		  * Are there any risks of triggering a negative emotional response?
		  * Are there any different response options you would suggest, or alternative wording?

March 2021	Review and response of 'The Big ASK survey' for 13-17 years olds emailed to (Name withheld), Head of Statistics and Data Collection, Children's Commissioner for England	'Thanks so much - super useful comments. Why don't you think the survey will tell us about barriers? I was trying to think of a way to get at them without giving a list of potential barriers and thus biasing the response to what we see as barriers already, hence Q4. Is there another way you think we should look at this?'
March 2021	Email from Deputy Vice-chancellor (Academic) and Chair of the REF Working Group) UoS confirming output selections for the REF2021	Dear Sarah, on behalf of the REF Working Group I am pleased to confirm that the following output was selected for the institutional submission to REF2021. An investigation into the factors that impact upon social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people that may lead to exclusion from school.
July 2021	Invited to do a podcast on neurodiversity with the Ann Craft Trust	https://www.anncrafttrust.org/solving-the-puzzle-working-with-neurodiverse-children-with-special-education-needs-and-disabilities-safeguarding-matters/
Aug 2021	Reference to the research on school exclusions and monograph recommendations Together for Children: Promoting inclusive schools and academies: Creating a cohesive	'The purpose for this document is to build on the outcomes of the educational research that was completed in 2018-2020, which highlights there is a clear and compelling need to solve rising school suspension and expulsion rates, leading to harmful outcomes regarding children's education and well-being, in addition to a significant number of children and young people who have unmet undiagnosed or untimely meet diagnosed special educational needs

	Sunderland approach, information for school leaders and stakeholders	which is impacting on level of alternative and specialist provision across Sunderland' (p. 2).
Sep 2021	**Cited in publication:** Ofsted Sunderland SEND Area Inspection	**Strengths identified in the report** 'Partnership work between the education team and headteachers is beginning to have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people with SEND. For example, the proportions of children and young people with SEND who are subject to fixed-term or permanent exclusion are decreasing. The attendance of children and young people with SEND is improving, and the proportion who are persistently absent is decreasing' (p. 7).
Oct 2021	Email request for publications on school exclusion from the principal social researcher and Team Leader at DfE	'Yes, please to forwarding your articles when they are published.'
Oct 2021	Email e-introduction from Data Champion Council for Disabled Children to The Challenging Behaviour Foundation for a discussion about my research on school exclusions	'Sarah led some amazing research with excluded young people and their families in Sunderland, which highlighted the issue of seclusion/isolation booths as a major concern, she's already been in touch with officials at DfE about this.' I leave it to you two to follow up.
Oct 2021	Email request from IntegratED to endorse their Alternative Provision Quality Toolkit and embed into the toolkit my exclusions research	The AP Quality Toolkit codifies AP quality, enables effectiveness to be evaluated and takes a comprehensive and holistic approach to improvement. Your endorsement will demonstrate the support within the sector for this approach to evaluating and improving AP quality.
Oct 2021	Email and phone request from a Professor at Oxford University to offer consultancy support, develop and test an early years developmental framework	'The pilot would involve policy work and work with data experts, practitioners and communities to coproduce with wide participation a general enough model that it can work across health, social care, and early learning and across related agencies in the place.'

Nov 2021	Email request for collaborative working on SEND	'It was great to hear about the work you are doing with SENCOs in your area and nationally. I think we are both working in very similar ways which is extremely encouraging… perhaps we could have a catch up sometime? As I was saying on Monday I'm all for collaboration and co-operative working.'
Dec 2021	Successful application for UKRI Policy Support Funding to build upon current research on school exclusions through 3 new research projects	The review panel would like to congratulate you on the award and an excellent application. Project 1: £6,138 Project 2: £11,846 Project 3: £7,500
Dec 2021	Invited to review for a special issue for Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Journal	'We now have the papers and need to organise peer review and so am hoping you might be willing to remain on our list of potential reviewers. The issue is due out next year, and focuses on exclusions, particularly unlawful and strategic exclusion.'
Dec 2021	Contact from a student I presented to at a local college on SEND and school exclusions	'I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart because you have me the means and the strength to fight a little harder and use the correct terms. In such a very short space of time school have now put strategies in place to help my children and I have actually managed to get CAHMS to start their assessments after 4 years of one of my children being under them and 2 years for the other. They are actually all of a sudden being assessed next week.'
Dec 2021	Became Co-Chair of the National Working Group: Safeguarding Disabled Children	'Thank you for your offer to co-chair; that's wonderful news.'
Dec 2021	Email introduction to Social Finance Associate Director to colleague in their organisation	I think you're both doing really interesting work on identifying risk of exclusion, services to avoid it, and child voice. Might be a lot to share and I think it might be worth the two of you having a quick chat in the new year.
Jan 2022	Invited to present at the Inclusive Leadership Conference by the organisation The Difference.	'It would be really valuable for leaders at the conference to hear about the work you are doing to capture and understand the voice of the child and their families in developing more proactive practice and systems.'
Jan 2022	Invited presentation by Together for Children and NASEN to SENCOs on findings in the exclusions research	'We are doing a training session with whole school NASEN looking at transitions primary to secondary. We have SENCOs and a secondary HT involved and we were wondering whether you could do a 10monute presentation on the outcomes of the

		exclusions research and how schools can become more inclusive.'
Jan 2022	Co-authored Safeguarding in research policy (UoS) for consideration of adoption.	Draft available
Jan 2022	Request from Ofsted senior research lead for the sum of publications on school exclusion	'A list of your publications and publications themselves would be more than helpful.'
Jan 2022	Email request to present at The Difference Inclusive Leadership Conference on research ethics.	Invitation to speak at the Inclusive Leadership Conference on Saturday 19th March.
Jan 2022	Email request from Social Finance to provide guidance on their upcoming publication on school exclusions	'I'm reaching out because I'm writing a report on school exclusion and mental health and would love your input.'
Jan 2022	Invited presentation for The University of Northampton, Special Interest Group (Education and Research Programme	I wondered whether you would be willing to deliver a seminar on the subject of your paper 'school exclusion, substance misuse and the use of weapons at school.' I think there would be a lot of interest from colleagues and students at the university as well as colleagues working in local schools.'
Jan 2022	Invited member to the Ofsted Expert Panel to feedback on their upcoming Alternative Provision Research Findings.	'I had a pleasure of coming across your work in this area, thanks to the colleagues from the Office of the Children's Commissioner who shared your recent publication with me – 'Alternatives to school exclusion'. In view of your specialism, would you be interested in becoming a member of my expert panel? This would involve providing feedback on emerging findings and also possibly on any further research/publications/initiatives that we should be aware of.'
Feb 2022	Invited presentation at Evaluation in Action Conference with Together for Children Director of Children's Social Care.	Title: Walking on eggshells: evaluating sensitive or small-scale services. Available at: http://www.evaluationconference.co.uk
Feb 2022	Representative at EDSRG (UoS)	'Can you please invite Sarah to the EDISRG she is the second representative from FES.'

Feb 2022	Invited reviewer for the Centre for Social Justice IntegratED Alternative Provision Quality Toolkit 2022	'Thank you for contributing to the AP Quality Toolkit project.'
Feb 2022	Feedback following review of IntegratED AP Toolkit	'I am going to give some thought into how child voice could be included more explicitly in the toolkit.'
Feb 2022	Invited presentation at WomenED by the Students Union	'I would be really honoured if you would be able to give a small talk about your achievements thus far.'
March 2022	Feedback from an attendee at the WomenED and invitation to deliver a workshop to primary education trainees	'I thought your presentation at Monday night's event was great and you are very inspiring. I am the President of the new Primary Education Society here at the University, I was wondering if you would like to do a talk/workshop with us at some point about your work and experiences with SEND?'
March 2022	Consultancy request from PlaySpace	Request from the Director of PlaySpace to provide guidance on safeguarding and catering for CYP with neurodiversity in their Arts Council project.
March 2022	Email circulation of #SeeMe creative arts project by Porticus	'#SeeMe is a pilot creative arts 'voice' project with over 200 CYP, 5-16 years, with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) excluded from school in NE England. The purpose of the project is to recognise and champion the abilities of those excluded from school.'
March 2022	Submitted response to proposed DfE Behaviour in Schools and Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance	Submission ID ANON-182Z-Y7NG-T
March 2022	Invited to write a piece for UoS Splash Page on the publication of the DfE SEND review	Available at: https://sunderlandac.sharepoint.com/sites/StaffNews/SitePages/Reflections-on-the-SEND-and-Alternative-Provision-Green-Paper.aspx
March 2022	Invited to write a blog #SeeMe, UoS	Available at: https://sunderland.ac.uk/more/research/research-blog/posts/?id=354
March 2022	Invited by acting head of school (UoS) to be one of five case studies for ITE Ofsted Inspection	'(Name withheld) has told me to make your outreach/research work one of the five examples that demonstrates how the School of Education engages regionally and nationally and demonstrate how we go beyond the CFF in the Ofsted blurb with an accompanying folder of evidence of reach and impact. I know your projects have massive reach and

April 2022		impact. Therefore, could you get together a small folder of evidence relating to this work.'
April 2022	invitation from Ofsted Senior Research Lead to review an upcoming publication	'I am thinking of having the report potentially reviewed by a couple of external colleagues, sometime in May. If we go for that, would you want to be one of them?'
April 2022	Email from British Association of Social Workers (Professional Officer)	Communication to tell me they are sharing the #SeeMe creative arts project film and Twitter @seemenortheast with their networks.
April 2022	Invitation to round table event at Oxford University	Attendance at information sharing event to describe data and information sharing as part of BACD and LDAF projects
April 2022	Invitation to be a member of Reducing Restrictive Interventions Safeguarding Children Group by the Children and Young People Policy Lead at the Challenging Behaviour Foundation	'I am emailing to invite you to become a member of the Reducing Restrictive Interventions and Safeguarding Children (RRISC) group. The group members have been consulted and unanimously agreed that you would be a great addition to the group if you wish to join'
April 2022	Invitation to contribute to a special CollectivED event online	'I would like to invite you to contribute to a special CollectivED 3Rs event on 28th April from 7-8pm.'
April 2022	Invitation for UoS Media Relations to support the announcement of REF 2021	'You have been highlighted as one of our key researchers and we would like to promote your research work.'
April 2022	Email request to cover the #SeeMe exhibition and research	Request from Education for Everyone magazine to share the exhibition and future plans for research on school exclusions
April 2022	Invited presentation of research on school exclusions	Email from (Name withheld) l to present to Research England and UKRI at the UoS executive meeting
April 2022	Invitation to review a book proposal for Routledge Publishers	Email from Editorial Assistant to review a book on lived experiences of children in schools.
April 2022	Invited to deliver a lecture to Y1 BA (Hons) Primary education students	Shared overview of research on school exclusions and took 120 of the students to see the #SeeMe exhibition at the NGC

May 2022	Invited presentation for BA (Hons Primary education)	Research findings of publication 2
May 2022	Request for consultancy	King James School Bishop Auckland Site visit to support design of new alternative provision school
June 2022	Invited presentation of my research on school exclusions to the executive chair of Research England and the UKRI Institutional Manager	Following the presentation, the Executive Chair requested I write a blog on school exclusions research for the Research England Website

**Table 17.** Testimonials from headteachers

Date	Testimonial number and outline
Jan 2022	**1: Headteacher, ex-NASENCO student and member of UoS Independent SENCO network** Working alongside Sarah Martin-Denham for the past 3 years has not only been one of the highlights of my teaching and managerial career but has also played an invaluable role in developing mine and my school's awareness of SEND issues and developing staff's skill set to overcome these issues. In particular, Sarah's extensive research on school exclusions and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) has, without doubt, been partly responsible for significantly reducing exclusions (by 80%) within my own PRU setting, as well as permanent exclusions and FTEs (eradicating isolation booths) in those schools we provide a service for. Sarah's infectious enthusiasm and drive has motivated me to complete my SENCO award and to specialise in ACE's. Consequently, through Sarah's collaboration, I have ensured my staff and students across both Primary and Secondary settings, are inspired to further themselves academically by completing research projects and keeping up to date with current literature. For example, KS4 female students are currently undertaking a study in exploring the impact female students have in an alternative provision. These disengaged female students are actually discussing the possibilities of what further education can bring to them, university links forged by Sarah. They have also been vocal in their satisfaction that they are being listened to and their views are valuable. Furthermore, students in my Primary school are looking forward to working with Sarah on their cultural project, supported by the National Glass Centre and Sunderland University.
Jan 2022	**Testimonial 2: Education Consultant, TfC** In 2016/7 Together for Children commissioned Sunderland University to carry out an analysis of the prevalence of SEND provision across the City.

