



# University of HUDDERSFIELD

## University of Huddersfield Repository

Nassem, Elizabeth

Where Does Bullying Exist in Children's Everyday Experiences of School?

### Original Citation

Nassem, Elizabeth (2012) Where Does Bullying Exist in Children's Everyday Experiences of School? Doctoral thesis, University of Huddersfield.

This version is available at <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/17516/>

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: [E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk](mailto:E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk).

<http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/>

# **WHERE DOES BULLYING EXIST IN CHILDREN'S EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL?**

ELIZABETH MARY NASSEM

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Education

July 2012

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to examine, from children's perspectives, where bullying exists in their everyday experiences of school. A Foucauldian perspective is used to conceptualise bullying and perceives it as involving power which is fluid and involves struggles between individuals. Different modalities of bullying are examined (between pupils, between teachers and pupils and systemic bullying). This research also investigates different severities of bullying from clear to 'grey'; and different perspectives and feelings children have. Traditional definitions are challenged which distinguish bullying as a specific form of aggression, experienced by a minority of people.

Observations, focus groups and individual interviews were conducted with children in five state schools, a private school and a pupil referral unit, 84 children in total were interviewed. This research found that although most children experienced characteristics of bullying such as name-calling and humiliation, which often caused them distress, few children considered it as bullying and no-one referred to themselves as a bully. Teachers were subject to powers of normalisation and panopticism where they were under surveillance to ensure children conformed to education norms. Although bullying was found to be multi-causal, a particular finding in this thesis is the role played by boredom. Working-class boys with learning difficulties were particularly under '*the gaze*' and increasingly targeted for punishment, which usually increased their boredom. Some of these children wanted revenge and engaged in bullying. Because they often felt increasingly targeted for punishment, they also experienced bullying by teachers and systemic bullying. Another reason children bully is to be popular and exercise social power over others. This research is an original contribution to knowledge because of its complex and multi-faceted understanding of bullying. These findings have wider resonance and are likely to apply where these processes occur, for example, in other schools.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank my supervisor Dr. Robin Simmons for all the support, guidance and encouragement you have given me. Thank you to Dr. Ann Harris, Professor Mark Halstead and Professor Cedric Cullingford for comments on earlier drafts. I thank the schools who allowed me to implement my research and the children for your sincerity and making my research interesting, alive and raw. I thank my Dad for your support and advice. You have had such belief in me that has helped me to stay focused and have confidence. A special thank you to my Mum, who has been my greatest source of support and inspiration. I thank you for your love and guidance and helping me to have the faith, courage and strength to strive for this.

# CONTENTS

**Chapter One:** Introduction

Pages 5-15

**Chapter Two:** Literature Review

Pages 16-55

**Chapter Three:** Theoretical Perspective

Pages 56-69

**Chapter Four:** Methodology

Pages 70-112

**Chapter Five:** Findings and Analysis

Pages 113-151

**Chapter Six:** Significant Findings and Contribution to Knowledge

Pages 152-172

**Chapter Seven:** Recommendations

Pages 173-183

**References**

Pages 184-198

**Appendices:** Appendix A-J

Pages 199-270

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses my own experience of bullying. It analyses current definitions of bullying and sets the scope of this research. Finally, it provides an outline of the proceeding chapters and specifies the aims and objectives.

## **Choice of Topic: An Autobiography**

To begin this introduction it is necessary to explain why I chose to examine bullying. Sparkes (1995) argues that authors are implicated in the construction of our text and this should be acknowledged. Discussing my experiences of bullying makes transparent my positioning rather than placing myself as the author in the distance (Hook 2001; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). These personal experiences have been written in retrospect and I look back with hindsight and as an adult completing research on bullying.

I first became bothered by bullying when I was bullied in year seven at high school. I was so affected by it that I wanted to understand it better. Problems of bullying laid heavily on my mind as the problem grew in severity and as more people became involved I felt I became known and targeted as a '*victim*'. I was called names, beaten up, sometimes ten people would search for me to threaten and push into me. People used to spit in my hair and throw their drinks in it and put my coat in the bin. I look back and wonder why I was so vulnerable and why, even though some people were aware of this, it continued to happen.

When it came to my dissertation for my undergraduate degree in Psychology the decision to research bullying was easy; there was no other interest as strong. However, the academic literature felt detached and made me feel ashamed of being bullied, particularly when I read about Salmivalli, Lappalainen and Lagerspetz's (1996) '*helpless*' and '*provocative*' victims. When I used the peer nomination technique of

Salmivalli et al's (1996) to collect my data I gave children a list of names in their class and asked who they would label as '*bullies*', '*reinforcers*', '*assistants*', '*defenders*', '*outsiders*' or '*victims*.' I felt uncomfortable with using this technique but from studying bullying academically I objectively distanced myself. A pupil made me aware that I was potentially doing harm rather than good. He told me my questionnaire could lead to bullying because another pupil could look over their shoulder to see what someone else had labelled them as.

As I wrote up my dissertation, I realised it was so far removed from anything like I had experienced and seeing Salmivalli et al's (1996) labels of victims I started to remember what my experience of bullying felt like: the cold sweats, legs feeling like jelly, the fear of school every day and the weakness. As I read Salmivalli et al's (1996) suggestion that the best response to bullying '*is not to respond*,' I wondered how anyone could reduce bullying to something they should just be ignored. In the desire to be objective, it felt as if some academics were writing about bullying as if they knew nothing about it, and so I wanted to interview children to find out from them what their experiences of bullying and school were like and not minimise or objectify this.

After University, I started doing some voluntary work in '*villas*' [homes in a psychiatric hospital for people with severe learning disabilities]. I observed staff stealing '*patients*' food and leaving them to sit in their own urine and faeces; all the patients had badly rotten teeth that were brown and black through neglect, if they had teeth at all, and one patient wore trousers that fell to the floor when he didn't hold them up. When I reported this, most of the people defended the standards of the hospital and victimised me; banning me from the hospital. The maltreatment of the patients continued even though I reported it to several authorities such as the Chief Executive of the hospital and the Healthcare Commission. Although these experiences may not be considered as bullying, they led me to want to explore how people's behaviour in institutions can enhance

understanding of bullying. The *Literature Review* analyses definitions of bullying and the slipperiness of this.

When I started teaching, I became aware of the disruption and bullying in the schools and classes where some pupils ostracised, made threats, and were violent to each other. I spoke to the heads of years and departments about this but the problems continued, and it was never something I felt that the teachers and I completely successfully dealt with. I found bullying embedded into the everyday experience of school, for example, pupils being ridiculed for making mistakes; forced into bins; put in isolation; blamed for things they hadn't done; and being told they are '*thick*' by children and teachers. From this, I decided that instead of focusing on extreme cases, I would examine the mundane and everyday experiences of bullying. I was also certain that I could research bullying from a more ethical standpoint that did not discriminate against individuals by asking them for typical characteristics of group members (Troyna and Carrington 1989).

## **Scope of Thesis**

### *Outline of Research*

The aim of this study is to examine, from the child's perspective, where bullying exists in their everyday experiences of school. This study examines how children perceive their interactions with pupils and teachers.

### *Definitions*

Most research suggests that bullying involves a minority of people. Monks et al (2009) and Ofsted (2003) cite Smith et al's (1999) statistics on bullying, that between ten and twenty percent of pupils in England had been bullied six months prior to the survey. Ofsted (2003) also found a '*low level*' of bullying in schools. However, Monks et al (2009) state that the prevalence of bullying is influenced by several factors such as its definition and the time span examined.

Prevalent definitions of bullying focus mainly on aggressive acts (physical or psychological), and involve three dimensions: it is repeated, intentional and involves a clear imbalance of power whereby the victim has less power than the bully. This definition was developed by Olweus (1993) but others such as Monks et al (2009) and Cowie and Jennifer (2008) perceive bullying as involving these three dimensions. However, there is no universally agreed definition and bullying remains an *'elusive'* concept (Cowie and Jennifer 2008; Chan 2009). Olweus' (1993) definition has been criticised: Walton (2005) asks how many repetitions are required to establish if bullying has occurred, and Lee (2006) asks if it is any less bullying if it occurs just once? Cullingford and Brown (1995) suggest that people can be just as hurt by inadvertent remarks as deliberate attempts to bully. Olweus (1993) suggests that for teasing to be considered as bullying it should involve his three dimensions. However, Ofsted (2003) and Lee (2006) state that children can escape taking responsibility for bullying by saying, *'we didn't mean to do it'* or *'we were only joking'*.

#### *A Foucauldian Perspective of and Power*

This thesis draws on a Foucauldian perspective of power which challenges Olweus (1993) on the validity of neat power imbalances. Aalsma and Brown (2008) suggest that associations between power imbalance and bullying need to be further addressed. Foucault (1980) conceptualises power as fluid and without binary opposition between rulers and the ruled, power can come from below. He states that power is *'a machinery that no-one owns'* and it is *'never in anybody's hands.'*

Foucault (1979; 1980) suggests that the power individuals have depend on their position. He acknowledges inequality and states that *'certain positions permit a supremacy to be produced'*. Inequality is beyond the control of individuals, *'class domination can be exercised to the extent that power is dissociated from individual might'*. This suggests that the power individuals exercise that goes beyond their individual strength such as their social class should be examined.

Foucault (1980) states that, through panopticism, everyone is under observation and '*watched by all or certain others*'. However, some people are more closely observed than others. Through normalisation, power is exercised over people where they are expected to conform to norms. If they do not, they are likely to be excluded and punished. The more under the '*gaze*' people are, the more they have normalisation exercised over them and they become increasingly targeted and punished. This suggests that power can be explored in a more sophisticated and systemic way where it is exercised through observation and pressures on people to conform. Foucault (1980) acknowledges that people can resist power in multiple ways although the more power is exercised over individuals, the harder it is to resist. This takes into account resistance which perceives humans as autonomous and rational agents.

#### *Teachers' and Pupils' Role*

There is often a strong expectation on teachers to handle bullying. The *Department for Children Schools and Families* (2007) state that teachers should ensure that '*pupils are free from bullying and harassment*' and Chan (2009) refers to teachers as the '*social engineers of change in their classroom*'. However, Craig, Pepler and Atlas (2000) found that teachers intervened to stop bullying in only one in six playground episodes. Furthermore, it has been found that teachers can bully children for example, by humiliating them in front of the class (Eslea, Stepanova and Cameron-Young 2002). Eslea et al (2002) state that there should be more research on pupils bullying teachers. However, whilst there has been little research on pupils bullying teachers, Terry (1998) found that the majority of teachers (56.4%) had been bullied by pupils. Dzuka and Dalbert (2007) found more reports of teachers being bullied by pupils in schools that were not achieving well academically. Hepburn (1997) found that teachers were influenced by technologies of power and positioned to enforce normalisation and ensure children conform to educational norms. Children who did not, such as those with learning difficulties were more likely to be increasingly targeted and punished by teachers. This

suggests that there are wider factors influencing bullying between teachers and pupils.

### *Systemic Bullying*

Systemic bullying is concerned with institutional and societal factors largely beyond the teachers' control. This research examines how the way people are positioned (for example, their intellectual ability and social class) can influence how they experience bullying. This power does not have to be exercised to be experienced and from a Foucauldian perspective, it can occur solely through observation. Bansen et al (2009) argue that research on bullying needs to consider the '*normalised practices of power in school*'.

Boredom has been associated with bullying but not thoroughly investigated (Rigby 1997). Foucault (1979) states that boredom is associated with the power of time where people become objects of control and manipulation. A Foucauldian perspective implies that children who are frequently punished are more likely to experience boredom through isolating and meaningless tasks and so are more likely to be punished, become angry and want revenge. This implies that children who are bored are more likely to engage in bullying. It also implies that certain children may be more likely to experience systemic bullying. This research investigates these issues further.

### *Theoretical Approach*

A Foucauldian perspective is used to frame this research. The focus is primarily on Foucault's approach to power and resistance, normalisation and panopticism.

Traditional definitions of bullying are based on a positivistic perspective where bullying is perceived in binaries, either people are bullied or they are not. However, Foucault (1972) argues that, through labelling and placing people into binaries, power exercised over them as they become targets of professional intervention. He also implies that people can resist

their labels. This research explored beyond whether people were labelled as bullies and victims and used a fluid (rather than fixed) approach by investigating different severities, modalities and forms of bullying. It also took into account people's feelings. This was used to deconstruct dominant ways of understanding bullying and to draw on multiple perspectives where it recognises that it is not possible to tell a single and exclusive story about something that is complex (Derrida 1988). As suggested by Woodhead and Faulkner (2000) people's sense of the world differs. The complexity of bullying was investigated which took into account ambiguity and messiness.

The approach used in this research symbolises a development, rather than a complete separation from modernity. Because Foucault recognises inequality his approach cannot be criticised, as some postmodernists can for being nihilistic, existing in a '*praxis of not being sure*' where the 'truth' of the exploiter is equally valid to the 'truth' of the 'exploited' (Atkinson 2002; Cole 2003). In acknowledging inequality, this research derived a list of characteristics of bullying from the literature review (please see *Appendix A*). This involved factors that were often associated with bullying such as teasing, violence and humiliation. These characteristics were not automatically considered as bullying but were used as a guide of what experiences children may discuss. They varied in severities, for example, when teasing did not seem to upset anyone it was considered as a '*grey*' area. However, it was not safe to say that it was not bullying (Morita 1996). Teasing and name-calling that upset children was considered as bullying. The originality in this research lies in its complex and multi-faceted approach to bullying.

### *Methodology*

A qualitative approach using observation and interviews (focus groups and individual interviews) were used. Observations were used to become familiar with the children and develop a thematic framework from which to base interview questions. Focus groups were used to explore the way children interacted with one another and develop the thematic framework

for the interview questions. Interviews were used to explore children's experiences and perspectives in more depth and open questions avoided restricting children's responses. The semi-structured interviews focused specifically on experiences relevant to participants and allowed for some consistency in areas covered but also considerable freedom in the attention given to different topics (O'Kane 2000).

### *Social Groups*

This research examines children from different educational settings and backgrounds i.e. private school, state schools (five) and a pupil referral unit. In total, 84 children were interviewed (57 in the focus groups and 32 in the individual interviews). Some children were interviewed twice. Both males and females took part. Children in the highest and lowest sets were also included. From this, multiple perspectives from a broad range of backgrounds and abilities were used to develop a more sophisticated understanding of bullying. It also meant that social class and intellectual ability could be considered. Apart from one child, all participants were of secondary school age. The participant who was at primary school (year five/six) was included to enhance understanding of the 'grey' areas in bullying since I became aware she was being bullied by her friends.

The district and schools where this research was conducted mainly involved children from a white/British background, representing the demographics of the area. It meant that racial issues were not thoroughly examined, although some issues of segregation and inequality were investigated. Bullying is examined from children's perspectives to explore their experiences and their understanding of bullying. Teachers were not interviewed, although their interactions with pupils, from children's perspectives, were analysed. This is to ensure that the child's voice remained the focus. Terasahjo and Salmivalli (2003) argue that there are few studies focus on children's perspectives of bullying.

## **Notes on Terminology**

Children with learning difficulties were included in this research. The term 'learning difficulty' refers to children who received additional support for their learning; several children who were in the lowest two sets of the state schools and children who were diagnosed with learning difficulties such as ADHD and dyslexia.

Although the state (secondary) schools in this study were given pseudonyms, to inform the reader of the education setting of the school, the private school, pupil referral unit (PRU) and the primary school are labelled as PRU, private school and primary school.

Systemic bullying refers to the institutional and societal factors that are beyond the power of individual teachers and pupils which cause children distress, for example, children with learning difficulties who are upset because they feel they are perceived as 'thick'.

## **Outline of Chapters**

The *Literature Review* critically examines definitions of bullying and the role that teachers and pupils have in bullying. It examines how children's experiences in school such as streaming and boredom may be associated with bullying. It also examines how membership to social groups such as social class, gender, and the child's intellectual ability are associated with bullying.

The *Theoretical Perspective* discusses postmodernism, and explains how Foucault is located within a postmodern approach. It explains the theoretical stance taken in this research where the Foucauldian approach is considered as a development of modernity, rather than a rejection of its core values. It discusses how bullying is examined by investigating it in a complex way taking into account messiness, ambiguity and multiple perspectives.

The *Methodology* chapter discusses why and how qualitative observations and interviews were used rather than surveys and questionnaires (which are most often conducted to examine bullying). It provides a reflexive account of ethical issues and how they were dealt with, and the sampling process. It also explains how themes were developed and how a Foucauldian approach was used to analyse data.

The *Findings and Analysis* chapter presents the main themes that emerged from the observations and interviews. It discusses experiences of bullying which vary from 'grey' to severe. The main themes which emerged were: pupil-pupil bullying (for example, bullying achieves social power over others); daily experiences within school (for example boredom); and autonomy (the extent to which children exercised voice and agency). It explains how and why certain children such as from working-class backgrounds in lower sets were more likely to experience different modalities of bullying.

The *Significance of Findings and Contribution to Knowledge* chapter provides a theoretically informed account of the most significant findings of this thesis. It discusses the original contribution to knowledge of the way it takes into account the complexities and 'grey' areas of bullying. The most significant findings were: *inadequacy of current definitions; who is vulnerable to panopticism and normalisation?; people bully because they are bored; people bully to be popular; positioning of the teacher; resistance and autonomy.*

The *Recommendations* draw on how the research findings can be used to inform policy and practice. Various recommendations are suggested such as how to reduce the stigma of the bullying label and how to make schools more interesting to reduce bullying. It also suggests directions for further research.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The main aims of this research are to:

- Examine children's everyday experiences and interactions (between pupils and pupils and teachers) and where bullying exists within this.
- Investigate different dimensions of bullying.

The objectives are to:

- Examine different severities (clearly bullying and 'grey' areas); modalities (pupil-pupil, pupil-teacher and systemic bullying); and forms of bullying (verbal, physical, psychological and relational).
- Investigate children's experiences of bullying in different educational environments (for example in working-class and middle-class backgrounds, and different streams such as highest and lowest stream), types of schools (private school, state schools, pupil referral unit) and different gender groups (males and females).
- Analyse how children perceive the teacher's role in bullying.
- Investigate power inherent in bullying as problematic and fluid where people both exercise power and have it exercised over them.

The main research question is the title of the thesis '*where does bullying exist in children's everyday experiences of school?*' From this, several sub-questions were identified:

- What characteristics of bullying such as teasing, humiliation and violence do children experience in school?
- What interactions between pupils and pupils and teachers could be considered as bullying?
- How do teachers respond when they observe bullying and/or it is reported to them?
- Why do children bully?

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

This literature review aims to critically analyse different approaches to bullying. It discusses positivistic perspectives of bullying where bullying is conceptualised in binary terms and applied to a minority. It uses a Foucauldian perspective to challenge the concept of a clear power imbalance and conceptualise power in a more fluid and problematic way. The positioning of the teacher is also examined in terms of their expectations to handle bullying and how they can be involved in bullying. This research also discusses literature on how children's everyday experiences in school may be associated with bullying such as boredom. Finally, it examines literature on how societal factors in school such as social class and gender are associated with bullying.

The adverse effects of bullying are widely documented. Being a victim of bullying is often associated with a greater chance of anxiety and committing suicide, and bullies are more likely to be involved in crime, alcohol abuse and other forms of anti-social behaviour (Ofsted 2003). Yet despite the legal requirement for schools to combat bullying and have an anti-bullying policy, it remains a major problem in schools and society (Hamilton 2002; Ofsted 2003; Woods and Wolke 2003; Besag 2006; Cheminais 2006; Lee 2006). Research by Smith et al (1999) remains one of the most widely cited studies on bullying, and Ofsted refers to this in its 2003 report. Smith et al (1999) found between ten and twenty percent of pupils in England had been bullied six months prior to the survey. Ofsted (2003, p.5) argues that there are no national statistics of reported and proven cases of bullying because definitions of bullying and levels of seriousness vary. Monks et al (2009) state that:

*“Prevalence figures vary greatly, influenced by: what time span is being asked about, (for example, last month; last term; last year; ever at school?), what frequency is regarded as bullying*

*(for example, once/twice a term; once a month; once a week or more), and what definition is used (for example, whether it includes indirect as well as direct forms)."*

(Monks et al 2009, p.146)

Ofsted (2003, p.5) suggests that the problem of definition is illustrated by common reactions from pupils accused of bullying such as '*we were only having a laugh,*' and what some schools regard and record as unpleasant behaviour some would regard as bullying. Ofsted (2003) found that surveys of children suggest they perceive bullying as more widespread than teachers. This suggests that perceptions of what constitutes bullying vary. Cowie and Jennifer (2008) argue that while there is growing worldwide interest in bullying there is currently no consensus regarding its definition. Chan (2009) states that *with confused meanings and lack of consensus bullying is an elusive phenomenon which has defied attempts to define it*' (p.185). Besag (2006) argues that there is still not an in-depth understanding of bullying because:

- The approach to bullying has been too simplistic, there is not one simple answer to the problem.
- Gender differences have only been considered recently.
- Bullying is a difficult area to research because it involves examining social interactions
- Sophisticated equipment and time is needed.
- It is a false premise that bullying can be eradicated.
- A generalised approach has been taken whereas remedial problems should be matched to specific areas.

Besag (2006) implies that bullying should be examined in a more nuanced way that takes into account its complexity and different forms and examines individual differences, as this research aims to do.

## **Defining Bullying**

### *Prevailing Definitions*

Olweus is often considered as a key figure in research on bullying, his work began in Scandinavia but is now widely influential internationally (Yoneyama and Naito 2003). In *'Bullying at school: what we know and what we can do'* Olweus (1993, p.9-10) refers to bullying as repeated exposure to *'negative actions'* by one or more student. *'Negative actions'* are when someone intentionally inflicts injury or discomfort upon another, psychological (for example, name-calling and teasing) or physically (for example, pushing and kicking). He stresses that it is not bullying when *'two people of approximately the same strength (physical or psychological) are fighting or quarrelling'*; there must be an imbalance of strength. Olweus (1993) states that the term intention is used to *'rule out nonserious negative actions'*. The seriousness of these actions is because they are repeated.

Monks et al (2009) and Cowie and Jennifer (2008) perceive bullying as involving three dimensions: intentional harm, repetition and an imbalance of power between the aggressor and victim. Along with Olweus (1993), Monks et al (2009) suggest that bullying does not have to be repeated in extreme cases. Randall (1996) argues that aggressive behaviour should not have to regular because people can be frightened after the event. Naylor et al (2006) found that children did not perceive bullying as having to be repeated or intentional, and only 40% of pupils perceived bullying to involve an imbalance of power. Walton (2005) asks how many repetitions are needed to establish that bullying has occurred? Lee (2006) raises the question, if the bully uses only one act is it any less bullying then if it were repeated?

The notion of intentionality has been questioned by Cullingford and Brown (1995) who argue that people can be just as hurt by inadvertent comments as by deliberate attempts to bully. Lee (2006) argues that intentionality could permit the bully to deny meaning to cause hurt, although in some cases the bully may not have intended it. Yet, in most

definitions, intentionality remains a vital element. Olweus (1993) focuses on the behaviour of the bully rather than the experience of the victim and focuses only on experiences that are clearly observable and that are not subjective. In this thesis, intentionality and repetition are not considered as a pre-requisite for bullying although when maltreatment is intentional, repeated and with a clear imbalance of power it is considered as bullying. This research explores how maltreatment makes the person feel rather than if the bullying was perceived or observed to be intentional. If children feel hurt, for example, by name-calling then it is considered as bullying.

### *Distinguishing Bullying*

Aggression and violence are terms often used in definitions of bullying. Cowie and Jennifer (2008, p.2) state that there is general agreement that 'bullying' and 'violence' overlap. Myers (2006) considers 'violent interactions' as bullying, even though most researchers attempt to distinguish violence from bullying. However, Olweus (1993) argues that aggression must occur to another individual, be repeated and intentional, causing mental or physical suffering to be considered as bullying. Terry (1998) suggests that social interaction distinguishes bullying from aggression; one can be aggressive towards a chair because no interaction is involved. However, in this thesis, aggression is considered as a characteristic of bullying and the extent to which it constitutes bullying will vary depending on children's experiences.