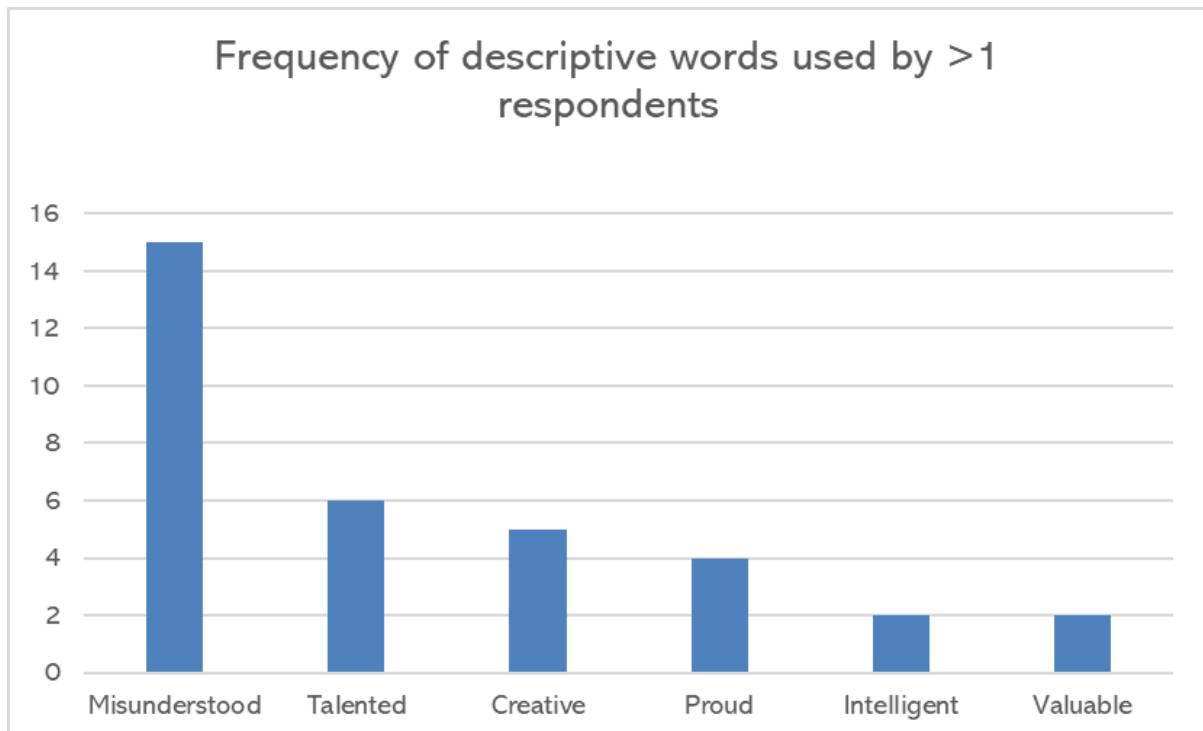|	The research was led by Sarah Martin-Denham who worked closely with senior officers of Together for Children and local providers to ensure that provision for pupils with SEND reflects identified need. The documentation was well received by head teachers and provided a more robust understanding of need across the city which has ultimately informed commissioning arrangements to ensure sufficiency of school places.
	As testament to the high-quality research carried out in 2017, a further piece of research was commissioned in 2018 by Together for Children to look at the increase of fixed term and permanent Exclusions for pupils across the City. This work involved a considerable amount of work interviewing multi-agency staff, parent/carers and young people. The involvement and co-production of the research involving parents and young people has achieved considerable recognition at a national and regional level. As a consequence of this research Together for Children has developed two multi-agency Assessment Hubs have been developed (primary & secondary) to carry out multi-agency assessments to support the needs of those young people at risk of exclusion. The assessment hubs have been identified as exemplary practice in the SEND area inspection and in the recent Link School – Inclusion Quality Mark Assessment (IQM) assessment. A revised managed move protocol has been drafted and is in discussion with head teachers across the city. Further research work is currently being carried out to assess the quality and impact of the HUBs alongside a transitions project for vulnerable children's transition programme supporting those young people in year 6 to make a successful transition to secondary education.
	In summary, Sarah is a highly effective researcher whose research has informed the ongoing development of SEND and social care provision across the City of Sunderland. She is a committed supporter of the professional development of teachers through the NASENCO course and works effectively in partnership with officers and schools to promote the needs of vulnerable groups as evidenced in the contributions of teachers to a range of publications to support young people. She is also an advocate for parents and young people giving them a voice in articulating their experience of a range of provisions across the City.

Table 18. Pre-presentation views of teacher training students

Frequency of descriptive words used by >1 respondents
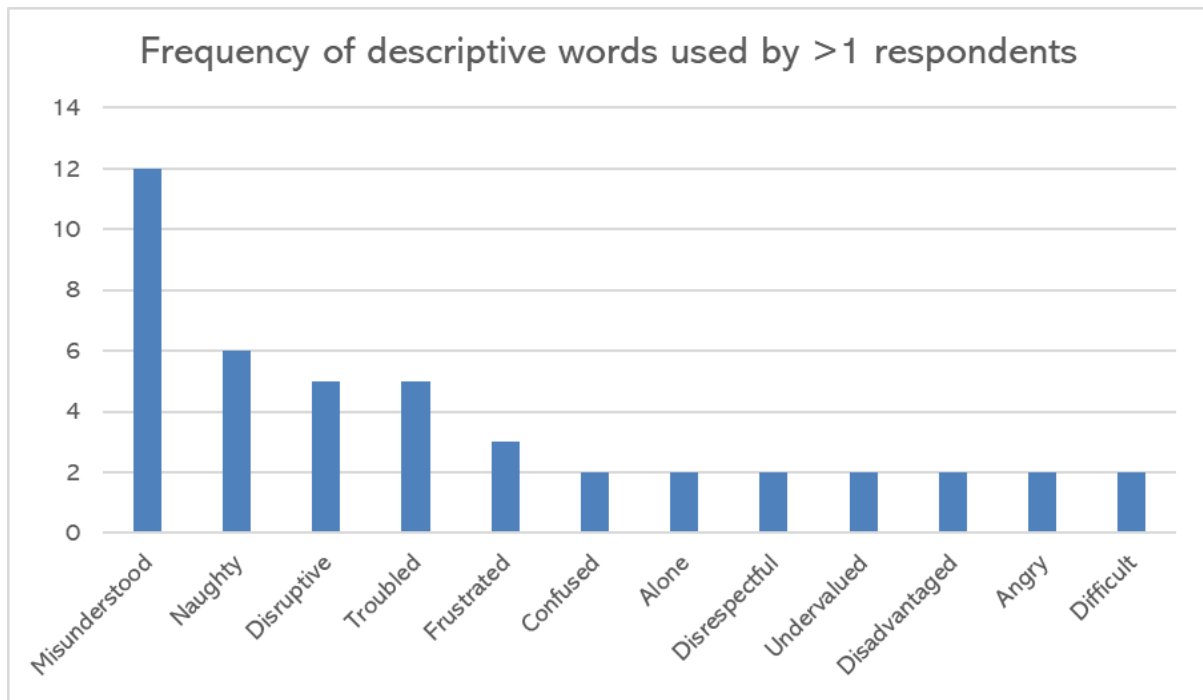
Table 19. Post-presentation views of teacher training students

Frequency of descriptive words used by >1 respondents

Appendix 7

Contribution to co-authored publications

Table 20. Contribution to co-authored publications

Publication number	Type of publication	contribution %	contribution wordage	My role
Martin-Denham, S., Saddler, H. and Donoghue, J. (2017) *The prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16, across the City of Sunderland:* School of Education. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	**Funder report**	83.54% of the (45,336 word publication)	37,957	Principal Investigator and Lead Author Conceptualised and designed the research Disseminated findings to the funder and wider audiences
Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020a) *Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England? A Policy Brief.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	**Policy brief**	70% of the 1,258 word publication (881 words)	881	
Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020b) *Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	**Policy brief**	75% of the 1,494 word publication (1,121)	1,121	

Appendix 8

English research on school exclusions that captures the voice of CYP, caregivers or professionals

Table 21. English research on school exclusions that captures the voice of CYP, caregivers or professionals

Publication title Date range 2017-2022	Method	Child voice	Caregiver voice	Professional voice
Brede, J., Remington, A., Kenny, L., Warren, K, and Pellicano, E. (2017) 'Excluded from school: Autistic students' experiences of school exclusion and subsequent re-integration into school', *Autism & Developmental Language Impairments*, *2*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/2396941517737511.	Semi-structured interviews	9	7	19 staff from one special school -1 senior teacher -2 teachers - 2 senior TAs - 14 TAs
Hatton, C. (2018) School absences and exclusions experienced by children with learning disabilities and autistic children in 2016/17', *Tizard Learning Disability Review,* 23(4), pp. 207-212.	Data analysis of school census data	0	0	0
Paget, A., Parker, C., Heron, J., Logan, S., Henley, W., Emond, A. and Ford, T. (2018) 'Which children and young people are excluded from school? Findings from a large British birth cohort study, the Avon Longitudinal Study of	Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children, a prospective U.K. population-based birth cohort study, collected parent reports of permanent	0	Questionnaire Yes/no responses	0

Parents and Children (ALSPAC)', *Child: Care, Health & Development*, 44(2), pp. 285–296.	school exclusions by 8 years and parent and self-reports of permanent and fixed-term exclusions in the preceding 12 months at 16 years.			
Cole, T., McCluskey, G., Daniels, H., Thompson, I and Tawell, A. (2019) 'Factors associated with high and low levels of school exclusions: comparing the English and wider UK experience', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* 24(4), pp. 374-390.	cross-national data study	0	0	Five semi-structured interviews with specialist officers working in two Local Authorities in England
Graham, B., White, C., Edwards, A., Potter, S. and Street, C. (2019) *School exclusion: a literature review on the continued disproportionate exclusion of certain children.* London: Department for Education.	Literature review	0	0	0
McCluskey, G., Cole, T., Daniels, H., Thompson, I. and Tawell, A. (2019) 'Exclusion from school in Scotland and across the UK: Contrasts and questions', *British Educational Research Journal,* 45(6), pp. 1140-1159.	Mixed methods research -analysis of national datasets -analysis of legislation and policy Semi-structured interviews	0	0	27 semi-structured interviews with local authority staff in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
Embeita, C. (2019) 'Reintegration to secondary education	Semi-structured interviews	0	3	0

following school exclusion: An exploration of the relationship between home and school from the perspective of parents', *Educational & Child Psychology*, 36(3), pp. 18–32.				
Atkinson, G. and Rowley, J. (2019) 'Pupils' views on mainstream reintegration from alternative provision: a Q methodological study', *Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties*, 24(4), pp. 339–356.	Q factor analysis from a Q sort activity	9	0	0
Daniels, H., Thompson, I., Porter, J., Tawell, A. and Emery, H. (2020) *School exclusion risks after COVID-19.* Oxford: Department of Education, University of Oxford.	Report from virtual discussions, individual meetings and written responses	0	0	70 participants from 26 LA's
Demie, F. (2021) 'The experience of Black Caribbean pupils in school exclusion in England', *Educational Review*, 73(1), pp. 55–70.	Questionnaire, semi structured interviews, focus groups	0	14	65 participants -15 teachers - 17 Governors - 8 SENCOs - 5 educational psychologists -20 school staff
Caslin, M. (2021) '"They have just given up on me" How pupils labelled with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) experience the process of exclusion from school', *Support*	Case studies	13	0	0

for Learning, 36(1), pp. 116–132.				
Murphy, R. (2021) 'How children make sense of their permanent exclusion: A thematic analysis from semi-structured interviews', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* pp. 1–15.	Semi-structured interviews	18	0	0

Appendix 9

Table 22. Phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarisation with the data	Refamiliarising through immersion with the dataset. Listening to 174 audio files of the original interviews (publication 2) and reading and re-reading the transcripts
2. Coding	Coding interesting features in the individual publications, systematic approach across the data corpus
3. Generating initial themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering the data into each theme
4. Developing and reviewing themes	Checking the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data corpus. Generating a thematic map of the analysis
5. Refining, defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine each theme and create the overall story of the data. Generating clear names to define each theme
6. Writing up	Final opportunity for analysis, returning to the objectives and eliciting compelling extract examples

Braun and Clarke (2022)

Appendix 10

Ethical approval information for the published works

Table 23. Ethical approval information for the published works

Publication number	Publication title	Reference number	Date of approval
1	Martin-Denham, S., Donoghue, J. and Saddler, H. (2017) *The prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16, across the City of Sunderland:* School of Education. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	000116	30/03/2017
2	Martin-Denham, S. (2020a) *An investigation into the perceived enablers and barriers to mainstream schooling: The voices of children excluded from school, their caregivers and professionals*. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	001546	12/03/2018
3	Martin-Denham. S. (2020b) *The enablers and barriers to successful managed moves: The voice of children, caregivers, and*	001546	12/03/2018

	professionals. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.		
4	Martin-Denham, S. (2020c) *A review of school exclusion on the mental health, well-being of children and young people in the City of Sunderland.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	001546	12/03/2018
5	Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020a) *Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England? A Policy Brief.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	001546	12/03/2018
6	Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020b) *Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	001546	12/03/2018
7	Martin-Denham, S. (2020d) 'Riding the rollercoaster of school exclusion coupled with drug misuse: the lived experience of caregivers', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 25(3-4), 244-263. Doi:10.1080/13632752.2020.1848985.	001546	12/03/2018
8	Martin-Denham, S. (2021a) *The benefits of school exclusion: Research with headteachers in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	001546	12/03/2018
9	Martin-Denham, S. (2021b) 'Defining, identifying, and recognising underlying causes of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties: Thematic analysis of interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* 26(2), pp. 187-205. Available at: https://doi:org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1930909.	001546	12/03/2018
10	Martin-Denham, S. (2021c) 'School exclusion, substance misuse and use of weapons: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children', *Support for Learning*, 36(4), pp. 532-554. Available at: https://doi:10.1111/1467-9604.12379.	001546	12/03/2018
11	Martin-Denham, S. (2021d) 'Alternatives to school exclusion: Interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and*	001546	12/03/2018

	Behavioural Difficulties', pp.375-393. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1983326.		
12	Martin-Denham, S. (2022) 'Marginalisation, autism and school exclusion: Caregivers' perspectives', *Support for Learning, 37(1),* pp. 108-143. Available at: https://doi: 10.1111/1467-9604.12398.	001546	12/03/2018