Terry (1998) suggests that bullying is a subset of abuse because physical aggression is expressed in sexual violence and involves psychological threats. He argues that when the subjective trappings are stripped away from bullying and it is examined solely by its defining characteristics then a broader perspective can be achieved. This fits in with the aims of this thesis, which consider defining characteristics of bullying such as fear and violence. Abuse is considered as a broader issue that is associated with bullying. Terry (1998) uses a more complex way of defining bullying than traditional definitions. He states that bullying occurs when there is an uneven power balance which is abused, he includes repetition but also

takes into account the experiences and feelings of victims by referring entrapment. In this thesis, entrapment is considered as a characteristic of bullying.

Stein (2003) argues that in America almost anything has the potential to be considered as bullying such as preferences towards particular people over others. However, having a guide that includes details of what experiences may constitute bullying and taking into account people's feelings can help prevent this. He suggests that a '*tyranny of sameness*' may be implied where all events are treated with the same seriousness. However, this can be overcome by taking into account different severities of bullying. Loach and Bloor (1995) argue what might constitute racism when experienced by adults is usually considered as bullying when it involves children. Stein (2003) argues that sometimes egregious behaviours are labelled as bullying when they may constitute sexual harassment. This implies that wider forms of inequality are difficult to distinguish from bullying. Racism and sexual harassment are considered, in this thesis, as factors at the societal level that underlay bullying.

Randall (1996) refers to bullying as a '*classic form of oppression*'. However, oppression is a difficult term to identify. Nunkoosing (2001) suggests that oppression cannot be seen unless one has an explicit sense of values. Meyer (2008) states that oppression is produced when certain discourses privilege certain identities and marginalise others. Taylor (1992) argues that if society mirrors a demeaning picture of a person or group then that group can suffer damage and a reduced sense of identity. Constructing bullying in terms of oppression implies that bullying can be difficult to distinguish, and recognition of it is influenced individuals values. This implies that bullying involves groups and how they are marginalised and emphasises the importance of exploring the negative influence this has on their self-esteem. This research is exploring some '*marginalised groups*' such as children permanently excluded from school. Although Foucault (1980) prefers to use the term resistance rather than oppression,

his perspective can be used to examine bullying that is rarely explicitly identified.

### *Criticisms of Binary Definitions*

Myers (2006) argues that vague terms such as bullying and name-calling avoid examining underlying power dynamics, and refers to bullying as ‘*a range of verbal, psychological, physical and violent interactions*’ (p.60). Some theorists (Morita 1996; Roxburgh 2008) perceive bullying as existing on a spectrum of behaviours which involve, as Askew (1989) suggests, power struggles. Foucault (1980) suggests these power struggles are fluid and exist in ‘*normal relationships*’.

Roxburgh (2008) argues that pupils frequently tease each other about clothes and hairstyles. Although this may be perceived as harmless, it can be considered as serious bullying. Olweus (1993) still includes teasing in his concept of bullying but suggests that teasing becomes bullying when it is repeated, intentional and with a clear imbalance of power. This literature implies that, when examining bullying in context, it can be difficult to distinguish from teasing. Burk (1897) wrote an article entitled ‘*Teasing and bullying,*’ where he associates bullying with teasing by stating ‘*the responses include about 1,120 instances of teasing and bullying*’ (p.336).

Because bullying is recognised as an international problem, this chapter reviews literature from various countries (Smith and Binney 2005). Although Morita (1996) is specifically concerned with bullying in Japan, he argues that there are similarities in Japan and England, which he refers to as ‘*westernised*’ such as academic and peer pressure. Morita (1996) states that ‘*bullying occurs against the backdrop of contemporary society*’ and is difficult to define because it is generated in the tissues of everyday life (p.314). He suggests that problems defining bullying have developed from the government perceiving bullying as concerning a minority, and extensive reporting by the media. He argues that bullying occurs on a continuum from ‘*light to dark*’ but its core lies in the ‘*grey zone*’ and it has

linkages with the 'light zone'. This can include acts carried out in a playful manner, which may appear innocent, so it is difficult to judge whether behaviour is bullying. This research considers different characteristics and severities of bullying, some of which are difficult to clarify. However, Morita argues that despite bullying existing in a 'grey' zone, it is perceived as problematic deviant behaviour. He states that:

*“Bullying covers a large spectrum of behaviour: it ranges from mild joking, teasing and mocking to acts of violence including causing bodily harm, assault and blackmail, which are clearly criminal offences...bullying becomes evident when mild joking, teasing and so on reach this grey zone...this is not to say that the damage caused by them is mere trifle; in Japan various cases of suicide have occurred because of them”.*

(Morita, 1996, p.314)

#### *Individual Approach*

Bansel et al (2009) argue that the individual approach is the '*current trend at the moment*' (p.59). This focuses on finding typical characteristics of bullies and victims (Hazler, Miller, Carney and Green 2001). Researchers (Salmivalli 1999); teachers (Siann, Callaghan, Lockhart and Rawson 1993); and pupils (Bosacki, Zopito and Dane 2006), have been found to express beliefs that people are victims because they behave inappropriately and deviate from norms. Fox and Boulton (2005) found that victims were perceived by teachers, self and peers as having poor social skills. Olweus (1993) classified victims into three categories: '*typical*' (anxious and insecure), '*passive/submissive*', and '*provocative*'. Bansel et al (2009) attribute the very nature of pathologising people as a reason why bullying is so difficult to stop. Although Bansel et al (2009) do not offer a thorough explanation, it could be argued that interventions attributing responsibility of bullying to victims treats the symptoms and not the cause. Furthermore, people cannot always change the things they are bullied for such as their height or ethnic origin.

To some extent, bullies are also pathologised. Although Ofsted (2003) states that *'bullies can come from any background or ability group in the school'* a couple of lines later it states the widely held finding (e.g. Elliot 2002; Ahmed 2006) that being a bully is associated with being a criminal, *'bullies are twice as likely to be in trouble with the police than their peers'* (p.15). This implies that the prevalent literature on bullying is focusing on the most obvious and physically violent bullies. Green (2001) suggests that the individualistic approach has led to an underestimation of the prevalence of bullying and a misunderstanding of its nature. However, Nansel et al (2001) argue that it can be used as evidence on the amount of bullying to dispute claims such as *'there is no bullying in our school'*. Walton (2005) argues that *'the focus of much of the literature on bullying is on individuation and behaviour, stripped of school or community contexts and driven by narrowly focused definitions'* (p.109). In focusing on individual factors, most of the research is not considering how bullying weaves into children's daily experiences in school.

#### *Restrictions of Bullying Labels*

Foucault (1972) states that divisions between normality and abnormality apply binary divisions which are assumed to be fixed inside a person where people become objects of professional intervention. The individual approach associates bullying with abnormality that can be objectively identified by researchers and teachers. However, Foucault (1972; 1979) implies that aspects of humanity are changeable and associates labelling with disciplinary truth and power.

Besag (1989) and Cullingford and Brown (1995) found that being labelled as a victim can lead to further victimisation. Hepburn (1997) states that power is traditionally conceptualised in a modernist sense, as something individuals exert over others. However, from a Foucauldian perspective, power is conceptualised in terms of how we can exert power by constructing ourselves in particular ways, for example, as *'bully'* or *'victim'* (Hepburn 1997). Hepburn (1997) argues that to admit to being bullied is to be bullied into being a *'victim'*; to not to admit to being bullied is to

refuse help and continue being bullied. If speaking of oppression makes someone into *'the type of person'* who is oppressed, then they may become silent to resist oppression, which paradoxically, could contribute to their oppression. This links to Foucault's (1979) police-prison-delinquent cycle and suggests that people can exercise some agency over their label. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

#### *Critiques of Olweus' Concept of Power*

One factor in understanding bullying is power. Olweus (1993) suggests that an imbalance of strength is required for bullying (either physical or psychological) and the victim must have difficulty defending themselves. However, Aalsma and Brown (2008) state that because power imbalance is considered a fundamental aspect in defining bullying, further research should investigate it. Chan (2009) also argues that although power imbalance is usually considered central to bullying, its nature remains unexplored. He suggests that this is because of a focus on empirical data, although he used quantitative data and found that most bullying is by age-equals (78.6%). Terry (1998) argues that a boy may be physically weaker than another but have strength in terms of having violent brothers who will defend him. Terry (1998) concludes that *'the idea that one party is perceived to be stronger than the other needs further examination'* (p.258). Current literature demonstrates this holds contemporary relevance.

Ofsted (2003) refers to bullying as *'aggressive or insulting behaviour by an individual or group, often repeated over a period of time, that intentionally hurts or harms'* (p.1). Ofsted (2003) also acknowledges that physical and psychological abuse can occur together, verbal abuse can carry a threat of and actual violence. However, they do not mention power. Mishna (2004) raises further issues about power imbalance by finding that a minority of pupils (two girls and one boy) were bullied by friends, and parents felt the *'blame'* for bullying was fifty-fifty. Lee (2006) suggests that a loss of power may be a consequence of bullying rather than a cause.

This implies that there are cases of bullying where it is impossible to establish a clear imbalance of power.

## **Foucault and Power**

### *Strategy of Power*

Foucault's work can be used to challenge Olweus' perception of a clear imbalance of power. Foucault (1980) argues that power is exercised from innumerable points with different elements, natures and levels. It is not the case that one person has all the power; it is distributed in a more complex way:

*"[Power] is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriate as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power."*

(Foucault 1980, p.98)

Foucault (1980) states that although there is hierarchy in institutions which takes a pyramidal form there isn't a 'source' from which all power derives. This suggests that bullying is not always because of certain individuals imposing their power. Rather, it involves the positions individuals and groups occupy:

*"Power is no longer one who possesses power by birth, it becomes a machinery that no-one owns...not everyone occupies the same position, certain positions permit a supremacy to be produced. So much so that class domination can be exercised to the extent that power is dissociated from individual might".*

(Foucault 1980, p.156)

A Foucauldian perspective implies that certain groups are more powerful such as *'the dominant class'*. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1979) refers to the way delinquents have power exercised over them as *'the abuse of power'* whereby violent constraints are imposed on inmates. He suggests that once people went to prison they could not become anything else. Police surveillance provides the prison with offenders, which the prison transforms into delinquents who are the targets of police supervision, which regularly sends many of them back to prison. He argues that prison produces delinquents because it produces unnecessary and useless existence which isolates prisoners. He refers to the power of administration, and the feeling of injustice, whereby prisoners who see themselves exposed in such a way makes them angry and they becomes broken with everything that has bound him to society, for example, he learns the logic of thieves who regard society as the enemy. *'Delinquents'* such as children permanently excluded from school are used in this research and a Foucauldian perspective implies they are more likely to experience bullying by the *'dominant class'*. The dominant class in schools can be considered as teachers. This suggests that the delinquent-teacher relationship may resemble the police-prisoner relationship. However, Foucault (1980, p.92) acknowledges that these delinquents have some power and he states that power can come from below. This implies that people who are bullied have some power, and pupils have some power over teachers. One form of power is resistance. Foucault (1980) proposes that resistance is integrated inside of power rather than outside of it and there are multiple forms of resistance.

### *Discipline and Punishment*

Foucault (1979) studied the French penal system and associated prison with school in the way it exercises power over its subjects. He suggests that the body is *'caught up'* in a system of constraint, obligations and prohibitions. Individuals become the object of manipulation and conditioning, with institutionally structured days and no control. This suggests that children are conditioned to become what he refers to as

*'docile bodies'*. He argues that the timetable in school has the controls of power where time is divided into segments, which end at a specific time and children do not pass to one activity until the first has been completed. The lack of control children have over time can be associated with boredom and intellectual ability, this is discussed later in the chapter.

Foucault (1979) suggests that normalisation and surveillance makes it possible to qualify, classify and punish. He argues that schools create ranks that are hierarchical, with fixed positions which permit circulation, indicate values and guarantee obedience; *'cellular power'*. In examinations, individuals are under the gaze of knowledge. Examinations create hierarchies (in terms of abilities) and measures of conformity, homogenize, shade individual difference and exclude, creating an abnormal shameful class whilst permitting the power of the dominant class. This can be construed as powers of systemic bullying that are not directly in anyone's hands, which exclude certain groups and reject individual difference.

Foucault (1979) suggests that the exercise of power is graduated and linear. He states that the best way of avoiding serious offences is to punish the most minor seriously with the aim of producing docile and capable bodies. It implies that certain groups who are targeted, such as delinquents, may be particularly susceptible to this exercise of power and through punishment people can be humiliated. However, punishment does not have the same influence on everyone, for example, the rich tend to not fear fines as much as the poor. Foucault (1979) suggests that the strongest effect of punishment is psychological *'punishment strikes the soul rather than the body'*. He suggests that punishment changes individual's morals. From the way he describes changes in people who experience punishment, it appears that this change in morality is not positive.

From a Foucauldian perspective (1979), power can be exercised in a way where direct contact is not necessary for a response to occur. He refers

to the power to punish as an *'immediate reaction of all in relation to the individual'*. It does not need to be explained but must trigger the required behaviour. In school, there are bells and gestures from teachers which trigger responses. This suggests that power can be exercised in a way that does not need to make any direct command or have physical contact with individuals. It highlights the importance of investigating the influence certain experiences have on individuals, for example, whether they feel frightened or humiliated, rather than just taking the modernist stance of exploring only observable behaviours.

### *Panopticism*

Foucault (1980) explains how through panopticism everyone is put in their place, there is no absolute point or person and this enhances its power:

*"In the Panopticon each person, depending on his place, is watched by all or certain others. You have an apparatus of total and circulating mistrust, because there is no absolute point".*

(Foucault 1980, p.158)

This implies that everyone is influenced by power, although these effects are different. Foucault (1980) suggests that the individual must never know whether he is being looked at any moment; but know that they could be. Ideally, all power would be exactly through observation and gaze, *'the perfection of power should render its actual exercise unnecessary'*. These clear acts of bullying do not need to occur, as long as they create a sense of observation and mistrust.

Foucault (1979) suggests that although individuals have responsibility for their power, it gains victory. This suggests that examining the extent to which individuals feel they can act as autonomous agents can be used to investigate how power is exercised over them and what they can do about it. A Foucauldian perspectives implies that although individuals have

agency it is restricted and the more they resist power, the 'heavier' it becomes:

*"He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. By this very fact, the external power may throw off physical weight; it tends to be non-corporal; and the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects: it is a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation".*

(Foucault 1979, pp.202-3)

### **Power in Social Groups**

Drawing on a Foucauldian perspective, power is conceptualised as being accepted because it '*produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse*' (Foucault 1980, p.119). This implies that people may use or abuse their power because it can be beneficial. Bansel et al (2009) argue that bullying is a continuum of regulatory practices which reiterates order and suppresses acts that run counter to that order. They argue that little attention has been paid to this. They aimed to examine everyday relations of power. The participants were the researchers who recalled their experiences of bullying. They found that practices of inclusion and exclusion are not stable and that some '*children are vulnerable to a violation they never saw coming*'. This implies that because bullying is about normalising behaviour, anyone who behaves in ways that did not conform are vulnerable to bullying. This supports Foucault's concept of normalisation. However, Bansel et al (2009) did not examine bullying beyond the immediate peer group and is limited in the extent it takes into account '*normalised*' practices in school, pupils do not exist in a community made up only of peers. This research aims to examine the lived experience of children and provide more 'solid evidence' than Bansel et al (2009) by using semi-structured interviews

and exploring, from the child's perspective, how they interact with teachers. Their retrospective analysis is also more likely to capture the more extreme experiences of bullying and it could be argued that their research is keeping discourses in the academic arena by interviewing only other academics.

Sutton (2001) criticises studies such as Besag (1989), which found bullies to be unpopular outcasts who are socially inadequate. He argues that some children who bully might be considered '*socially skilled*' and definitions of what is socially competent may be bullying rather than being a '*weakling*'. Walton (2004) argues that it is a misconception that bullying is anti-social behaviour because in many cases '*it affords dominance and social status, and is often rewarded and supported by other children*'. (p.33). This supports a Foucauldian perspective that implies bullying achieves and produces things. Salmivalli (2010) suggests that bullies want high status with their peers and found that a child can be rejected (disliked by classmates) and yet perceived as '*popular*'. She argues that '*aggressive children, including bullies, can be perceived as cool, powerful and popular*' (p.114).

### *Social Learning Theory*

One explanation for why people bully is Social Learning Theory (SLT). According to SLT, through observation, role-modelling, imitation and reinforcement a child learns how to behave. Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961) conducted an experiment where three to five-year-old children observed an adult behave aggressively to a plastic '*Bobo*' doll. Those who saw the adult model's aggressive behaviour being reinforced performed significantly more imitative aggressive acts. They suggest that a child's aggressive tendencies are learned and can be strengthened through observing others being rewarded for behaving aggressively (vicarious reinforcement). This suggests that children who are in a more violent environment are more likely to become violent. Coyne and Monks (2011) state that SLT can explain violence in different contexts, for example, Olweus (1993) found harsh and inconsistent discipline was

common in families of bullies. An SLT perspective implies that children witness people being rewarded for bullying and so they learn to bully themselves. However, considering the theoretical approach in this thesis, it is not appropriate to take an SLT approach, this is because, as Usher and Edwards (1994) state:

- It is based on empirical '*scientific data*,' stripped of meaning and subjectivity.
- It doesn't take into account individual differences or agency.
- It is deterministic by implying that everyone will behave in a predictable way because of the behaviours they observe.
- It cannot go beyond the confines of the observable.

SLT is incompatible with a Foucauldian approach which perceives individuals as rational agents who can exercise resistance and does not explore direct cause and effect or assume everyone is a direct product of their environment.

### *Conformity and Ostracism*

Literature on conformity attempts to address why individuals in groups go along with the group despite their better judgement. Costanzo and Shaw (1966) found that conformity peaks around adolescence. Tajfel (1981) argues that part of identity seeking for most adolescents consists of strong identification with a particular group. However, most of the research on conformity is using experimental methods rather than real-world groupings.

One reason why people may conform to their peers is to gain acceptance and not be vulnerable to bullying. Cullingford and Brown (1995) found that 36% of children suggested that people are bullied for being different. Dixon (2011) suggests that ostracism coerces conformity by maintaining stable and cohesive functioning of groups. If people do not conform then they may be ostracised; the power of ostracism is the threat of exclusion, which is implicit throughout. Leary (1990) suggests that for ostracism to

occur then it needs to be perceived as ostracism and observed by others. However, individuals may not want to refer to their problematic relations as ostracism. In this thesis, ostracism is considered as a characteristic of bullying.

Brown (1990) suggests that conformity to different groups is not straightforward since individuals may belong to different groups such as cliques and crowds. Durkin (1995) states that people interact with many others, including teachers and siblings, therefore their influence is not limited to peers. As with SLT, research into conformity is incompatible with the Foucauldian approach taken in this research. It does not take into account agency and focuses on the observable behaviour of individuals rather than their feelings. It is a collective theory which groups all individuals together with one unitary set of ideas. It does not take into account multiple perspectives and how one's sense of the world differs. To some extent, it pathologises individuals, as if most of them going along with the crowd and do not exercise resistance. However, a Foucauldian approach examines cases individually and explores ambiguity, complexity and multiplicity. Morita (1996) suggests that bullying is becoming more of a problem because society has become more individualistic and through privatization there is a focus on individuals rather than groups. This refers to a growing concern for one's self and indifference towards others, which has resulted in people becoming bystanders.

### *Bystanders*

Sullivan, Cleary and Sullivan (2004) suggest that most children are bystanders and do not intervene in bullying. They refer to bystanders who '*tend to depersonalise and dehumanise the victim and ignore how they feel about what they see*' (p.20). However, they acknowledge that they may do this because they are afraid of being bullied.

Salmivalli (2010) interprets the '*bystander effect*' (Darley and Latane, 1968) to argue that children do not intervene to reduce bullying because there tends to be multiple witnesses and suggests that children may

distance themselves from victims because it takes a lot to overcome the 'bully's' power. From a Foucauldian perspective, labelling individuals as bystanders is unlikely to take into account their complex thoughts and behaviour and there is likely to be fluidity in their role. Green (2001) suggests that all children are affected by being in a bullying climate which can create fears and tensions, for example, wearing trainers that are not fashionable. The influence of the public execution that Foucault (1979) describes can be applied to 'bystanders' where 'spectators' take part. He states that in a public execution spectators must be afraid, witness the punishment and participate. The individual and group are the 'effects of power' and are used to re-establish the dominant power. This research aims to explore bullying which involves the people who may inadvertently experience bullying, even though this is a 'grey' area. Salmivalli (2010) attributes the responsibility of the bully achieving high status to peers and argues that children reward the bully, if they refuse to assign the bully high status they would lose their rewards. However, do the means of attributing high status to bullies rest solely on the children? What role do teachers and school experiences play in this?

## **Teacher's and Pupil's Role**

### *Role of Teachers*

#### *Expectations on Teachers to Reduce Bullying*

The *Department for Children Schools and Families* (2007) state that the law requires that teachers must:

*"Promote the general progress and well-being of individual pupils and of any class or group of pupil assigned to them which includes ensuring as far as possible that pupils are free from bullying and harassment".*

(DCSF 2007, p.1)

This implies that the teacher's role is separate from bullying, their only responsibility is reduce it. Ofsted (2003) suggests that it is often expected that teachers should have a greater role in reducing bullying, although

other professionals should work with teachers such as educational psychologists. Chan (2009) perceives teachers as the '*social engineer*' for change. However, Craig, Pepler and Atlas (2000) found that teachers intervened to stop bullying in only one in six playground episodes, and one in four classroom episodes. They suggest that this may be related to difficulty in detecting and classifying bullying. Roland and Galloway (2002) suggest that teachers influence and are influenced by bullying.

### *Bullying of Pupils by Teachers*

Eslea, Stepanova and Cameron-Young (2002) state that teachers have '*enormous power to manipulate the peer group*'. They suggest that teachers bullying pupils needs more attention, and found that 34% of university students had been bullied by teachers. Examples included, being called stupid in front of the class and having their work shown as an example of what not to do. However, when more specific questions were asked concerning '*types of aggression*' (such as humiliation and verbal abuse), rather than using broad terms such as bullying and '*picked on*', it was found that 76% had experienced teacher aggression: 53% public ridicule and humiliation; 51% picked on for academic work and 46% unfair punishments. However, the difference between 20% and 76% is large and suggest that people are more likely to associate their experiences with specific characteristics associated with bullying rather than the actual label. This could be because people don't want to be labelled as a victim. As Hepburn (1997) argues, to be labelled as a victim means to continue to be victimised. By using specific characteristics of bullying rather than just the broad label of bullying this research can explore it in a more fluid way that takes into account a wider range of individual cases.

The experiences described by Eslea et al (2002) do not fit Olweus' criteria of what constitutes as bullying. However, several researchers consider these examples such as humiliation (from teachers and pupils) as bullying (Stainton-Rogers 2002; Czarniawska 2008; Yoneyama 2008). In this research, when children experience humiliation it is considered as an example of bullying, although different severities of this and children's

feelings are considered. Twemlow and Fonagy (2005) define a bullying teacher as one who uses their power to punish or manipulate a student beyond what would be a reasonable disciplinary procedure. When Eslea et al (2002) asked participants '*why do teachers bully?*' 50% said '*power*' or '*control*'. Twenty percent of respondents said that teacher aggression was a valid form of discipline or that they felt they deserved the bullying. This implies that teachers may be using bullying to control their class. However, they did not speak to participants and used questionnaires. To examine how bullying weaves into complex everyday interactions between pupils and teachers it is beneficial to speak to children.