Appendix 11

Presentation of raw and analysed data

Figure 2. Sample of thematic analysis using NVivo 12: Publication 2

	Name
	A7 - SEMH in those who are excluded TfC data
	A2 - Categories of SEMH PLASC data sets
	A6 - How the SEMH category for the SEN register has been determined, and by who the SEMH has been identified with reference to whether this has been indicated or diagnosed for the pupil in q
	A4 - Analysis of training for school staff
	A5 - Highlight areas of good practice and determine guidelines for good practice in supporting pupils with SEMH in schools with the purpose of seeking to support schools in reducing the number
	A3 - Chart behaviour traits displayed by children at risk of exclusion, or as indicators of social and emotional distress to determine if early intervention is feasible for schools to provide
	A1 - Factors causing rise in SEMH
	A9 - Exclusions issues and policies
	A12 - Solutions to SEMH rise
	A11- Social Care
	A10 -Pressures on SENCOS
	A8 - Barriers to including and supporting children in school with SEMH
	Stigma of Alternative Provision

Figure 3. Sample of IPA using Microsoft Excel: Publication 7

Participant No.	(All)
Row Labels	**Count of Participant No.**
What are the child's future aspirations	4
Apprenticeship	2
Education and training	1
Vocational career	1
Barriers to health services	15
Exemption list	2
No formal assessment despite request	6
Wait time too long	2
Staff on sick/left	5
What were the reasons for any fixed period/permanent exclusions	14
Persistent disruptive behaviour	4
Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against an adult	2
Physical assault against a pupil	2
Drug and alcohol related	5
Racist abuse	1
When did you/others first noticed difficulties	9
Born prem at 21 weeks	1
Caregiver noticed difference	2
Caregivers noticed difference	1
Increasing concern in adolescence	1
Parent noticed in nursery	1
Primary School identified concerns	2
Secondary school identified concerns	1
What are the drivers and implications of drug misuse	28
Child involved in criminal activity	6
Drugs available in schools	1
resulted in addiction	7
Succumbed to peer pressure	2
Psychological Impact	7
Impact on physical health	4
Child exploitation	1
The consequence of school exclusion	7
Child has changed for the better	1
Lost schooling	2
Ending up in a PRU	1
Alternative provision has been positive	1
Psychological Impact	2
What child enjoys about alternative provision	2

Figure 4. Sample of thematic analysis using Microsoft Excel: Publication 8

Main theme	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Quote
Benefit of exclusion	Deterent for others	Respite for teachers	To the school there's a benefit the other pupils see that as som
Benefit of exclusion	Deterent for others	consequence for parent	I think it is about setting a precedent setting your expectations
Benefit of exclusion	Deterent for others	Respite for teachers	not in terms of the child, not really, it's a statement to the scho
Benefit of exclusion	Deterent for others	safety of teachers	if the behaviour has got to a point where it is unacceptable, ar
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	No benefit for child	for us personally long term none, in any system that is structure
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	Dont exclude	
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	Dont exclude	no exclusions: everything we do is to prevent exclusion we hav
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	Dont exclude	None in the last 9 years partly because we work with parents v
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	Dont exclude	We've had none in the last 3 years and none at risk of exclusior
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	No benefit for child	No, it's end of the line for me, it just wouldn't be in my mindse
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	Dont exclude	I don't see any benefits to excluding children we haven't had ar
Benefit of exclusion	Dont exclude	Dont exclude	I think what we have got in place, the staff we do spend a lot o
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	To allow others to learn	It's hard to say for the student; it's about the learning that that
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Respite for teachers	there are no benefits of the child whatsoever what it does do i
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	No benefit for family	Because I don't think it helps I don't think the children benefit f
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Safety of other children	I don't know about effective but I think they had to be done, fo
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Doesn't change behaviour	No. And that's the point that I got to with this exclusion picture
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Better of in another schoo	The benefit for me is I get them. But I think there isn't a benefi
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Better of in another schoo	There are no benefits to fixed term exclusions; I don't believe ir
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Doesn't change behaviour	I don't believe that exclusions are successful, but my statistics v
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Respite for teachers	Apart from an immediate relief for the school that excludes and
Benefit of exclusion	No benefit for child	Doesn't change behaviour	I don't feel there are a lot of benefits to be honest. They need

Figure 5. Sample of thematic analysis using Microsoft Excel: Publication 9

Group	HL Group	Type of provision	Ofsted Rating	Main theme	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Quote
HT NURSERY2	Nursery	Nursery School	Outstanding	Finding root cause	EYFS framework	staff flag concerns	In nursery we would identify a child development in terms of typical development using development matters document which describe the milestones the children would go through developmentally that is divided into bands depending on their age what we would do is look to see if children are operating around their age band And if they're not that's when Staff would come forward to me to say they have concerns about a child, social emotional mental health would be very much around the ecd strands of development how they socialise with children, how they have developed attachment with parents and carers, how they develop attachment with key worker, whether or not the child seems anxious after the typical settling in period, if the child is displaying behaviours which are aggressive to other children
HT NURSERY4	Nursery	Nursery School	Outstanding	Finding root cause	EYFS framework	staff flag concerns	as to where they are at and potential delay but really a more holistic approach
HT PRIM4	Primary	Primary school	Good	Change in emotions	Observing behaviour	gathering informatic	I think for us in terms of identifying it observation, talking to parents, teachers gathering information and if we perceive there to be a difficulty, So something like a social emotional difficulty will come up in the child's behaviour so it could be that the child is stressed or the child is displaying different behaviours…Obser
HT PRIM5	Primary	Primary school	Good	Change in emotions	Observing behaviour	emotional needs	Within the children i think it's principally really from observations, i think the sad thing is you end up picking up on these things if a child misbehaves or if they are particularly sad and withdrawn, I would suggest that we really know our children well particularly by July, which means they are vulnerable in the first few terms or a little bit vulnerable

Figure 6. Sample of IPA using Microsoft word: Publication 10

Emergent Themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments	Key words
	Was it easy getting assessments from health?		Pressure, cuts, shortages, diagnosis hopefully, earlier, late
Mourning and grief for what could have been Loss of future	We had to pressure them, if she had been diagnosed earlier then she would have got that support, she could have gone to a specialist school, we still haven't been able to get it into a specialist school, hopefully though in September she will start at one,	Onus on parent to get child assessed Use of 'if' reflecting on what could have been if diagnosed earlier	
Ineffective school placement processes	She was supposed to start this September, but she couldn't because the application had been delayed and there wasn't enough space, so we were told we had to wait. It is the council's responsibility to provide specialist education.	Reflection that with prompt diagnosis she might have got support and gone to an appropriate type of school Processes matter to them, school place application delayed and implication of this was no school placement.	
Lack of accountability	Last year she was in reception and this year she is in reception as well they haven't moved her up. I guess it's not their fault because they're saying that if she moves up to year one, she will struggle and her speech hasn't developed, she just has simple words, so things have been on hold for a year.	Feels council failed in their duties Reflects that school were doing what was best for the child	
Schools unable to meet child's needs Curriculum not fit			

Figure 7. Sample of thematic analysis using Microsoft Word: Publication 11

Main theme	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2	Quote
Alternatives to exclusion	1:1 support	removal from situations t	conflict over play
Alternatives to exclusion	1:1 support	segregated	I mean there have been occasions over the years where we have had to have
Alternatives to exclusion	Additional staffing	intense support	We would have signed them additional support through the main session of
Alternatives to exclusion	Additional staffing	intense support	We paid and bought in additional member of staff to work in the classroom,
Alternatives to exclusion	Additional staffing	in school support	So, we always try to make sure that there is more adult intervention, more a
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	involving parents	Moving forward, we're looking to develop a much more individualized appro
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	Intense support	really we can't take any credit for it it's the work of textra and the Peer supp
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	involving parents	so in our school they will get quite a detailed support plan it's an individual
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	Reasonable adjustments	I would see parents and come up with an action plan Support plan and put
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	Flexible timetable	There is a significant behaviour plan which is shared with everybody. They ge
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	sanctions	we monitor behaviour and we have a consequences system, there will be c
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	behaviour support team	I look at staffing and risk assessments and we put behaviour plans in place. I
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	sanctions	It's very much trying to identify what the reason is for the threat of exclusio
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	involving parents	One of the advantages of using our pastoral and well-being lead is for parer
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	segregated	We have got a behaviour plan in place so it is clearly identifying, with the di
Alternatives to exclusion	Behaviour plan	segregated	We offer the behaviour support unit the support of the behaviour support w
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	Intense support	We've got calm rooms upstairs, 3 in total. One is a sensory room which we u
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	Intense support	It's individual. It's very difficult within the mainstream because if you haven'
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	Intense support	The xxx children have SEMH issues. They will be struggling with behaviour a
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	restraint	We have a suite of services and facilities that are always there and we've bu
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	segregated	We have a small room downstairs where if I needed children to work on the
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	intense support	Isolation booths are detrimental to their mental health, to their wellbeing, t
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	segregated	We have so many depending on the child. To give an idea of the structure. W
Alternatives to exclusion	bespoke spaces	in school support	behaviour unit. But we would also try and reduce timetable. Long before hit
Alternatives to exclusion	dont exclude	dont exclude	/
Alternatives to exclusion	dont exclude	dont exclude	/
Alternatives to exclusion	external support	behaviour support team	It will go to the early help arena with the local authority and generally it's to
Alternatives to exclusion	identifying needs	involving parents	I think we are much better at identifying the need and supporting the familie
Alternatives to exclusion	Involve parents	Additional support in nur	We involve the parents as much as possible, look your child is struggling wit
Alternatives to exclusion	Involve parents	involving parents	We involve parents right from the start. Sometimes it's difficult because chil
Alternatives to exclusion	Involve parents	forest school	Our family support officer does life skills, so those children who, academical
Alternatives to exclusion	Involve parents	/	I think what we have got in place, the staff we do spend a lot of time with p
Alternatives to exclusion	involving parents	positive handling plan	Well we have a behaviour policy in place and everyone follows that, we mak
Alternatives to exclusion	isolation	/	We have an inclusion unit, if children are not behaving to the standards we ...

Figure 8. Sample of IPA using Microsoft Excel: Publication 12

2. Was there anything they didn't like about school? Did they seem to have any worries?			
Process of transition is ineffective	Yeah. Erm... from my perspective the underlying issue was the support plan that was in place in the infant school did not follow him adequately to the junior school. The junior school did not put any support in for him from day one. He was only diagnosed as being on the spectrum in the April May, so it was all quite a short turnaround. But they approached him in a very different way to the way the infant school had. They didn't find out from the infant school how they managed him.	Process of transition was ineffective

Parent feels the diagnosis was late

Different approach in juniors to infants, maybe knew him less well | Transition, dumped, sensory support, downhill, anxious, crisis, upset |
| No SEN support | They didn't put any support in place, they didn't put any time out breaks in place, no sensory support in place, I mean nothing I literally mean nothing. So, he was dumped into a classroom into a classroom with 30 odd and left to get on with it and went down-hill drastically very quickly. | Impact of no support was he couldn't cope

Lack of understanding from teacher of his needs | |
| Teacher training | He reacted very badly to something that his teacher did which in my view were very ill advised on her part and didn't take in to account his condition and that exacerbated it significantly and from that point on his view was that he was being treated disrespectfully and in fairness he was and for me he went in to crisis and so going to school every morning, he was absolutely up a height before he got there, and it took nothing to tip him and unfortunately when he his anxious and upset and frustrated and angry he is volatile and he will lash out. | | |

Appendix 12

Thematic analysis of the 12 published works

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data

Data familiarisation is essential to achieve systematic and deep engagement with the data
'to develop a rich and complex account beyond obvious meanings' (Clarke and Braun, 2013).
For this phase, each publication was re-read and, using pen and paper, initial notes,
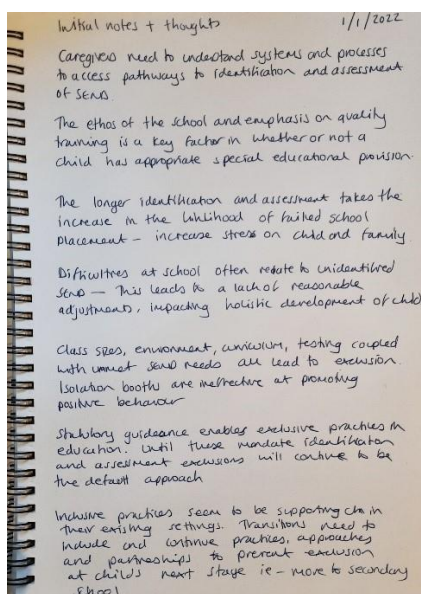thoughts and ideas were captured (Figures 9-11).

Figure 9. Initial notes: Phase 1

Figure 10. Consideration of risk factors for school exclusion: Phase 1

Figure 11. Consideration of risk factors against school exclusion: Phase 1

Then, as part of phase 1 the 12 published works were uploaded to NVivo 12 for coding of candidate themes and subthemes. The findings, conclusions and recommendations from the 12 published works were included in the coding process.

Phase 2: Coding

As shown in Table 24, there were 1,008 coded references across 5 candidate themes and 35 candidate sub-themes from the NVivo 12 coding (Figure 12). As stated by Tambling *et al*. (2021), sharing the frequency of codes is useful as it provides information on the distribution and density of codes across the data set.