Hepburn (1997) suggests that bullying should be conceptualised using a Foucauldian perspective where teacher bullying can be taken into consideration. She associates teachers repeatedly '*picking on*' certain pupils because they are particularly disruptive, with the police-prison-delinquent cycle of Foucault (1979); once they step over the line they cannot get '*off the hook*'. She suggests that children who are more profoundly '*picked on*' are the ones who don't succeed academically at school. All children are expected to conform to educational values and the ones who do not must be '*made to*'. This revolves around the abuse of power and is associated with Foucault's concept of normalisation. She refers to the technology of power-knowledge and surveillance which influences why teachers pick on pupils; they are responsible for the learning and behaviour of pupils. This is considered as systemic bullying, in this research, whereby certain pupils are more likely to be targeted by teachers who are positioned to behave in this manner. However, when individual teachers target children it is also considered as teacher bullying.

#### *Bullying of Teachers by Pupils*

An issue rarely explored is teachers being bullied by their pupils. Yoneyama suggests that power relationships can flip between pupils and teachers, and pupils can bring teachers into their violent culture and '*toughen them up*' (Yoneyama and Naito 2003; Yoneyama 2008). Although Yoneyama's research emphasises a need to review teacher-

pupil relations, it does not thoroughly take into account how pupils may influence teachers' responses to them. Twemlow and Fonagy (2005) found that teachers from schools with high suspension rates were more involved in bullying with pupils (as a victim or bully) than schools with low reports. They argue that some teachers may drift towards or contribute to the violent culture of '*problem schools*' rather than being made more violent by them. Terry (1988) refers to a '*cycle of abuse*', where victims of abuse/bullying go on to be perpetrators and are attracted to a culture of abuse. Dzuka and Dalbert (2007) argue that little is known about teachers as the victims of violence, and define violence as intentional and repeated exposure to aggression. Consequently, they equate aggressive behaviour with bullying which demonstrates the overlap and ambiguity between bullying and aggression. Some behaviours they define as violence against teachers are psychological such as insults, mockery and pushing. In this research, these are considered as characteristics of bullying which vary in severity.

Dzuka and Dalbert's (2007) study involved 364 teachers in eight Slovakian provinces and found that almost all teachers had experienced at least one violent student act in the past, and 49% of teachers had reported at least one experience of violence in the previous 30 days. In vocational schools, 55% of teachers had reported violence in the previous fifteen days. However, they do not clearly specify why there was more violence in vocational schools. This suggests that students may be more violent and bully their teachers in schools that are not achieving as well academically. Terry (1998) found that the majority of teachers (56.4%) had been bullied by pupils and younger or less experienced teachers were more susceptible.

#### *Anti-Bullying Initiatives*

Ofsted (2003, p.2) visited fifteen schools in Norfolk, Coventry, Devon, West Sussex, Durham and Birmingham and reported that the level of bullying in these schools was '*low*', serious incidents were '*rare*' but schools were '*not complacent*'. Ofsted (2003) suggests that schools that

use the 'available materials' from LEAs, such as training on bullying, do not have serious problems. Ofsted (2003) makes the following recommendations to reduce bullying, many which involve teachers such as patrolling of staff, clear rewards and procedures to punish bullies, and training for staff to help them identify and deal with bullying. These recommendations focus on preventing bullying but do not focus on dealing with its underlying cause. They perceive bullying as a behavioural problem that can be reduced by surveillance whereby people don't necessarily have to experience punishment to be afraid of it (Foucault 1979). Williams and Winsdale (2008) warn that punitive methods can reproduce the power relations inherent in bullying. Walton (2008) argues that punitive methods fail to account for wider contexts that inform behaviour, for example, bullying involving people who are different reflects wider societal issues.

Although schools invest significant resources in anti-bullying campaigns, Smith, Ryan and Cousins (2007) argue that there is little evidence of programme effectiveness, a few programmes have been successful but many have not. In their content analysis where 2,377 primary school children were interviewed, Woods and Wolke (2003) found that *'schools with the most detailed and comprehensive anti-bullying policies had a higher incidence of bullying and victimisation behaviour'* (p.381). Cornell, Sheras and Cole (2006) suggest that more awareness of bullying could raise greater sensitisation to bullying so children are more likely to report it. Woods and Wolke (2003) argue that the more plausible account is that detailed policies shifted bullying to a more covert nature. Support for this claim came from the finding that schools receiving high policy scores on anti-bullying policies (for example, schools that held conferences on bullying) had the fewest children reporting it. This implies that greater awareness of bullying may contribute to it becoming covert rather than reduced.

### *Peer-led Interventions*

Peer-led interventions tend to focus on changing the individual and can be associated with normalisation and the police-prison-delinquent cycle, from a Foucauldian perspective (1979), where children who may not conform experience increased supervision, are pressured to conform and be part of a homogenous group. Cowie and Jennifer (2008) state that peer support programmes are becoming popular strategies to reduce bullying. The *'Bullying: don't suffer in silence'* (Smith 2000) documentation suggests using a circle of peer support where the leader asks *'what do we like and value about this person?'* However, closely analysing someone's behaviour when they are being bullied can be considered as a form of bullying in itself. Ofsted (2003) suggests using a *'circle of friends'*. However, a befriending scheme implies that the person is not worthy of friendship through regular means. Ofsted (2003) refers to peer mentors who give support to pupils on bullying but states that this is not a substitute for adult action. They also use a quotation from a head-teacher stating that:

*"We tell them [pupils] they can approach any adult if they are worried. However, many don't... because they see us rushing around doing what we do and don't want to bother us".*

(Ofsted 2003, p.24)

This implies that dealing with bullying may not be a priority to teachers and children may be confronted with bullying without their support. Green (2001) argues that people who are bullied should not be expected to take the prime responsibility for ending their bullying. If they could then they would; they need the help of adults.

### **Everyday Experiences in School**

This section discusses children's everyday experiences in school which may influence bullying. Yoneyama and Naito (2003) argue that despite schools being the place where most bullying occurs, research in England has not examined its role. They believe that researchers such as Rigby

(1997) have associated bullying with boredom and being a 'loser' but these are passing remarks and have not been thoroughly addressed.

### *Conformity and Obedience to School Norms*

Milgram (1963) argues that obedience is ingrained in society and this implies that being 'obedient' is associated with a loss of moral responsibility. He found that 62.5% of participants obeyed instructions by a 'teacher' to give 'electric shocks to a learner' to the point where they thought they might have killed him. However, considering the approach taken in this research, it is expected that different children will respond differently to authority.

Most research on bullying in Japan focuses on 'ijime' (collective bullying). Yoneyama (1999; 2008) associates bullying with a negative effect of students being over-conforming but argues that pressures to conform to hierarchical relations are not unique to Japan. Ijime usually involves the whole class but can also involve a small circle of friends; is not necessarily frequent; tends to occur in the classroom; and involves 'ordinary' pupils. Yoneyama and Naito (2003, p.317) state that children engage in bullying because schools are authoritarian structures that include control, blame and punishment and have little room for vulnerability. Pupils learn to be submissive to those who hold power, but to be oppressive to those who are socially weaker.

Yoneyama (1999; Yoneyama and Naito 2003) argues that that control in school results in silence which makes it difficult for pupils (and teachers) to speak their mind. However, students have a vested interest in being obedient and uncritical (docile), because they believe it 'pays' to survive in the competition. This implies that students conform to authority, accept oppression and remain silent about it. However, this is deterministic and perceives children as one unitary collective and derogatory way, for example, being either oppressed or an oppressor. It removes them of agency, resistance and responsibility, does not take into account multiple

perspectives and individual differences. Because of this, it is incompatible with the Foucauldian approach taken in this research.

Yoneyama (2008) distinguishes bullying between groups of 'good students' and 'problem children'. Although she does not investigate bullying that these students engage with in detail, she suggests these forms of bullying are different, and that bullying can be distinguished into Type A and B. Type A bullying involves 'problem children' who bully others often outside their friendship loop:

*"Their role of perpetrator is more or less fixed, although they could very well be victims in a different setting (for example, at home). The cause of bullying is likely to lay primarily in the individual attributes of the bully such as personality and family background".*

(Yoneyama 2008, p.8)

Whereas type B bullying involves 'good students':

*"With no signs of 'problematic behaviour'...type B bullying occurs largely among 'friends'... with rotating roles... there are environmental factors at work i.e. that bullying cannot be attributed only to the characteristics and/or backgrounds of each individual student".*

(Yoneyama 2008, p.9)

Although Yoneyama (2008) does not clearly specify what she means by 'good students' she implies that these students are obedient, well behaved and do not have 'problematic behaviour'. This could suggest that examining bullying involving 'good students' is a shift away from the prevailing perception of the 'violent bully' where there are different reasons for bullying in different 'types of people'. However, bullying by 'problem students' is because of their personality, whereas bullying by 'good students' is because of their environment. This places the

responsibility and stigma of bullying on '*problem students*'. Foucault's (1979) concept of docile bodies can be used to explain bullying by good students because individuals become trained to be capable, submissive and the object of constraint and obligations. It is more fluid and less deterministic than Yoneyama's (2008) theory and considers individual differences and resistance.

Frey (2005) found that teachers were more likely to be aware of bullying of pupils who were frequently getting in trouble and often targets of bullying. He also observed cruel behaviour in students that teachers described as 'no problem'. This implies that as children learn how to be obedient they may learn how to bully in ways that comply to school rules. This links to Foucault's (1979) notion that '*serious crimes go unnoticed*' and suggests that this research should also explore bullying by children who are obedient and bullying that teachers may not be aware of.

It has been useful to examine the research of Yoneyama (1999; 2008) and Yoneyama and Naito (2003). However, their data consists mostly of documents from problem pages and magazines such as '*Shonen Jump*', a popular children's comic magazine in Japan (Yoneyama 1999), so this limits the extent to which Yoneyama can substantiate these claims. Despite Yoneyama (1999) arguing that extreme bullying is the '*tip of the iceberg*' she often uses the most severe cases of bullying to illustrate her points. She provides a case study of a boy who committed suicide because of bullying where a mock funeral was held before his death and participated in by most of the class. However, it suggests that groups of '*ordinary children*' can ostracise an individual with profound consequences.

### *Boredom*

Owens et al (2000) found that adolescent girls reported that alleviating boredom was a motivator for using indirect aggression. In Ofsted (2008) pupils reported that there would be less bullying if children were not as bored. Although these studies suggest boredom is associated with

bullying they do not explain why. To some extent, boredom can be associated with Foucault's (1979) concept of docility where schools having the '*power of time*'. Breidenstein (2007) refers to boredom as a '*necessary and unavoidable component of school*'. He found that boredom refers to being detached, empty, imprisoned and a derogatory feeling that cannot be overcome. He states that the state of boredom is entrenched in the daily experience of school, foreignness of the lesson and strict regiment are too much for boredom not to be present. Newberry and Duncan (2001) found that delinquent children (mostly males who engaged in substance abuse and theft) had a higher tendency to experience boredom than non-delinquents. This can be associated with Foucault's police-prison-delinquent cycle.

### *Exclusion from School*

The number of pupils permanently excluded from mainstream schools and placed in pupil referral units for poor behaviour rose from 7,740 in 1997 to 16,010 in 2008 (Curtis 2008). De Pear and Garner (1996) argue that exclusion is '*primarily a birthright of the disadvantaged*'. Hayden (2003) states groups excluded from school mirrors the prison population such as males from working-class backgrounds who are under-achieving in school. This demonstrates what a prevalent influence social class has on exclusion. Besag (2006) states that exclusion remains prevalent in schools and is widely used to deal with bullying. In '*Don't Suffer in Silence*' Smith (2000) recommend fixed-period exclusion and permanent exclusion (when bullying is severe and persistent) to deal with bullying. Osler (2006) found that all the females in her sample who had been excluded believed that being bullied contributed to their exclusion such as long absences and bottling up feelings but then letting them out at the '*wrong*' time. Hayden (2003) found that these children felt victimised by the way the system reacts to them. This broadens out the concept of feeling victimised. Osler (2006) also found that children in the lower stream in which the best grade was lower than a C believed they would be denied access to marketable qualifications. This implies that children who are disadvantaged become more disadvantaged and resembles

Foucault's police-prison-delinquent cycle. This thesis explores the extent to which these issues can be considered as forms of systemic bullying of varying severities.

### *Private School*

Children attending private school are often neglected in research on bullying, particularly in terms of examining groups from different populations within the same study such as private and state schools, and with females. Bullying has a history of being associated with private schools, particularly boys', for example, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (Hughes 1857). Walford (1985) found that because boys are aware of financial sacrifices parents make the risk of expulsion because of bullying would be great. However, he states that bullying is an everyday feature of life in most private schools.

Stoudt (2009) argues that bullying is '*covered up*' in private schools to protect the reputation of the school. He studied an elite boys' school and found that pupils were physically and psychologically attacked because of their appearance, academic and athletic ability. He argues that bullying is facilitated by tolerance of verbal abuse where it is classed as '*no big deal*', and homophobic insults are perceived as boys just '*messing around*'. He argues that these reinforce exclusion and hierarchical categories. This implies that although there may be tolerance of abuse, it is nevertheless a form of bullying. In this thesis, these issues are considered as different severities of bullying.

Williams, Jamieson and Hollingworth (2008) found that privilege brings an alternative masculinity, which emphasise sensitivity and studiousness, valued by teachers but segregates boys from their peers. Walford (1993) found that it is not uncommon for parents to consider private schooling if children are having problems at state school. Williams et al (2008) argue that the need to be different can offer academic but not social success, and segregated schools offer a '*safe place*' where the '*non-hegemonic masculinity retains value*'. This suggests that bullying should be

conceptualised in a way that takes into account how the different ways that children are positioned in school can influence how and why they experience bullying.

### **Societal Issues Inherent in Bullying**

This sub-section discusses how broader factors beyond the direct control of the school may influence bullying such as labelling, intellectual ability and sub-cultural theory. Although streaming is brought about by the school, it is also associated with issues such as intellectual ability and so it is in this sub-section. Thompson and Gunter (2008) challenge the notion of bullying involving a perpetrator and a victim, and argue that student groupings are about status, power, class, race, gender and learning.

#### *Difference*

Terasahjo and Salmivalli (2003) found that '*systematic harassment*' was present in students' '*daily lives*'. Victims were perceived as deviant and who deserved to be treated with hostility. Although children had attitudes against bullying, bullying in the child's class was perceived as '*not really bullying*'. This suggests that bullying can be used to enforce normalisation and reduce difference, as explained earlier from a Foucauldian perspective. It also suggests that children perceive bullying in a disembodied and abstract way, rather than as an everyday lived experience.

Lahelma (2004) and Walton (2008) suggest that a lack of acceptance of difference is at the heart of what causes bullying and racism, where lines are polished between '*us*' and '*them*'. Both Lahelma (2004) and Myers (2006) found that in some way nearly every pupil was different and could be placed within vulnerable groups. Mooney, Cresser and Blatchford (1991) found that 27% of black children had been teased because of the colour of their skin, compared to nine percent of white children. However, Lloyd and Stead (2001) found that all eighteen gypsy-traveller children interviewed had experienced name-calling related to their cultural background. This implies that the prevalence of bullying can vary

depending on the research methods used. In this research, if people are distressed by name-calling it is considered as bullying, if they don't appear to be distressed it is considered as a 'grey' area.

### *Intellectual Ability*

Often children with learning difficulties are excluded from research on bullying. In examining Olweus' work on power, Chan (2009) excluded children with learning difficulties from his study. Wright (2008) states that '*it is still commonplace for research to fail to seek the opinions of pupils with multiple and complex needs*' (p.32). Mishna (2003) found that people with learning disabilities are at greater risk of victimisation and suggests that '*more research into the relationship between learning disability and bullying is needed*' (p.344). Cowie and Jennifer (2008) argue that there has been little research on '*disablist bullying*' but most research reveals that children with learning disabilities are substantially more at risk of being bullied (p.13). Sweeting and West (2001) found that bullying was more likely to happen to children who were less physically attractive, overweight, had a disability and/or were below average in academic subjects. This implies that being perceived in a derogatory way can make an individual susceptible to bullying.

Sullivan, Cleary and Sullivan (2004) state that children with special needs stand out in the classroom as a result of physical and psychological differences, and may act in ways which make them vulnerable. Their argument attributes some responsibility for bullying on children with special needs. However, Davis, Watson and Cunningham-Burley (2000) argue that it is important to examine how structural barriers are experienced and these may include stigma, discrimination and restricted opportunities. From a Foucauldian perspective, children with learning difficulties may be more likely to having different technologies of power exercised over them, such as surveillance, normalisation and the power of time, where children are not permitted to pass onto one activity until the other has been completed because they are more likely to struggle with their work. Walton (2005) refers to '*picking teams*' for sports activities as

relational bullying for the 'last' ones to be picked, yet is rarely considered as bullying. If children feel distressed about being 'left out' then it is considered as bullying in this research.

### *Streaming*

Streaming is often used in schools where children are placed in classes based on their perceived intellectual ability, as determined by their attainment levels. Research examining streaming tends to focus on one particular group such as males, a top or bottom set group, or in certain schools (Connell 1989; Mac an Ghail 1994) without examining how these factors may interact; for example, what effect do the bottom and top set children have on one another? As Foucault (1979) points out, everyone is influenced by the normal-abnormal distinction. Devine (2003) found that for children who did not perceive themselves to be clever, evaluation elicited rebuke, punishment and excluded them from friendship groups. Epp and Watkinson (1997) suggest that this is systemic violence which they define as:

*“Any institutionalized practice or procedure that adversely affects an individual or group by burdening them psychologically, mentally, culturally, spiritually or physically”.*

(Epp and Watkinson 1997, p.xi)

Epp (1997) labels this as 'systemic' because no-one is to blame, teachers do what is expected of them and follow protocol. The people more likely to suffer unfavourably are the ones who are not achieving highly academically. Marking systems have a positive impact on some which is only possible through the negative effect it has on others. He argues that pupils' reactions to 'systemic violence' are seldom acted out immediately and so it is difficult to establish cause and effect. He adds that abusive practices such as the right to punish and other forms of humiliation remain in school. Munn (1999) argues that an individual who does not conform to academic, sporting, artistic or behavioural standards set by adults can experience feelings of isolation or rejection by one's peers, which can be

perceived as bullying. In this research, when children feel rejected by their peers because they don't conform to educational standard or if they feel unfairly punished because of this, it is considered as a form of systemic bullying, if children feel certain teachers or pupils pick on them, then it is considered as bullying by teachers or pupils respectively. However, the extent to which these experiences are considered as bullying will vary depending on individual circumstances.

There is a wealth of literature that suggests that streaming can influence how individuals are perceived and their self-esteem. Lynch and Lodge (2002) found that children were aware of the stigma of being in the lower set classes where some children reported that *'teachers say we are dumb'*. They argue that there is segregation within schools, for example, top and bottom sets and between schools, for example, fee paying and disadvantaged schools. They also found that the assessment process of SATs shifted the way children perceived themselves and others, caused friction and polarised groups causing hostility especially towards the cleverest pupils. However, they do not examine what impact SATs have on how pupils who scored the highest perceived and interacted with pupils who scored the lowest. Myers (2006) also found that some pupils were left out for being very intelligent. Boaler (1997) reports that pupils in the top set stated that they were treated harshly by teachers who expected too much from them, and made comments such as *'this is crap for top set'*. These examples are considered, in this research, as characteristics of systemic bullying that vary in severity depending on individual experiences.

Hargreaves (1967) found hostility between members of different streams. He states that a self-fulfilling prophecy developed where the good pupils become better and experienced a rewarding relationship with their teachers, and the bad become worse and got *'picked on'*. However, he does not take into account individual differences and excludes voices which do not fit the *'ideal subject'*, for example, middle-class children in low streams. It is deterministic and perceives children in lower sets as

lacking in agency and ability to change their circumstances. Although a Foucauldian perspective acknowledges class domination, it implies that anyone who does not conform to the powers of normalisation are likely to be excluded and punished. This can be used to explore multiple perspectives in different groups, such as streaming in private school. Taking these issues into consideration, Hargreaves' (1967) research on streaming is of limited relevance to this thesis.

### *Labelling Theory*

Labelling theorists argue that labels assigned to people can have secondary effects which can be more profound than the initial cause (Becker 1963). Becker (1963) argues that being labelled changes one's public identity and creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. The individual is often segregated from society, for example, being a drug addict may lead to loss of employment and subsequent illegitimate activity. From having to face the same problems grows a deviant subculture: a set of shared values and activities, for example, a young thief meets an older more experienced thief. DeLamater (1968) found some rewards in being labelled as deviant such as status and self-esteem. Hargreaves (1967) states that individuals have three options of how to deal with labelling, they can: conform so the label cannot apply; use a strategy to neutralise the situation; or accept the label as part of their identity. However, this involves a significant amount of adjustment by the labelled individual. Arguably, having to adjust behaviour using any of these options could be considered as forms of normalisation and surveillance. Furthermore, Goffman (1963) demonstrates how labels can remain despite attempts people make to cover their differences.

Labelling theory overlooks agency and removes responsibility from people who are labelled, for example, Becker (1963) suggested that drug addicts who lose their jobs are '*forced into illegitimate activity*'. This perceives individuals in a collective and deterministic way, as if they have little choice but to follow a path of destruction once labelled. Crotty (1998) argues that labelling theory does not thoroughly explain why society

excludes some members and what mechanisms are used. Ackers (1968) states that labels cannot create deviant behaviour; attention must be placed on what caused the labelling in the first place. Furthermore, removing the label may be only one step in including stigmatised groups. Although labels for individuals with learning disabilities have changed, for example, '*handicapped*' and '*spastic*', they remain a stigmatised group. Furthermore, some labels such as doctor have positive attributes.

Labelling theory suggests that certain individuals and groups create labelling. However, a Foucauldian (1972; 1980) perspective argues that labels are created by disciplinary power where individuals are placed into binaries, and this power is not the sole responsibility of any individual or group. His perspective takes into account how individuals from various backgrounds can be subject to normalisation if they do not conform to norms. Foucault also suggests that people can exercise power, partly through resisting their label. This demonstrates that labelling theory is not consistent with a Foucauldian approach, which takes into account agency, resistance and individual differences.

### *Examining Gender*

Bullying of an indirect, psychological nature has been associated with more able pupils, females more than males, and increases with age (Ahmad and Smith 1994; Bjorkqvist 1994; Sullivan, Cleary and Sullivan 2004). Myers (2006) argues that these generalisations are oversimplified and found that boys engaged in verbal and physical bullying which could last several years. She found that all pupils were involved in bullying on a daily basis and confirmed the widespread finding (for example, Morita 1996; Yoneyama 1999) that pupils adhered to a code of silence and teachers were rarely informed about bullying. She argues that to admit victimisation creates stigma, and people can blame themselves and normalise bullying. She also found that some pupils who were bullied reacted in violent ways once '*pushed to the limit*'. This suggests that bullying can lead to violence.

Myers (2006) found that bullying between females was discreet and they were often excluded from peers where girls '*at the top*' (i.e. pretty, attractive and popular) kept pupils in their place by bullying. Besag (2006) also found that bullying between females usually involves exclusion from friendship groups. However, Besag (2006) examines only girls and does not take into account how boys contribute to bullying; yet as Besag (2006) herself points out, bullying should not be considered in isolation. The findings of Besag (2006) and Myers (2006) contrast to Duncan's (1999) findings where popular girls did not always follow the patterns of pretty and attractive. He refers to a popular girl who was overweight, black and disabled, yet she obtained such power; highlighting the importance of exploring how constructions of power can be fluid and offer all sorts of possibilities.

Myers (2006) argues that the unwritten rules of peers were more important than the official rules of the school. However, she did not investigate the rules of the school. Furthermore, gender roles can vary because of different factors such as social class and ability, and her study would have been more thorough had these complex factors been examined. Walton (2005) suggests that a '*thicker*' analysis of gender is required other than the notion that boys engage in physical bullying and girls relational. Myers (2006) also argues that '*future research needs to differentiate within the genders as well as between them*' (p.74).