Table 24. Initial codes and candidate themes: Phase 2

Initial themes	Candidate subthemes	Number of publications appeared in /13	Number of references to the candidate subthemes
RQ1. Why are schools excluding children and young people?			
Reasons schools exclude	To modify behaviour or because of behaviour	4	42
	Schools don't want children with difficulties	3	13
	To access external support or a new school	2	17
	To safeguard other children and teachers	2	14

	To deter other children from 'misbehaving'	2	9
	To give respite to other children and teachers	2	8
	To show caregivers how 'bad' things are	2	8

RQ2. What are the risk factors that increase the likelihood of school exclusion?

Exclusionary factors – risk factors	Lack of identification and assessment of SEND needs	11	79
	Lack of suitable provisions or skilled staff	7	30
	Lack of health pathways to identify and assess SEND needs	4	19
	Use of isolation booths	5	113
	Unachievable behaviour expectations	5	20
	Lack of support for children during transitions	5	14
	Victimisation and bullying by other children	5	12
	Curriculum and testing compounding difficulties	4	14
	Stigma of previous exclusion or negative behaviours	3	14
	Insufficient or no reasonable adjustments for SEND needs	3	11
	Lack of co-production with caregivers	3	7
	Drug misuse	2	47
	Use of restraint	2	4
	Carrying of knives	1	2

RQ3. What protective factors buffer the likelihood of school exclusion?

Inclusionary factors - protective factors	Bespoke approaches	7	53
	Staff with knowledge and understanding	7	37
	SEND needs identified and assessed	7	34
	Adapted curriculum	5	22
	Communication and partnership with caregivers	4	31

	HTs not agreeing with school exclusion	3	17
	Scaffolded transitions	2	32
RQ4. What is the impact of school exclusion on the child and family?			
The impact of school exclusion	Impact on child	5	47
	Impact on caregivers	4	50
	Impact on siblings	2	13
RQ5. What are the preventative measures that can be taken to reduce school exclusion			
Recommendations and solutions	Improvements to national guidance, systems and processes	11	96
	Improved identification and assessment of SEND	10	32
	Training for schools	9	36
	Increased funding for special educational provision	4	11
Total		157	1,008

Figure 12. Raw data from NVivo: Phase 2

At this point, it was important to reflect on the value the 12 publications to consider if the most suitable publications were selected for examination. Table 25 and Figure 13 show the frequency of each of the codes from the 12 publications represented during the thematic

analysis (phases 2 and 3). The visual representation in Figure 13 shows with 261 coded references, publication 4 had the highest sum of references, while publication 7 had the lowest sum of references at 4.

Table 25. Frequency of the 12 publications across phase 2 of thematic analysis: Phase 2

The publication	Number of Codes coded /30 from the publication	References assigned to codes from the publication
1. Martin-Denham, S., Saddler, H. and Donoghue, J. (2017) *The prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) identified in young people, aged 3-16, across the City of Sunderland:* School of Education. Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	10	58
2. Martin-Denham, S. (2020a) *An investigation into the perceived enablers and barriers to mainstream schooling: The voices of children excluded from school, their caregivers and professionals.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	19	179
3. Martin-Denham. S. (2020b) *The enablers and barriers to successful managed moves: The voice of children, caregivers, and professionals.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	19	145
4. Martin-Denham, S. (2020c) *A review of school exclusion on the mental health, well-being of children and young people in the City of Sunderland.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	29	261
5. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020a) *Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England? A Policy Brief.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	1	8
6. Martin-Denham, S. and Donaghue, J. (2020b) *Out of sight, out of mind? Managed moves in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	3	13
7. Martin-Denham, S. (2020d) 'Riding the rollercoaster of school exclusion coupled with drug misuse: the lived experience of caregivers', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 25(3-4), pp. 244-263. Available at: https://doi:10.1080/13632752.2020.1848985.	14	73

8. Martin-Denham, S. (2021a) *The benefits of school exclusion: Research with headteachers in England.* Sunderland: University of Sunderland.	10	45
9. Martin-Denham, S. (2021b) 'Defining, identifying, and recognising underlying causes of social, emotional, and mental health difficulties: Thematic analysis of interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties,* 26(2), pp. 187-205. Available at: https://doi:org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1930909.	9	17
10. Martin-Denham, S. (2021c) 'School exclusion, substance misuse and use of weapons: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children', *Support for Learning*, 36(4), pp. 532-554. Available at: https:// doi:10.1111/1467-9604.12379.	16	77
11. Martin-Denham, S. (2021d) 'Alternatives to school exclusion: Interviews with headteachers in England', *Emotional and Behavioural Difficultie*s', pp. 375-393. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2021.1983326.	19	67
12. Martin-Denham, S. (2022a) 'Marginalisation, autism and school exclusion: Caregivers' perspectives', *Support for Learning, 37(1),* pp. 108-143. Available at: https://doi: 10.1111/1467-9604.12398.	16	64
Total	165	1,007

Figure 13. Visual representation of themes (Table 25) for each of the 12 publications: Phase 2
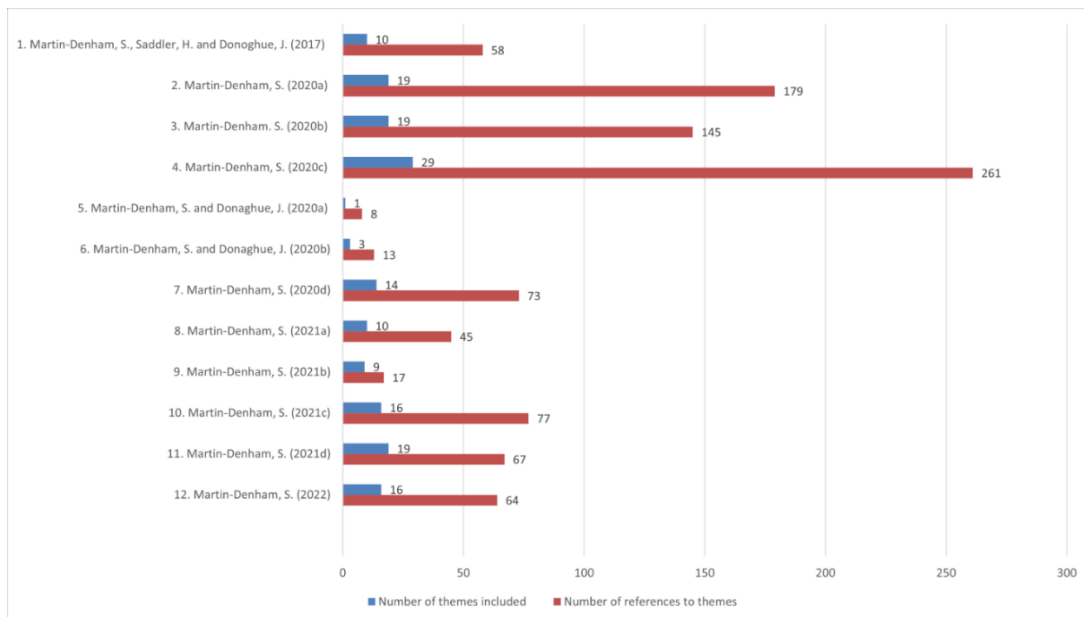
Phase 3: Generating initial themes

Phase 3 used the coded and collated data from phase 2 to search for initial candidate themes and subthemes rather than codes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). As part of this process, the codes were re-analysed on NVivo 12 and combined into new or modified themes (Figure 14, Table 26). The colour coding illustrates where the candidate themes in phase 2 were collapsed into new candidate subthemes in phase 3 of TA. This process resulted in the same number of candidate themes (5) and fewer subthemes (from 34 in phase 2 of TA to 18).

Figure 14. NVivo 12: Phase 3 coding

Table 26. Revised candidate themes and subthemes: Phase 3

| Candidate themes (phase 2)	Candidate subthemes	Candidate themes phase 3	Candidate subthemes
Why schools exclude	To modify behaviour or because of behaviour[a]	Why schools exclude	Behaviour modification [a,e,g]
	Schools don't want children with difficulties[b]		
	To access external support or a new school[c]		Protecting others[d,f]
	To safeguard other children and teachers[d]		To find solutions[c]
	To deter other children from 'mis-behaving'[e]		Self-preservation[b]
	To give respite to other children and teachers[f]		
	To show caregivers how 'bad' things are[g]		
Risk factors increasing likelihood of school exclusion	Lack of identification and assessment of SEND needs[a]	Risk factors for school exclusion	Unknown SEND[a,c,k]
	Lack of suitable provisions or skilled staff[b]		Unmet needs[b,c,f,j,k]
	Use of isolation booths[d]		Unable to live up to expectations[e,h,i]
	Unachievable behaviour expectations[e]		Exposure to adversity[d,g,l,m,n]

	Lack of support for children during transitions[f]		
	Victimisation and bullying by other children[g]		
	Curriculum and testing compounding difficulties[h]		
	Stigma of previous exclusion or negative behaviours[i]		
	Insufficient or no reasonable adjustments for SEND needs[j]		
	Lack of co-production with caregivers[k]		
	Drug misuses[l]		
	Use of restraint[m]		
	Carrying of knives[n]		
Protective factors buffering school exclusion	Bespoke approaches[a]	Protecting against school exclusion	Knowledgeable school staff[b]
	Staff with knowledge and understanding[b]		Forging relationships[e]
	SEND needs identified and assessed[c]		Identification and assessment[c]
	Adapted curriculum[d]		Bespoke approaches[a, d, g]
	Communication and partnership with caregivers[e]		School ethos[f]
	HTs not agreeing with school exclusion[f]		
	Scaffolded transitions[g]		
The impact of school exclusion	Impact on child[a]	The legacy of school exclusion	Impact on child[a]
	Impact on caregivers[b]		Impact on family[b,c]
	Impact on siblings[c]		

Preventative measures	Improvements to national guidance, systems and processes[a]	National reform	Improvements to national guidance[a,b]
	Improved identification and assessment of SEND[b]		Training for school staff[c]
	Training for schools[c]		Increasing funding[d]
	Increased funding for special educational provision[d]		

As shown in Table 26 and Figure 14, the candidate theme 'why schools exclude' and 'behaviour modification' were brought together from the phase 2 subthemes 'to modify behaviour or because of behaviour', 'to deter other children from misbehaving' and 'to show caregivers how bad things are'. These new candidate subthemes related to schools wanting to achieve behaviour modification, so the new candidate subtheme worked well. Similarly, the new candidate subtheme 'protecting others' captured the meaning from 'to safeguard other children and teachers' and 'to give respite to other children and teachers'. Self-preservation was a better 'fit' to describe that 'schools don't want children with difficulties' as following a revisit to the transcripts, this subtheme seemed to encapsulate that schools felt they were unable to meet the needs of the children in their care due to the complexity of their SEND. Figure 15 shows the revised themes and subthemes.

Figure 15. Thematic mapping of candidate themes, subthemes and connections (version 1): Phase 3
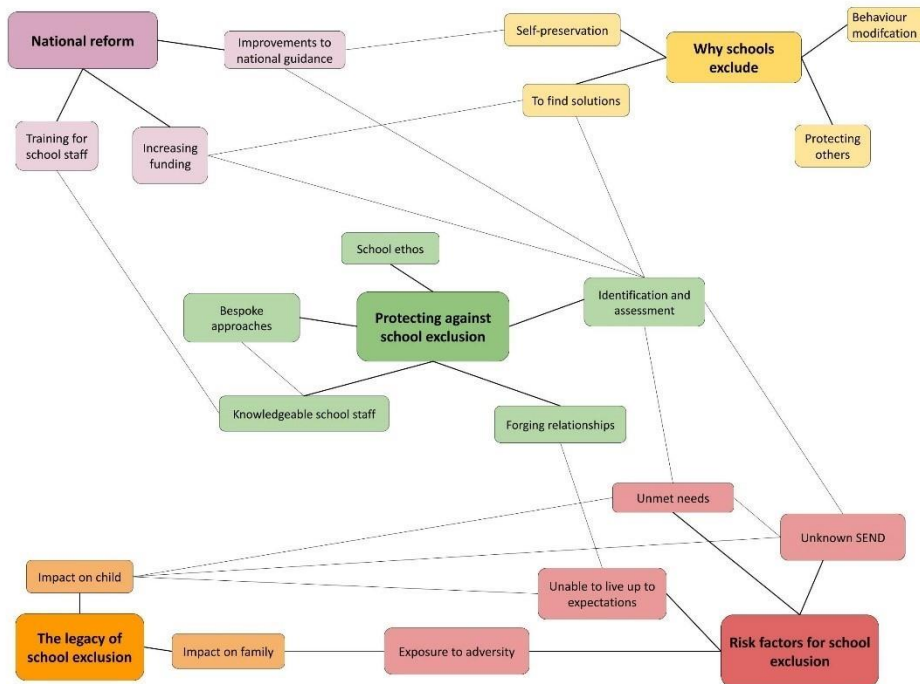
Phase 4. Developing and reviewing themes

Phase 4 allowed for further developing and reviewing of themes presented in phase 3 (Table 26, Figure 15). The following test is suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006).

'One test for this is to see whether you can describe the scope and content of each theme in a couple of sentences. If you cannot do this, further refinement of that theme maybe needed (p. 22)'.

On reflection, it was felt that the data corpus needed to be revisited to ensure it represented the meaning in the data. Tables 27-29 present the outcome of the refinement and the changes in the naming of some candidate themes and an increase in candidate subthemes from 34 to 43. The changes included collapsing the candidate theme 'national reform' into the candidate theme 'risk factors for school exclusion' due to the belief that vagueness in statutory guidance created situations where placed children at risk of school exclusion.

The following changes were made to the candidate subthemes within the theme 'why schools exclude' (Table 27):

- 'Behaviour modification' was changed to 'hope of reshaping behaviours' as when revisiting the transcripts, headteachers justified the school exclusion believing it would reshape a child's behaviours
- Self-preservation to 'discrimination' as it was apparent, they did not want the child in school as they were unable to meet their needs arising from their disabilities.