### *Females*

Impett et al (2008) argue that middle class girls are pressured to be the '*perfect girl*' and censor their thoughts, emotions and behaviours to maintain relationship, resulting in a discrepancy between what they think, feel and say, which is associated with low self-esteem. Allan (2009) found that girls who positioned themselves as attractive and well behaved maintained an elite position as the most popular. However, they were powerful only in ways that enhance and maintain their femininity. This implies that behaviours that enhances femininity may inadvertently restrict agency and self-esteem. Reay (2001) found different ways females

experienced being a girl and refers to *'nice girls'* who are mostly middle-class, hard working and well behaved, whose behaviour results in the *'benefits of culture'* but *'self-surveillance'* and little freedom. This suggests that in gaining educational benefits they may lose voice and freedom in expression. It suggests that internalised oppression that is exchanged for cultural benefits and implies losing a form of power to gain another. Literature on the child's voice is discussed further in the *Methodology* chapter as this influenced how the data was gathered. Reay (2001) found that *'nice girls'* in working-class schools were perceived as unpopular and boring, whereas girls who were *'tomboys'* suggested that *'it's better being a boy'* and advocated male superiority and a shame of femininity. A Foucauldian perspective implies that the conforming nature of middle-class females could be associated with *'docile'* subjects where they are objects of discipline and constraint. This suggests they could be experiencing systemic bullying. Arguably, *'tomboys'* have less power exercised over them in terms of their resistance to being *'docile'* subjects. However, they may also experience the police-prison-delinquent cycle described earlier by Foucault (1979).

## *Males*

### *'Gay' Label*

Walton (2008) argues that bullying in boys can sometimes be excused as *'boys being boys'*. The hyper-masculinity of working-class boys has been found to be a reason for why they are defensive against teachers, for example, to show they are stronger (Connell 1989; Mac an Ghail 1994). This suggests that aggression may be a way to assert masculinity and could be associated with bullying. Mac an Ghail (1994) and Walton (2008) argue that the *'gay'* label is a means of regulating masculinity where those who do not meet these standards are vulnerable to social exclusion and ridicule. Walton (2008) suggests that although some researchers have examined children being labelled as *'gay'*, they have failed to draw upon these findings in relation to bullying.

### *Counter-school Culture*

Willis (1977) conducted an ethnography of twelve working-class '*lads*' as they prepared to leave school and go into work. He analysed the conflicts and challenges they had with teachers and '*ear'oles*' and suggests that these are the result of social class issues where working-class culture is collectively in opposition with middle-class culture. He suggests that '*grassing*' is to prevent the power of the formal organisation and classes are about celebrating their own values and challenging authority. Although Willis explains how some '*lads*' are persistently targeted by others, he does not label this as bullying, merely symptomatic of their culture. This removes them of agency and pathologises them. However, although Foucault (1980) acknowledges class domination, he also implies that people can exercise resistance.

Willis (1977) states that the lads reject the '*ear'oles*' because they have invested in the aims of the education system and don't '*have a laff*'. This puts people into binaries and does not consider plurality, and multiple perspectives. However, a Foucauldian perspective refers to the powers of normalisation and observation which create hierarchies in school and where people who do not conform to standards are excluded. This is not necessarily sub-groups of working-class children, rather this power influences everyone, but not equally. In many ways, Willis's research in 1977 is incompatible with societal conditions today. His approach is collectivist and presents a meta-narrative where it assumes that tensions in the school are the result of social class, and the lads share the same experiences and values, in this sense it is deterministic and reductionist.

Willis (1977) argues that, for *the 'lads'*, conformism holds no rewards: it is to give up independence and creativity for '*nothing but an illusory ideal of classlessness*'. However, children are now encouraged to take various qualifications and more people are accessing higher education. He argues that the counter-school culture directs them to skilled and semi-skilled manual work. However, nowadays as Aronwitz (2004) explains,

there is increasing unemployment and the old certainties of the 'lads' getting a job and reproducing their class culture have faded.

### *Sub-cultural Theory*

Since children in a PRU are included in this research, it could be argued that sub-cultural theory can be used to explain why they become part of a delinquent group and how they might be involved in bullying. Sub-cultural theory became a predominant way of explaining social deviance in terms of adherence to cultural patterns in the 1960s and 1970s (Downes and Rock 2007). However, the extent to which it can be applied in the twenty-first century is limited, and this is explained in this sub-section.

Cohen (1955) argues that culture makes incompatible demands and subcultures evolve to 'so/ve' these problems, they borrow elements from the larger culture and rework them into distinctive form such as violence. The crucial condition is effective interaction with people who have similar problems of adjustment. Cohen (1955) describes some main attributes of a sub-cultural group. These involve: mostly working-class males; non-utilitarianism where goods are usually discarded; hedonism; malice and destructiveness; gang solidarity; no schedule; and conformity to sub-cultural norms. According to Cohen (1955), working-class children are most likely to be '*problems*' in school because of their lack of training in intellectual achievement and reinforcement in the home to conform to school. They join a delinquent sub-culture to acquire status in a more accessible form and '*hit back*' at the system that has branded them as failures.

Sub-cultural theory suggests that working-class children can be susceptible to being treated unfavourably at school and that they can present challenges to the teacher's authority. This could be used to explore different modalities of bullying such as systemic bullying. However, it provides a deterministic, meta-narrative and reductionist theory of how and why children join a sub-culture. It also perceives sub-culture as a separate binary entity to '*normal*' culture and assumes that

once children join a sub-culture they are not part of normal society and neither can they be. It implies warfare between youth and the adult-world (Downes and Rock 2007). However, a Foucauldian perspective acknowledges that there is fluidity within these roles, takes into account individual differences, and agency and advocates against using binaries. Although a Foucauldian perspective of the police-prison-delinquent relationship suggests that delinquency can become tied to one's identity, it also acknowledges how people can exercise resistance. Downes and Rock (2007) states that sub-cultural theory over-predicts delinquency, only a minority of working-class males are delinquent. Furthermore, with changing times sub-cultural theory is limited in explaining delinquency. Hayward (2004) argues that consumerism rather than production is tied to crime as individual's sense of identity is associated with symbolic goods. Sub-cultural theory is also incompatible with a Foucauldian perspective because it does not pay attention to ambiguity:

*“Little heed has been given to the situated, heterogeneous and fluid nature of belief; to its ambiguities, anomalies and contradictions; and to the sheer difficulty of pinning it down and arranging it as a system”.*

(Downes and Rock 2007, p.154)

### **Agency**

This research aims to explore how children exercise agency. Having a severely restricted sense of agency is a characteristic of bullying such as feeling entrapped. However, this literature review has demonstrated that children's sense of agency can be limited, for example, working-class children are more likely than middle class children to be excluded from school. Furthermore, all children and teachers have restricted agency and are circumscribed by their role in schools *'teaching situations choose lecturer and student more than they choose it'* (Bourdieu and Passeron 1994, p.13). Hodgkinson and Bloomer (2001) examined people who did not complete their college course and found that all but one participant came from a working-class background. Those who lacked capital had

few financial resources to call upon when the *'going gets tough'*. They argue that problems of dropping out reflect deeper problems of social inequality and disadvantage. However, even children from middle-class backgrounds who are succeeding in education may also have restricted agency in school, although this could be for the sake of long-term benefits. Bourdieu (1990, p.155) argues that *'resistance may be alienating and submission may be liberating'*:

*"While students and lecturers have a theoretical and long-term interest in challenging how universities work, they also have a practical and short-term stake in preserving a function for them in which they have to act and of which they are a product."*

(Bourdieu 1990, p.14)

## **Conclusion**

This literature review has critically discussed Olweus' definition of bullying and has explained how bullying remains a contested concept where the prevalence of bullying is influenced by how it is conceptualised. It has criticised studies on bullying such as the individual approach where certain groups are perceived in a collective way and their behaviours are described in binary terms. This research is original because it provides a multi-faceted way of conceptualising bullying which explores specific examples of bullying, such as humiliation and fear, rather than just a broad *'bullying'* label. It takes into account individual cases and different severities of bullying and how it makes people feel. It also considers the complex nature of power from a Foucauldian perspective and investigates multiple modalities of bullying (pupil-pupil, pupil-teacher and systemic bullying). From this, a more fluid and less restrictive way of conceptualising bullying is derived that can investigate ambiguity, messiness, and different experiences of bullying.

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the theoretical underpinnings of postmodernism are used to conceptualise bullying. A Foucauldian approach was primarily taken in this research. This chapter discusses the background to postmodernism and how Foucault is located within a postmodern approach. In adherence with Foucault, the theoretical perspective in this research is perceived as a development of modernity, and a new wave of perceiving fundamental beliefs of modernism. However, it is not a complete rejection of all its core values. This chapter also draws on some ideas from other postmodernists were such as Atkinson (2002). It explains how bullying is constructed in this thesis by examining: multiple truths and perspectives with their messiness, slipperiness and contradictions; how discourses of bullying are entrenched in knowledge-power relations; and discusses what influence dominant discourses have on bullying is conceptualised. The aim of this is to construct bullying in a way that contextualises and applies it to children's everyday experiences of school.

### The 'Post' in Postmodern

The term postmodernism refers to the aftermath of modernism. Maplas (2001) describes the different ways that the *'post'* in postmodernism can be perceived. *'Post'* can be described as 'not' modern and a movement beyond the modern era and its theoretical and cultural practices into new terrains, *'discourses and ideas'*. *'Post'* can also symbolise a continuity, progression and development of modernity. Foucault (1980) sometimes aligned his work with aspects of the Enlightenment tradition and specified continuities and discontinuities between modernism and postmodernism. He argues that one does not have to be 'for' or 'against' the Enlightenment and perceives modernity and postmodernism as oppositional attitudes which are present in any period. The stance taken in this thesis is that

'post' symbolises a development of modernity, which represents a new wave of thinking and questioning of certain fundamental beliefs of modernism, however, it does not reject every aspect of modernism. As Elam (1992) suggests '*postmodernity is a rewriting of modernity, which has already been active within modernity (p.9).*'

## **A Foucauldian Perspective**

### *Foucauldian Perspective Embedded in this Thesis*

A Foucauldian (1979; 1980) perspective is embedded throughout this thesis. It concentrates specifically on Foucault's complex understanding of power relations and resistance, normalisation and panopticism. These have been discussed in the literature review because they are used to challenge the way power is conceptualised by traditional definitions of bullying which state that bullying involves a clear imbalance of power. However, as the literature review has discussed, Foucault (1980) argues that power is fluid, is exercised from innumerable points and levels and involves struggles between individuals. Foucault (1979) argues that one way power is exercised is through panopticism. Although all individuals are in the panoptic, depending on their position, some people are more powerful than others. When people are closely under observation in the panoptic they have more power exercised over them and are under '*the gaze*'. People who are under the gaze are more subject to powers of normalisation where they are pressured to conform, put in hierarchies and those that don't conform are often excluded, and are more likely to be punished. This results in increased supervision and punishment. The more people resist these powers, the more power tends to be exercised over them.

### *Foucault and Postmodernism*

Usher and Edwards (1994) state that Foucault's work is usually considered as postmodern. However, this can be problematic because Foucault resists categorisation. He is normally considered as a poststructuralist along with writers such as *Derrida* and *Lacan*. However, his work goes beyond the role of language and textuality by analysing the

nature and role of power. Usher and Edwards (1994) argue that Foucault is considered as postmodern because he questions dominant ways of understanding modern practices, poses different questions and provides different perspectives and answers. This research also aims to question dominant ways of understanding bullying and, in this research, Foucault is considered as a postmodernist.

## **Background on Postmodernism**

### *Modernity*

Corker and Shakespeare (2002) argue that modernity describes the social institutions, belief and value systems of capitalist civilisation which is associated with capital accumulation and cultural imperialism. They suggest that modernity is complicit in the creation of social inequalities and systems of privileging power. Atkinson (2002) also suggests that modernity and the Enlightenment emphasise the superiority of the west and the idea of science as truth. The counter-culture of socialism is 'modern' because it retains the binary logic where communism is based on particular interpretations of Marxism. Marxism has been criticised for its search for a foundation of knowledge which can exclude and isolate people who are perceived not to meet the ideal subject (Lyotard 1984; Corker and Shakespeare 2001). The Foucauldian (1980) perspective in this research takes into account different perspectives, circumstances and the different ways people can exercise and resist power.