Table 27. Why schools exclude: Phase 4

Phase 3		Phase 4 revisions		
Candidate theme	Candidate subthemes	Revised main theme	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2
Why schools exclude	Behaviour modification	**Why schools exclude**	Hope of reshaping behaviours	Dysregulated behaviours
				Deterring others
				Provoke caregiver reaction
	Protecting others		Protecting others	Safeguarding
				Respite
	Self-preservation		Discrimination	Rejecting the child
	To find solutions		Finding solutions	Too access external support or new school

The following changes were made to the candidate subthemes within the theme 'risk factors for school exclusion' (Table 28):

- Unknown SEND was changed to unidentified SEND. This was a better statement to capture that often SEND needs are known but are not acknowledged by some education professionals as they are not formally assessed nor identified by health services.

Table 28. Risk factors for school exclusion: Phase 4

Phase 3		Phase 4 revisions		
Candidate theme	**Candidate subthemes**	**Revised main theme**	**Subtheme 1**	**Subtheme 2**
Risk factors for school exclusion	Exposure to adversity	**Risk factors for school exclusion**	Exposure to adversity	The detriment of isolation booths
				Substance misuse
				Bullying
				Restraint
				Possession of a knife
	Unmet needs		Unmet needs	Lack of SEN schools or skilled staff
				Lack of mainstream school SEN support
				Lack of reasonable adjustments
				Lack of support with transitions
	Unknown SEND		Unidentified SEND	Inadequate assessment and identification of SEND in schools
				Inadequate assessment and identification of SEND processes and pathways in health
				Lack of multi-agency approach
				Lack of co-production with caregivers
	Unable to live up to expectations		Unable to live up to expectations	Unattainable behaviour expectations
				Stigmatised of school exclusion
				Curriculum expectations

The following changes were made to the candidate subthemes within the theme 'protecting against school exclusion' (Table 29):

- 'Knowledgeable school staff' was amended to 'education workforce training' as revisiting the transcripts identified that underlying the lack of knowledge was a lack of quality training
- 'School ethos' was changed to 'ethical leadership' to show the importance of the values and beliefs of senior leaders in schools in positively influencing the school ethos

Table 29. Protecting against school exclusion: Phase 4

Phase 3		Phase 4 revisions		
Candidate theme	**Candidate subthemes**	**Revised main theme**	**Subtheme 1**	**Subtheme 2**
Protecting against school exclusion	Forging relationships	**Protecting against school exclusion**	Forging relationships	Caregivers as partners
				Positive child-teacher relationship
				Sense of belonging
	Bespoke approaches		Bespoke approaches	Support to regulate behaviour
				Supported transitions
				Flexible systems and processes
				Adaptable curriculum
				Smaller classes
	Identification and assessment		Assessment and identification of SEND	Schools assess and identify SEND
				Multi-agency working
				Support external to the school

|			Defined health pathways
	Knowledgeable school staff	Education workforce training	Assessing, identifying and meeting the needs of children with SEND
	School ethos	Ethical leadership	Ethos of inclusion

The following changes were made to the candidate subthemes within the theme 'the legacy of school exclusion' (Table 30, Figure 16):

- 'Impact on the child' and 'impact on the family' was too broad and was changed to encapsulate the detrimental impact of school exclusion on the child and the family as an adverse experience or set of experiences

Table 30. Legacy of school exclusion: Phase 4

Phase 3		Phase 4 revisions		
Candidate theme	Candidate subthemes	Revised main theme	Subtheme 1	Subtheme 2
The legacy of school exclusion	Impact on child	**The legacy of school exclusion**	Exclusion as adverse childhood experiences	Ill mental health
				Lost schooling
				Adverse effect on siblings
	Impact on family		Adverse effect of exclusion on caregivers	Psychological and physical impact
				Impact on employment
				Strain on the family unit

Figure 16. Thematic mapping of candidate themes, subthemes and connections (version 2): Phase 4
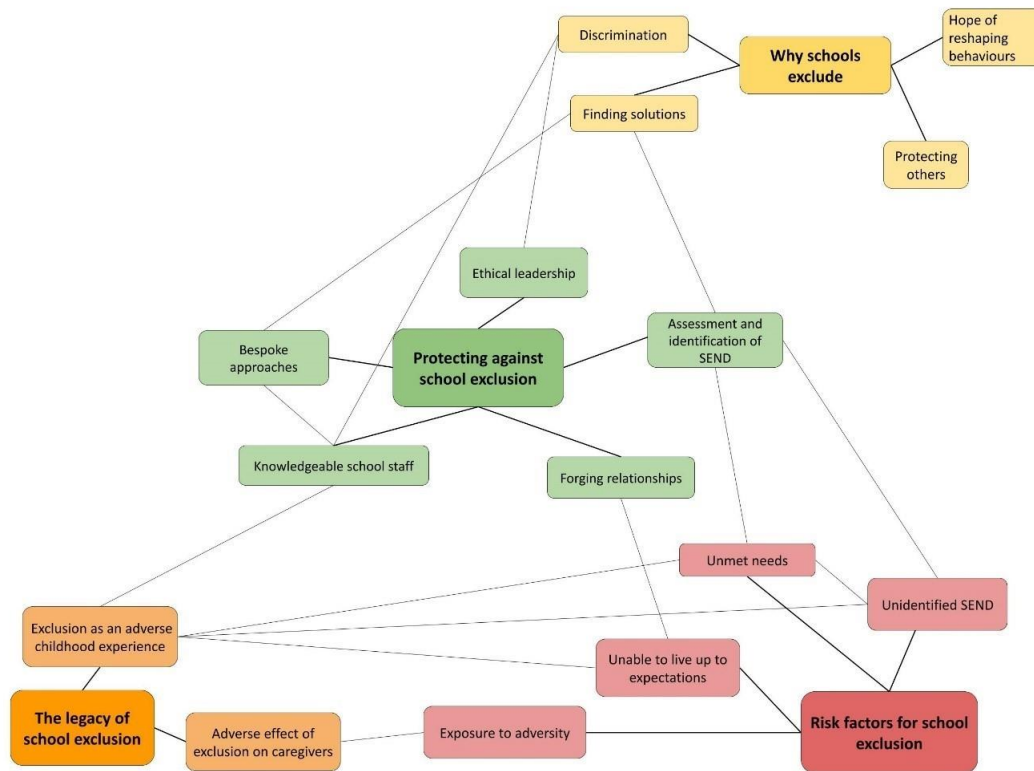

Phase 5. Refining, defining and naming themes

For phase 5, the redevelopment of themes followed a period of reflection using NVivo. Firstly, the theme 'why schools exclude' was merged into risk factors for school exclusion. The justification for this collapsing of the theme and subthemes was the 'why schools exclude' provides insight into critical 'risk factors for school exclusion'. Secondly, the legacy of school exclusion was renamed 'the aftermath of school exclusion'. 'The legacy of school exclusion' did not sufficiently capture the detrimental impact of school exclusion on the mental health, wellbeing and academic outcomes of children and young people and their caregivers who were excluded from school.

A further re-work of the data was undertaken due to the larger number of themes and subthemes using NVivo (Figure 17). The purpose of this was to ensure the 'richness and complexity of the data' was captured (p. 91). At this stage, there were three overarching themes, 12 themes and 35 subthemes, which could indicate an underdeveloped analysis,
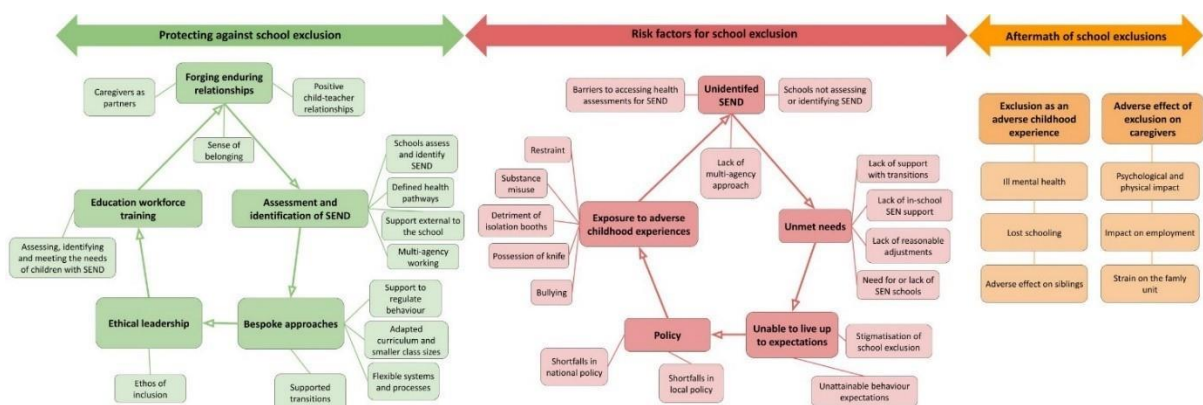
though consideration needed to be given to the immensity of the data corpus (174 interviews as part of the original study (Martin-Denham, 2020a).

Figure 17. NVivo nodes for Figure 18 (version 1): Phase 5
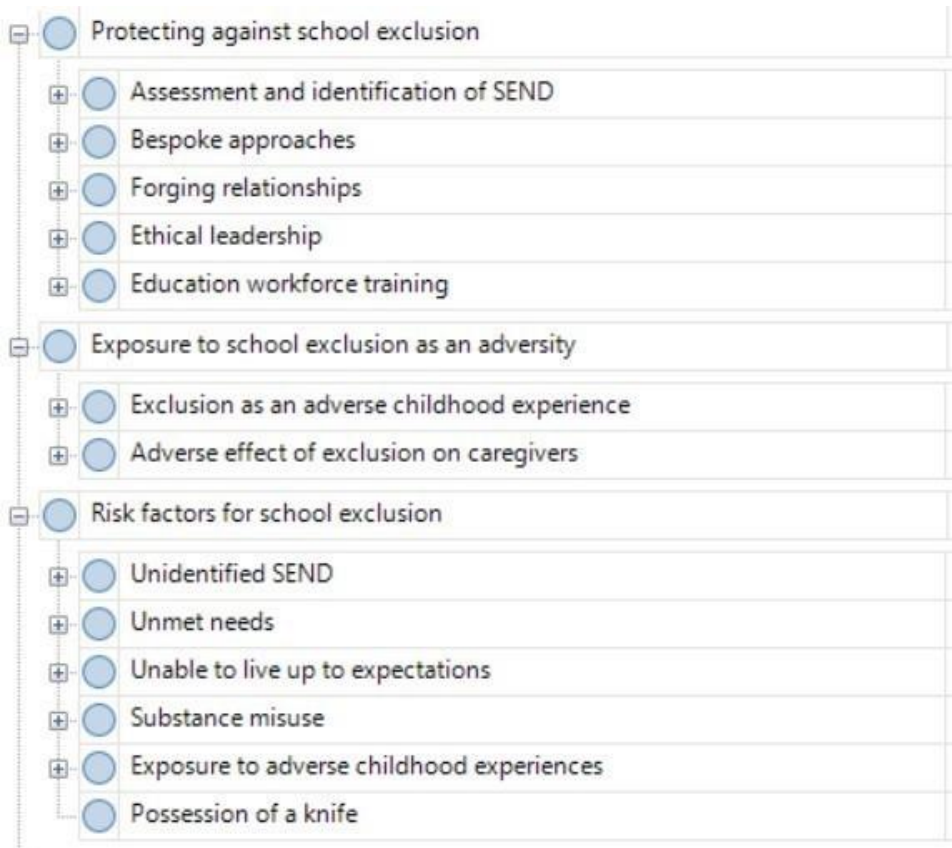
Figure 18. Thematic mapping of candidate themes, subthemes and connections (version 1): Phase 5

Next, the candidate themes were then placed in bold for ease of identification. A change was made to the subthemes within the theme 'the aftermath of school exclusion'. This process reduced the 12 themes and 35 subthemes (Figure 18) to 12 themes and 32 subthemes (Figure 19).

Figure 19. Thematic mapping of candidate themes, subthemes and connections (version 2): Phase 5
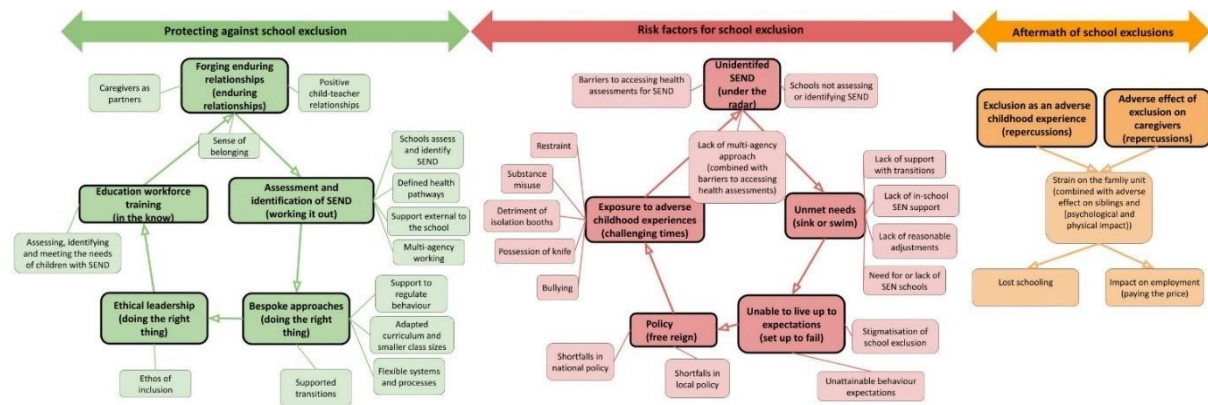
Figure 20 illustrates a further reduction from 12 themes and 32 subthemes (from Figure 19) to 10 themes and 30 subthemes (Figure 20) as part of phase 5 ongoing analysis.

- 'Ethical leadership' and 'bespoke approaches' were collapsed into a new theme 'doing the right thing'
- 'Exclusion as an adverse childhood experience and 'adverse effect of exclusion on caregivers were collapsed creating the theme 'repercussions'

Figure 20 illustrates the interpretation of the data that conceptualises rather than describe the data-informed by social constructionist theory (Clarke and Braun, 2014). Table 30 presents the change from descriptive to a conceptual labelling of the themes from Figure 19 to Figure 20.

Figure 20. Thematic mapping of candidate themes, subthemes and connections (version 3): Phase 5
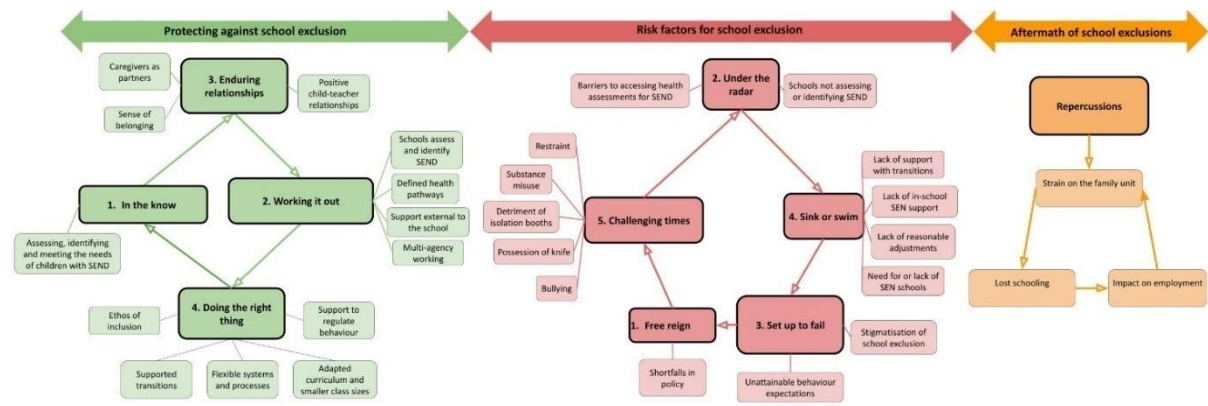
**Table 31.** Changes from descriptive to conceptual naming of the themes: Phase 5

Descriptive theme	Conceptual theme
Protecting against school exclusion	
Forging enduring relationships	Enduring relationships
Education workforce training	In the know
Ethical leadership	Doing the right thing
Assessment and identification of SEND	Working it out
Bespoke approaches	Doing the right thing
Risk factors for school exclusion	
Unidentified SEND	Under the radar
Unmet needs	Sink or swim
Unable to live up to expectations	Set up to fail
Policy	Free rein
Exposure to adverse childhood experiences	Challenging times
Repercussions	
Exclusions as an adverse childhood experience	Repercussions
Adverse effect of exclusion on caregivers	Repercussions

Recoding of NVivo (Figure 20) led to the same themes and some revision to subthemes with a revised thematic map (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Renaming and modification: Protecting against school exclusion: Phase 5

Name	Files	References
Protecting against school exclusion	0	0
Working it out	0	0
Defined health pathways	3	5
Multi agency working	7	20
School assess and identify needs	4	20
Doing the right thing	0	0
Flexible systems and processes	4	9
Adaptable curriculum and small class sizes	5	12
Supported transitions	3	16
Support to regulate behaviour	4	30
Enduring relationships	0	0
Sense of belonging	2	8
Positive child - teacher relationship	5	23
Caregivers as partners	5	26
In the know	0	0
Ethos of inclusion	4	17
Training and development	7	18

Figure 22. Revised thematic map: Phase 5
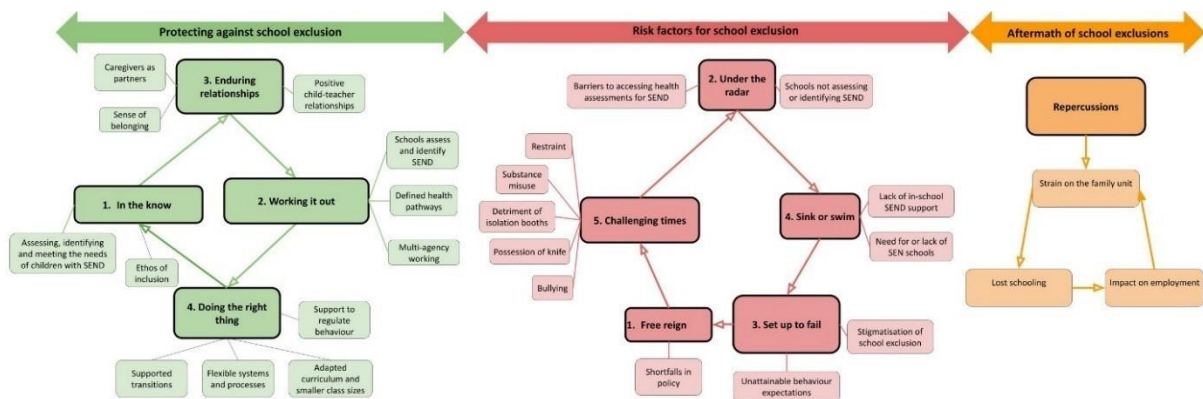
The next stage was to consider the presentation of themes and subthemes. Figure 22 could be mis-interpreted as a timeline which was not the intention and on reflection it was considered that there were further subthemes that could be merged. The exploration of data visualisation resulted in a move away from the timeline (Figure 22) to a circular representation with the child and family at heart, with the surrounding theme and subthemes (Figure 23-25). Consideration was given to the placement of the themes around the child and family, as shown in Figure 23. Free rein (shortfalls in policy) is deliberately at around the other risk factors as they are the fundamental cause of children remaining 'under the radar' of schools and health services (Figure 24). Figure 24 does not include arrows as they are not intended to be interpreted as cyclical.

Thought was given to whether free rein should be represented alternatively, to illustrate the impact of policy on all other themes as well as being a standalone theme in its own right. For example, education policy that schools 'should' not 'must' or 'could' assess and identify SEND needs (add refs DfE and DoH, 2015), unattainable behaviour expectations and use of isolation booths (Behaviour and discipline guidelines).

A final rechecking of the themes and subthemes was undertaken, resulting in Tables 32-34.

Table 32. Main theme and subthemes: Protective factors to buffer exclusion

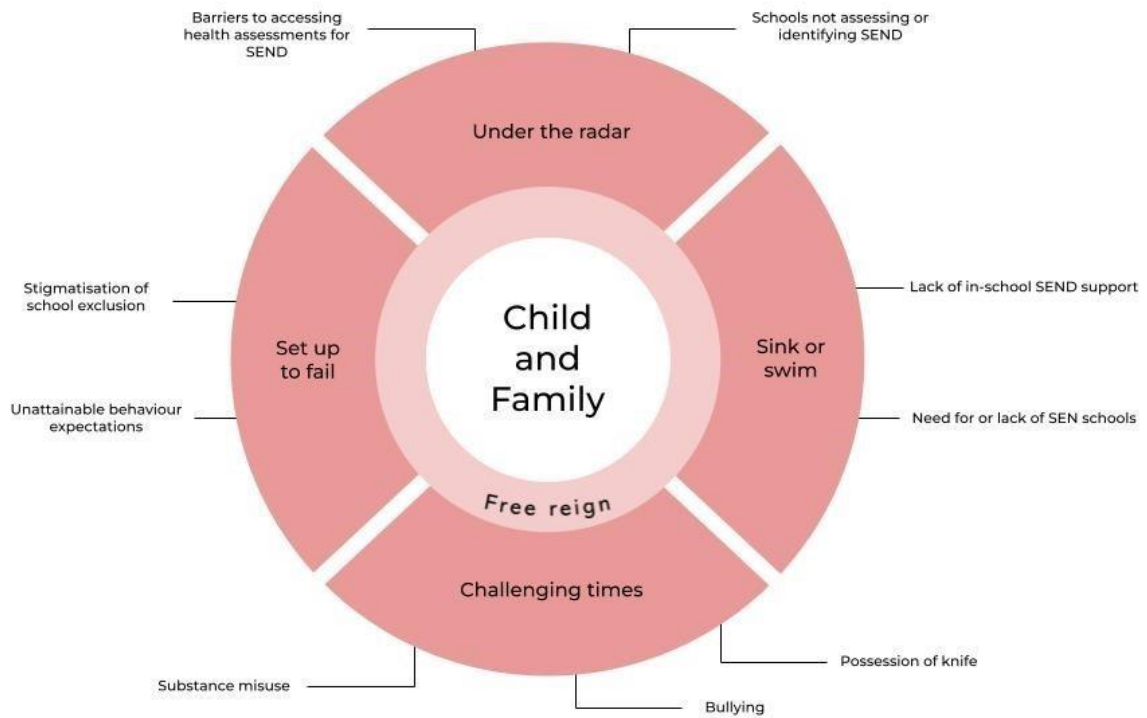| Objective	Main themes	Subthemes
To determine protective factors that buffer the likelihood of school exclusion?	**Working it out**	Schools assess and identify SEND
		Defined health pathways
		Multi-agency working
	In the know	Training and development
		Ethos of inclusion
	Doing the right thing	Support to regulate behaviour
		Adapted curriculum and small class sizes
		Flexible systems and processes
		Supported transitions
	Enduring relationships	Positive child-teacher relationships
		Caregivers as partners
		Sense of belonging

Figure 23. Circular representation of the protective factors: Phase 5
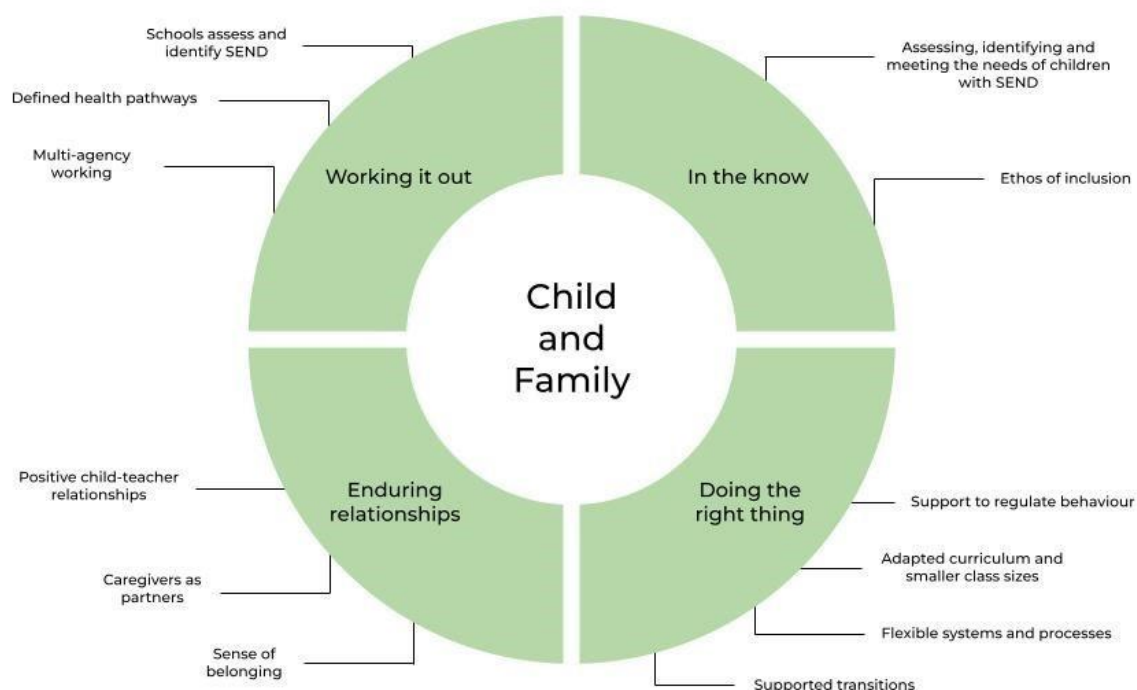
Table 33. Main themes and subthemes: Risk factors for school exclusion

Objective	Main themes	Subthemes
To determine risk factors that increase the likelihood of school exclusion?	**Free rein**	Shortfalls in policy
	Under the radar	Schools not assessing or identifying SEND
		Barriers to accessing health assessments
	Sink or swim	Lack of in school SEND support
		Need for or lack of SEND schools
	Set up to fail	Substance misuse
		Bullying
		Possession of a knife
	Set up to fail	Stigmatisation of school exclusion
		Unattainable behaviour expectations

**Figure 24.** Circular representation of the risk factors: Phase 5

Table 34. Main themes and subthemes: Repercussions of school exclusion

| Objective	Main theme	Subthemes
To evaluate the impact of school exclusion on the child and family?	Repercussions	Psychological impact
		Lost schooling
		Impact on employment

Figure 25. Circular representation of the repercussions: Phase 5
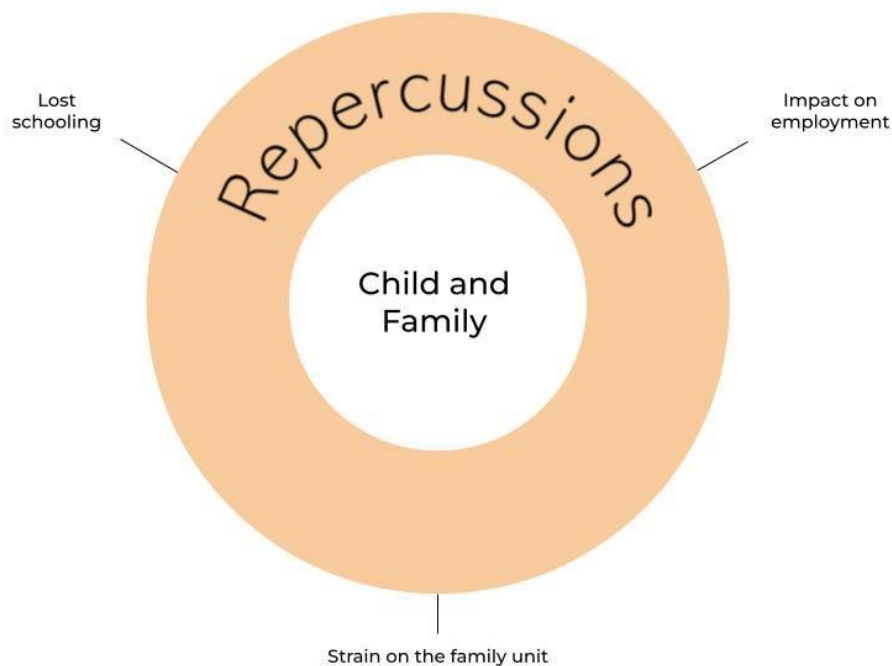
Figures 23-25 were combined to create a unified figure (Figure 26), with the child and family remaining at the heart of the inner circle. The theme 'free rein' conceptualises the overarching risk factor central to increasing the risk of school exclusion for children and young people. The statutory guidance and local policies give headteachers of schools a lack of obligation to implement the graduated response to identify and assess CYP for underlying SEND (DfE and DoH, 2015). The lack of mandated need to identify and assess for SEND means that CYP remain 'under the radar', increasing their risk of school exclusion as they 'sink or swim' in mainstream schooling. 'Challenging times' and 'set up to fail' also additional risk factors that increase the likelihood of school exclusion when there is no buffer from the protective factors in the inner circle. The outer ring in Figure 26 presents the theme 'repercussions' identifying the impact of school exclusion on the child and family.

**Figure 26.** Combined theme representation (version 1)
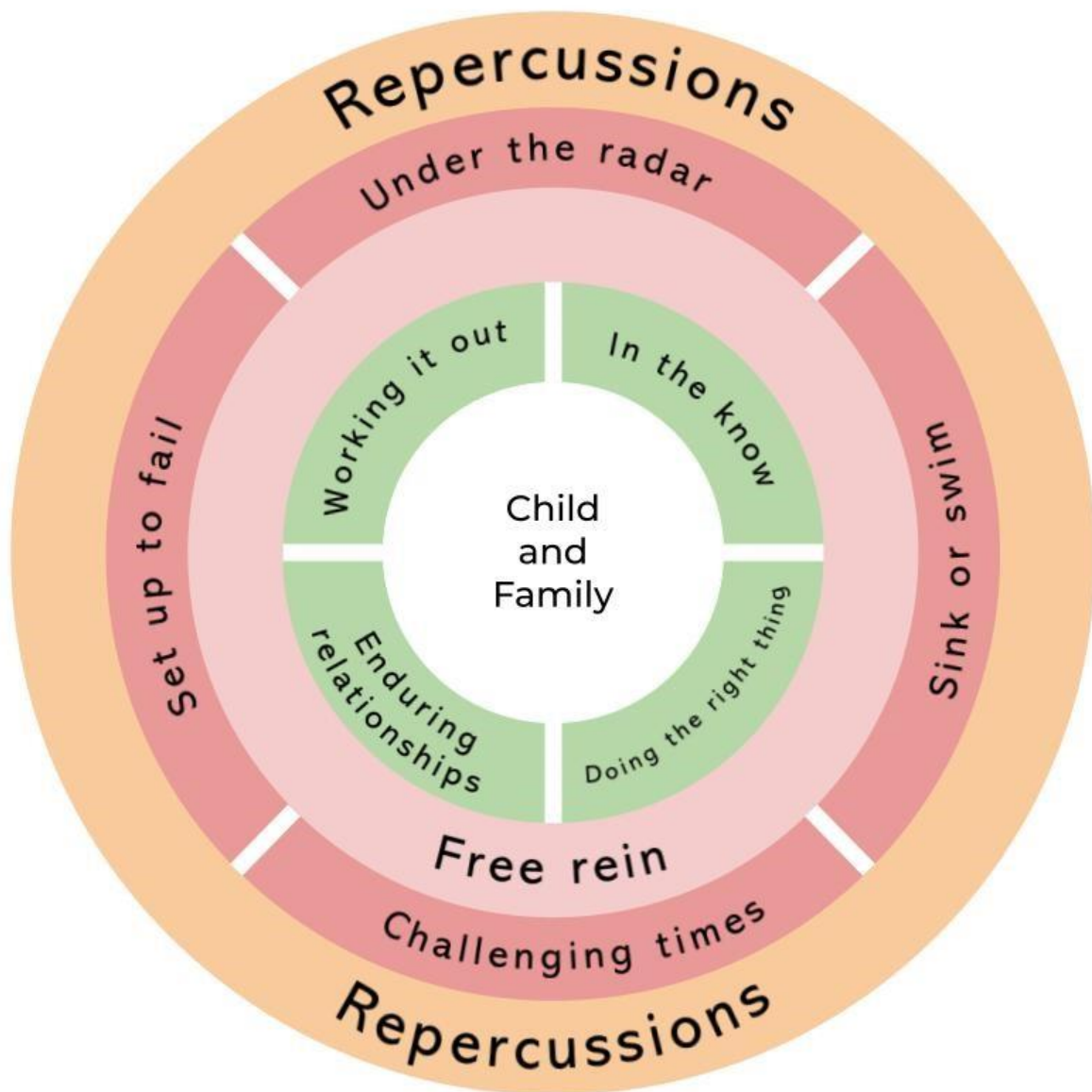
On reflection of Figure 26, it became apparent that 'enduring relationships' needed to surround the themes 'working it out', 'in the know' and 'doing the right thing' (Figure 27). The reason for this was that without a positive an enduring relationship in place the other themes as protective factors are not likely to occur.

Figure 27. Combined theme representation (version 2)
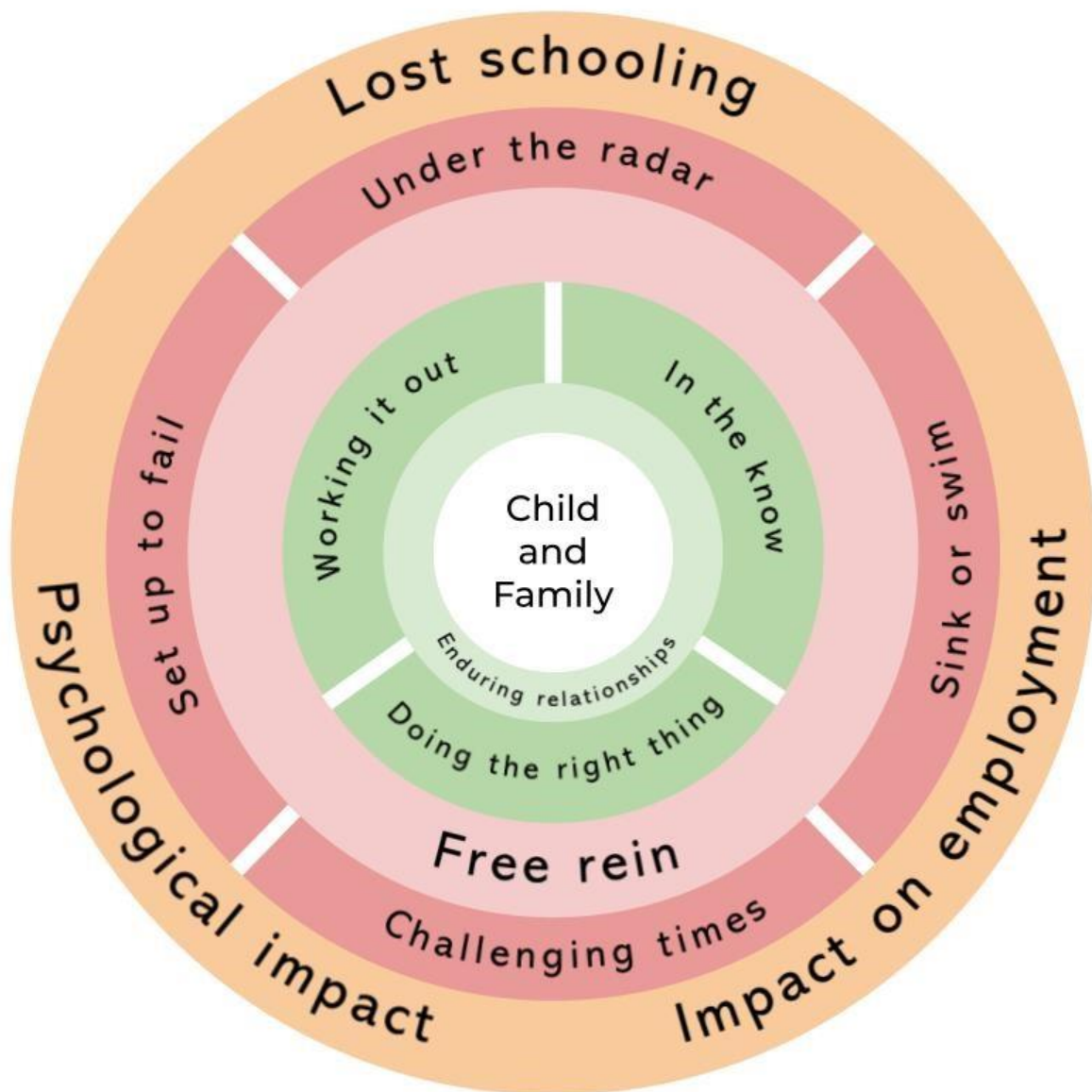
Further reflection on the data within Figure 26 led to the revisions shown in Figure 28. Repercussions did not give sufficient sense of the detail within the theme. Figure 28 shows the final theme representation and includes 'protective factors, risk factors and repercussions as a segment and repercussions broken into revised subthemes. Hanging by a thread replaced psychological impact, impact on employment and lost schooling were combined and revised to 'snowball effect' and new beginnings was added to identify the positive outcomes of school exclusion in that it was at this point their needs were met in alternative provision contexts (that was previously coded within psychological impact).

Figure 28. Final theme representation
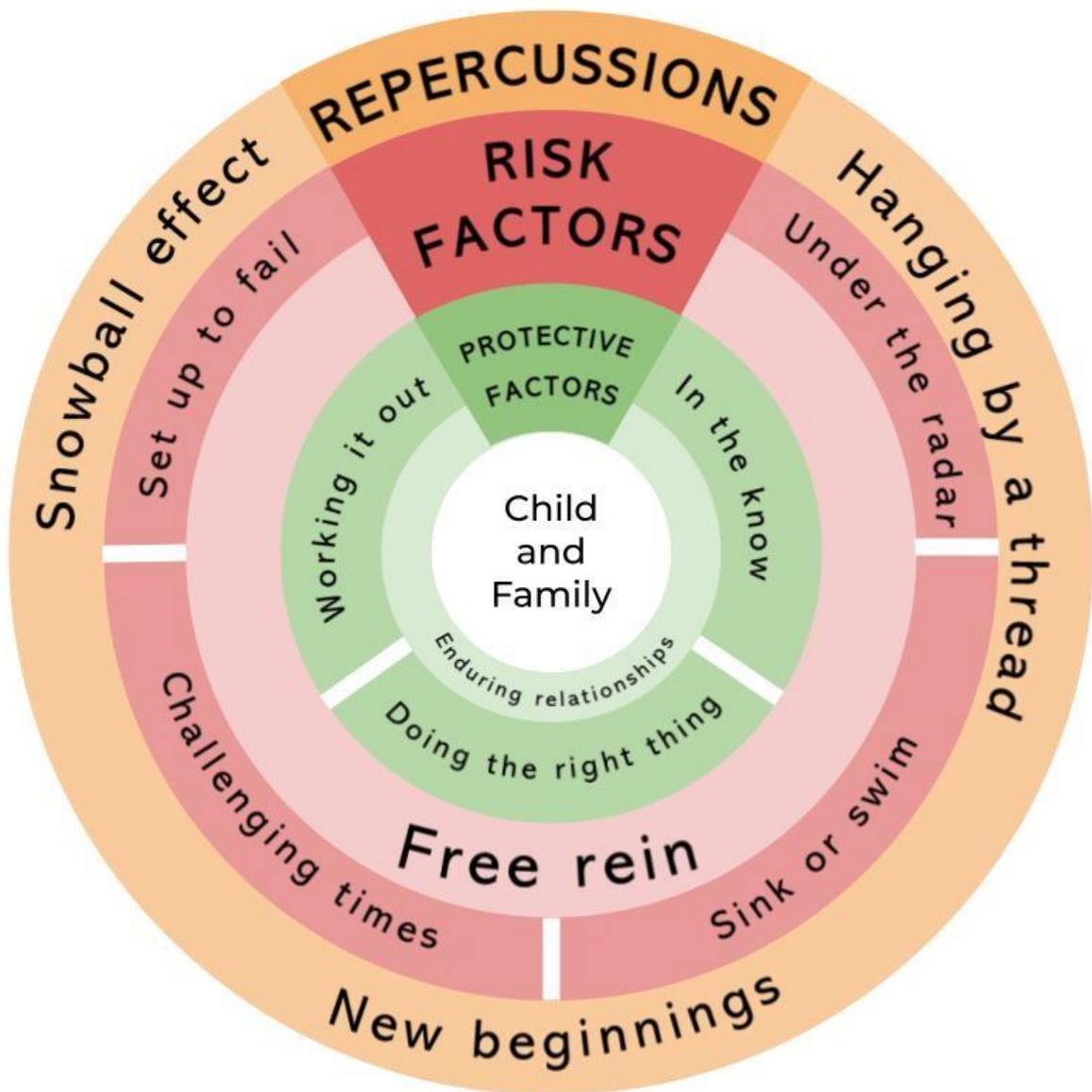
Appendix 13

Quantitative presentation of the coded references

Table 35. Number of coded references for the theme protecting against school exclusion

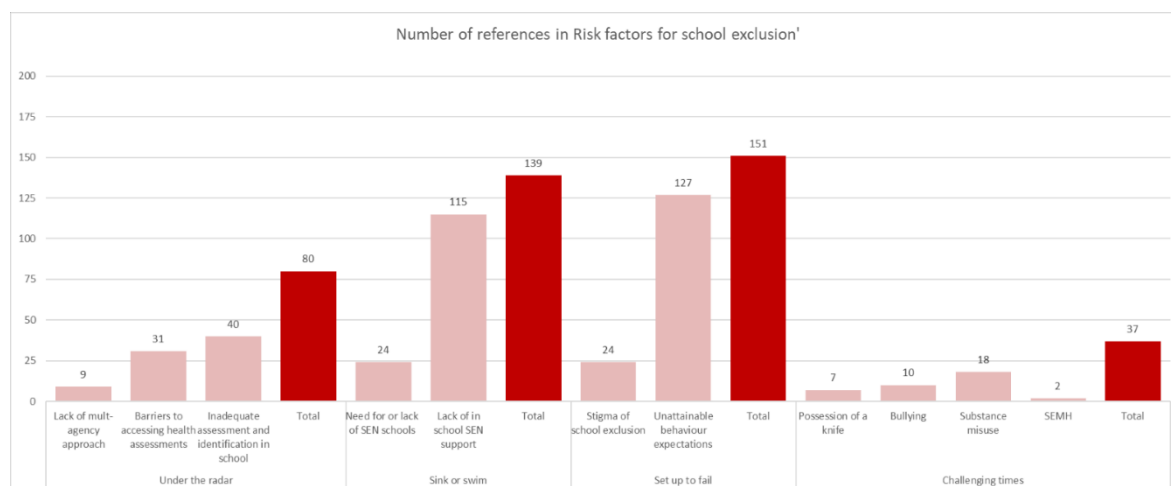| Theme	Number of references
Protecting against school exclusion	**256**
Doing the right thing	**86**
Support for regulating behaviour	39
Supported transitions	16
Adaptable curriculum and small class sizes	19
Flexible systems and processes	12
Enduring relationships	**62**
Caregivers as partners	27
Positive child-teacher relationship	27
Sense of belonging	8
Working it out	**61**
Multi-agency working	25
Schools assess and identify needs	25
Defined health pathways	11
In the know	**35**
Training and development	27
Ethos of inclusion	20

Figure 29. Bar chart to show the number of references for the themes in protecting against school exclusion
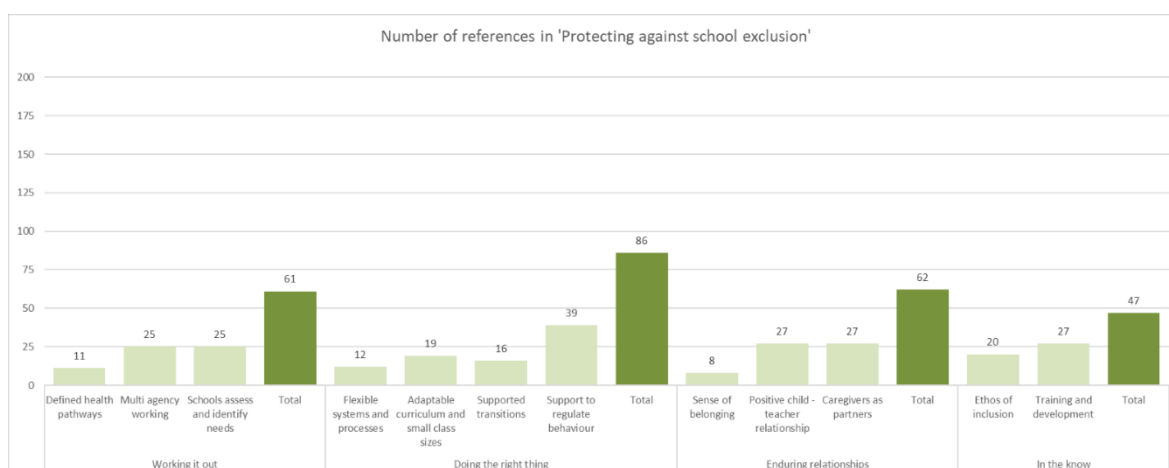
Table 36. Number of coded references for the theme risk factors for school exclusion

| Theme	Number of references
Risk factors for school exclusion	**407**
Set up to fail	**151**
Stigma of school exclusion	24
Unattainable behaviour expectations	127
Sink or swim	**139**
Need for or lack of SEND schools	24
Lack of in-school SEND support	115
Under the radar	**80**
Lack of multiagency approach	9
Barriers to accessing health assessments	31
Inadequate assessment and identification in school	40
Challenging times	**37**
Possession of a knife	7
Bullying	10
Substance misuse	18
SEMH	2

Figure 30. Bar chart to show the number of references for the themes in risk factors for school exclusion

Table 37. Number of coded references for the repercussions of school exclusion on the child and family

Theme	Number of references
Repercussions	**112**
Hanging by a thread	**62**
Snowball effect	**33**
New beginnings	**17**

Figure 31. Bar chart to show the number of references for the theme repercussions of school exclusion on the child and family
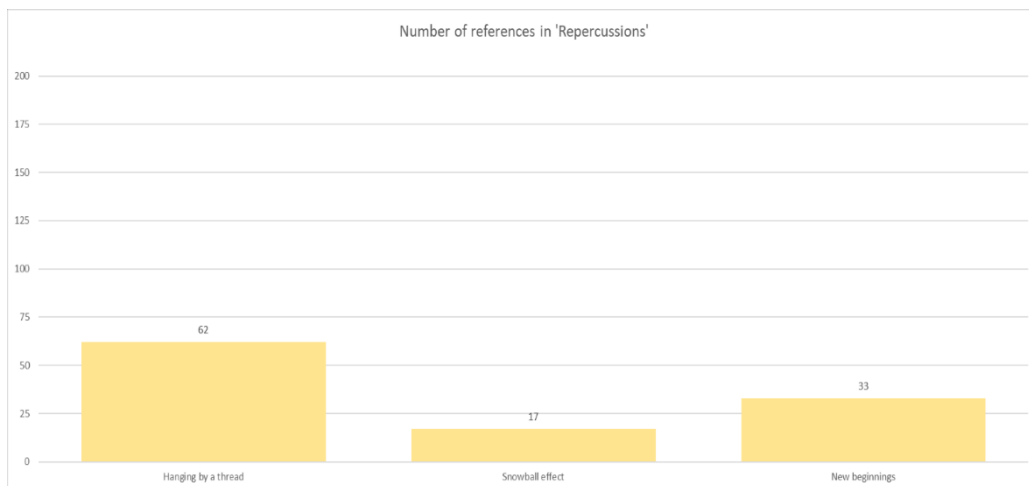
Appendix 14

Reimagining Freire's banking model

Table 38. Reimagining Freire's banking model to prevent school exclusion

Freire, 1970, p. 54	Preventing school exclusion
1. The teacher teaches and students are taught	1. The teacher responds and adapts to assessed and identified individual needs to promote participation and learning
2. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing	2. Teachers place value on the knowledge and experiences that CYP bring to a learning environment
3. The teacher thinks and the students are thought about	3. Dialogue between CYP, caregivers, teachers and other agencies allow the sharing of knowledge and understanding of the holistic needs of CYP
4. The teacher speaks and the students listen – meekly	4. Dialogue is central and encouraged in a two-way approach to learning and teaching
5. The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined	5. Co-production with CYP, caregivers, teachers and other agencies, to assess and identify underlying reasons and triggers for behaviours, to co-create response and timely review
6. The teacher chooses and enforces her choice and the students comply	6. Critical thinking is at the heart of provision and practice
7. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting, through the action of the teacher	7. Capturing of and response to child voice, to understand if individual needs are being adequately met by teachers and the school is embedded into systems and processes
8. The teacher chooses the programme content and the students (who are not consulted) adapt to it	8. CYP co-produce curriculum content and teaching approaches with their teacher
9. The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with her own professional authority, which she sets in opposition to the freedom of the students	9. The teacher actively promotes liberation of CYP
10. The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects	10. Learning is co-produced; co-reflection allows for transformative schooling

Appendix 15

Keynote speeches, presentations, seminars and workshops

2023   Invited presentation: '*#pullupachair - Participatory research with children and young people previously excluded from school'*. NSPCC, England.

2023   Invited presentation: '*#pullupachair - Participatory research with children and young people previously excluded from school'*. Department for Education, England.

2023   Invited presentation: '*#pullupachair - Participatory research with children and young people previously excluded from school'*. Office of the Children's Commissioner, England.

2023   Invited presentation: '*#pullupachair - Participatory research with children and young people previously excluded from school'.* Research and Knowledge Exchange Conference (RKE). University of Sunderland

2022   Conference: '*#pullupachair – Child-led conference*'. University of Sunderland

2022   Invited presentation: '*Research: Voices captured: School Exclusion*'. 7th Teacher Research conference, University of Sunderland.

2022   Invited presentation: *'Learning from research on the voices of children and young people'.* Westminster Education Forum, London (online).

2022   Invited presentation: *'Lessons from research on barriers and enablers to schooling from children and young people excluded from school'.* National Working Group Safeguarding Disabled Children (NWGSDC), London (online).

2022   Invited presentation: *'Learning from commissioned research on school exclusion'.* Leading Learning for Special Educational Needs and Disability – Community Interest Company (LLSENDCiC), London (online).

2022   Invited presentation: *'Reducing and preventing school exclusions in Sunderland and South Tyneside: Current research projects'.* National Working Group: Safeguarding Disabled Children, London (online).

2021   Individual paper presentation: *'Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England?'* British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, London (online).

2021   Individual paper presentation: *'School exclusion, substance misuse and use of weapons: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children'.* British Educational Research Association: Inclusion for all: the power of pupil voice for learners with SEND, London (online).

2021   Individual paper presentation: *'School exclusion, substance misuse and possession of weapons: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of interviews with children.'* The European Conference on Education, London

2021   Keynote: *'Let's get SMART targets cracked'. Annual SENCO conference'.* University of Sunderland.

2021   Invited presentation: *'Research findings: School exclusions and mental health'.* National Working Group: Safeguarding Disabled Children, London (online).

2021   Research dissemination: *'Family Group Conferencing: A thematic analysis of service-users' perspectives'.* Together for Children, Sunderland.

2021	Invited presentation: *'Protecting our participants – Ethical knots in education research'.* The Centre for Research in Education, University of Sunderland
2021	Invited presentation: *'Understanding children's behaviours'.* New College Durham.
2020	Oral evidence: *'Sharing research findings: School exclusions and drug misuse',* Dame Carol Black Independent Review of Drugs, Department of Health and Social Care, London (online).
2020	Invited presentation: *'Sharing research findings: School exclusions and mental health'. Department for Education, London (online).*
2020	Individual paper presentation: *'Excluding children for no real reason: What is the extent of the use of the category 'other' in reporting the reasons for fixed and permanent school exclusion in England?* The European Conference on Education, London (online).
2020	Invited presentation: 'The use of theographs to understand the journeys of children excluded from school'. The Centre for Research in Education, University of Sunderland.
2020	Invited presentation: *'Research dissemination: Social, emotional and mental health and school exclusions in Sunderland'.* Sunderland SEND Strategic Interagency Partnership, Sunderland.
2020	Keynote: *'Behaviour is language: The language of school exclusion'.* Interdisciplinary Research Network, University of Sunderland.
2019	Invited presentation: *'Linking health and education data on children with SEND in Sunderland: a 'proof of concept' project'.* NHS England, London.
2019	Invited presentation: *'Enablers and barriers to mainstream schooling: Children at the centre of research on school exclusions'.* Office for Children's Commissioner for England.
2019	Invited presentation: *'An investigation into the factors that impact upon social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people from 3-16 years in Sunderland'.* Heads Forum, Sunderland.
2019	Invited presentation: *'Childhood resilience: Research informed practice'.* Redcar and Cleveland Local Authority.
2019	Individual presentation: *'The varying impact of childhood adversities and the perceived level of trauma: A study of 156 graduates and undergraduates in the UK'.* PGCE annual research conference, University of Sunderland.
2019	Invited keynote: *'SENCO conference: Neurodiversity and moderate learning difficulties: The tensions'.* Together for Children, Sunderland.
2019	Keynote: 'Protective factors in childhood adversity'. Annual SENCO conference, University of Sunderland.
2019	Invited presentation: 'Intergenerational sport to bring families and communities together'. Children experiencing loss and trauma national conference, Newcastle.