### *Modernism becoming Postmodernism*

Best and Kellner (1991) state that by the 1970s French theorists were attacking modern theories rooted in humanistic assumptions and Enlightenment rationalist discourses. Foucault (1973; 1980) proclaimed the 'death of man' while suggesting new conceptions of theory, politics and ethics.

By the late twentieth century, communism was no longer offered as a feasible alternative to capitalism. Globalisation, new technologies such as the internet, changes in modes of production from an industrial to service

industry, and the privatisation of public resources contributed to this (Corker and Shakespeare 2001). Aronwitz (2004) argues that class identities and relations have become ambiguous. In 1977 Willis wrote *'Learning to Labor'*, an ethnography on working class males entering into factory jobs and their production and reproduction of their position in working-class culture. However, Aronwitz (2004) suggests that structural conditions of capital have shifted dramatically since Willis's study. Decentralisation of production has led to the loss of jobs and industries, for example, in textiles, garments and steel. This has been devastating to white working-class males, for *'at least the lads had a job awaiting them.'* Aronwitz (2004) suggests that a growing number of jobless people has also led to a rise in the *'underclass.'* Working-class jobs have now become waiting tables, construction labourer at non-union sites and *'vainly-trying sales'*. He states that new regimes of computer-mediated industrial and service production have accelerated the economic growth rate and reduced labour costs. With the growth of the internet and social networking there has been a loss of a traditional working-class community. He argues that the *'new working-class'* bring neither good wages nor do they reproduce the working-class culture.

Beck (1992) argues that society has become more individualistic because people have lost their support networks and have to rely on themselves. The process of individualisation involves threats of unemployment, separation of the individual from support networks (for example, family or neighbourhood), loss of supplementary sources of income (for example, part-time farming) and consumer dependency. This is at odds with a Marxist approach where there was a collective class struggle. However, most postmodern writers recognise that there is still inequality in a postmodern society even though there is more heterogeneity. Beck (1992) argues that class issues are still present and inequalities have sharpened as society has become more individualised and social groups lose their distinctive traits and their identity. According to Bauman (1993), in the postmodern era, consumerism has replaced production where there

is a pressure to acquire commodity and distinction and people have become consumers dependent on the market.

A Foucauldian perspective represents tolerance towards social differences, ambiguity and conflict, and suggests that meaning is socially constructed across institutional practices; it is not simply given. He calls for new ways of thinking to modernist discourses. Postmodernism shares an implicit sensitivity for the complexity of the social world and acknowledges that it is not possible to tell a single and exclusive story about something that is complex (Derrida 1988). In this research, the perspective that is taken recognises this complexity and multiple perspectives as opposed to binary thinking. The defining characteristics of postmodernism are:

- Resistance towards certainty and resolution.
- Rejection of fixed notions of reality, knowledge or method.
- Acceptance of complexity, lack of clarity and multiplicity.
- Acknowledgement of subjectivity, contradiction and irony.
- Deliberate intent to unsettle assumptions and presuppositions.
- Refusal to accept boundaries and hierarchies in ways of thinking.
- Disruption of binaries that define things as either/or.

(Atkinson 2002 p.74)

### **Framing Bullying**

Postmodernists such as Foucault (1980) recognise that there is injustice and unfairness and Bauman (1993) argues, even in a postmodern era, inequality still exists. This thesis recognises some fundamental beliefs of the Enlightenment such as the recognition of human harm and suffering along with guidance of what behaviours constitute this (Hammersely 1995). In recognition of this, a range of characteristics of bullying were developed such as teasing and humiliation, please see *Appendix A*. This developed from analysing the literature on bullying and provided guidance of what experiences to pay attention to in the research. It avoided an extreme postmodern nihilistic approach. Usher and Edwards (1994)

suggest that relativism is feared because it claims that there is no unique privileged position. It also implies that difference knowledge and truth cannot be possessed and mastered. A relativist approach would not provide any guidance on what constitutes bullying so anything could be considered as bullying. If truth is not a possibility then it could be argued that fundamental issues of bullying are undermined whereby bullying could be reduced to an insignificant term without any clarity or sense of values. This would have meant that 'justice' would be considered as *'effects of power'* with the implication being that the 'truth' of the exploiter is equally valid to the 'truth' of the 'exploited' (Atkinson 2002; Cole 2003). Postmodernism, in its most extreme form cannot differentiate between different behaviours to establish what bullying is and this could harm people who are being bullied:

*"Whatever the difficulties, we must find means of justifying some principles against others; otherwise there is little point in continuing with research."*

(Hammersley 1996, p.402)

The characteristics of bullying could be criticised for being just a more extensive list than a positivistic perspective. However, it was used to provide guidance on how bullying is experienced rather than using rigid and restrictive positivistic definition. It provides guidance so that a fluid and multi-faceted understanding of bullying can be developed that is broader than the traditional Olweus (1993) definition and has more relevance to children's experiences. It takes into account different severities and *'grey'* areas and does not perceive all these examples in binary terms. There is also fluidity within these examples and they do not all constitute automatically as bullying. This is opposed to having the *'fixed'* and governed truths of traditional definitions, as a Foucauldian perspective implies. It can also be used to examine experiences of bullying that do not conform to traditional definitions, as St. Pierre (2000) implies. Foucault implies that even at the individual level (such as pupil-

pupil bullying) institutional and societal factors of power-knowledge are ever-present. This thesis examines forms of bullying at the following levels: pupil-pupil (for example, teasing); pupil-teacher (for example humiliation); and systemic factors (for example, being distressed by being in the lowest set).

Feelings/emotions associated with bullying are also considered, for example, being frightened. These examples are not exhaustive but are used as a guide of what experiences to pay attention to. This research examines the context, how it makes individuals feel and the severity of the bullying to decide whether it constitutes bullying. It focuses on the experience of the individual in the interview as opposed to the behaviour of the bully. Traditional positivistic approaches do not take into account the subtle and 'grey' forms of bullying that postmodernism would consider and are limited in addressing how people can experience bullying on different levels (such as between pupils and teachers), as a Foucauldian (1980) reading implies. Considering the range of different forms of bullying, ages and stages at which one can experience bullying it could be argued that bullying in society is a postmodern concept.

A Foucauldian perspective offers the potential to investigate the messiness and complexity of everyday life, as opposed to positivism, which searches for a foundation of knowledge, certainty and generalities. It is sophisticated enough to explore a multitude of experiences that include '*marginalised voices*' (for example, children with learning difficulties). Different perspectives and severities of bullying are taken into account and are discussed and debated. Conceptualising bullying develops throughout the thesis and the '*Significance of Findings and Contribution to Knowledge*' chapter identifies a new and multi-faceted understanding which applies to the everyday interactions which constitute as bullying. It is far from an '*idle intellectual word play*' and existing in a '*praxis of not being sure*' (Atkinson 2002; Cole 2003).

A positivistic perspective does not particularly consider different severities of bullying but distinguishes (in an unsophisticated way) between what is and what is not bullying. Aiming to rigidly establish what experiences are bullying prior to the study being implemented, defeats the aim of this research which is to include the subtle and '*grey*' areas of bullying in the context of everyday life. Positivists perceive bullying in terms of exclusive and objective criteria that can be imposed externally on individuals and groups. However, it is expected that some clear experiences of bullying will emerge. Usher and Edwards (1994) argue that, by aiming to be objective and distant, psychology is limited in the extent it can apply to everyday life. They suggest that objectivity is purchased at the price of reflexivity. In postmodernism, norms and foundations have to be struggled over rather than appealing to a transcendent set of values. Interactions associated with bullying such as teasing are not automatically considered as bullying (unless otherwise specified) but are explored, debated and analysed to enrich understanding of the complexity of bullying. However, when children are distressed by this it is considered as bullying. If children are being called names and they do not appear to be upset by it, then it is considered as a '*grey*' area.

From a Foucauldian perspective, the way bullying is constructed is imbued within power interests and this is discussed further throughout this chapter. This research analyses beyond labels and considers the effects of power that these labels have. This is opposed to automatically classifying behaviours as '*bullying*' and '*not bullying*'. However, in adherence with Enlightenment thinking this research accepts some 'truths' about bullying. At this stage in the research, bullying is explored as a form of maltreatment that varies in severity and that people's feelings should be taken into account when investigating bullying such as if they are distressed. This thesis is exploring interactions rather than personalities so its aim is to investigate experiences of bullying, as

opposed to aiming to classify people as victims and bullies. However, it recognises that in some cases there is an identifiable victim and bully.

### **Subjective Experiences, Multiple Meanings and Truths**

Woodhead and Faulkner (2000) argue that human reactions cannot be measured as if they are chemical reactions because people make sense of experiences based on the meanings they attach and their sense of the world differs. Positivism involves the principle of parsimony, where phenomena should be explained in the most economical way possible and a simple theory is preferred to a complex one (Cohen and Manion 1994). However, postmodernists recognise that people's lives are far more complex. Derrida (1988) advises that researchers should not '*pretend to be sure of such simplicity where there is none*' (p.119).

Because bullying involves interactions and interpretations, the importance of perceptions is paramount to its study. A Foucauldian perspective provides the opportunity to examine different cases individually with their ambiguity, complexity, contradiction, slipperiness and messiness. Atkinson (2002) argues that postmodernism celebrates multiplicity and diversity and is '*inclusive*' rather than '*exclusive*'. Baxter (2002) suggests that postmodernism allows multiple voices to be heard with ringing clarity, unlike positivism which offers a '*one-size fits all*' grand narrative approach. A Foucauldian perspective takes into account how people experience power differently depending on their position and circumstances. It also considers how people respond differently to power being exercised over them and does not provide a meta-narrative approach in this sense. As expressed by Barrett (1991) '*reality*' depends on the perspective of the individual and is '*the property of the referent* (p.19).'

Burns and Walker (2005) suggest that investigating multiple perspectives focuses on a myriad of meanings, and specific individual experiences. Because of this experiences of bullying can be considered which do not fit neatly with the current definition. Postmodernism acknowledges that since

social reality is mind dependent, data is not free from interpretation (Sparkes 1992). Reflexivity is used throughout this thesis; for example in the *Introduction* I have discussed my own experience of bullying. Reflexivity can be used to consider how researchers are implicated in discourses and can become part of a dominant discourse (Usher and Edwards, 1994, p.152). It can also make the reader aware of the researcher's own position along with their findings so they can openly evaluate the usefulness of research.

### *Dominant Discourses*

This research is focusing on how children experience characteristics of bullying that vary in terms of how it makes them feel, severity and involves different modalities. This is opposed to just focusing on whether children label experiences as bullying or not. From Foucault's (1982) perspective, the language we use is associated with '*regimes of truth*' and tied to power (knowledge). He suggests that power operates through educating people to particular regimes of truth. This implies that discourses of bullying are entrenched in power relations, are about what can be said and with what authority.

Foucault (1982) discusses how certain discourses are more powerful than others and structural inequalities underpin discourses. Ofsted and Olweus (1993) are powerful discourses and represent a positivistic, 'objective' perspective. It implies that discourses of Ofsted and Olweus are most often used because they are the most dominant and powerful; rather than the ones that are more true. To conceptualise bullying beyond powerful discourses this thesis is examining what forms of bullying children experience and examines different severities and modalities of bullying.

Foucault (1982) explains how these identities are enmeshed in power-knowledge formations, '*society without power relations can only be abstraction*' (p.222). This contrasts with modernity's liberal-humanistic paradigm which perceives knowledge as a search for truth which is the

basis for emancipation which power *'distorts'* (Usher and Edwards 1994). Foucault (1979) suggests that power operates through *'knowledgeable'* discourses such as establishing norms that are used as a form of governance and control which is potentially violent and dangerous. Norms intensify the gaze by categorising and regulating individuals, and *'power operates through persons rather than upon them'*. This implies that the way bullying is conceptualised could be a means of governing people by establishing norms of what behaviours are acceptable and what are not. This can be associated with positivistic attempts to establish typologies and sub-typologies of victims (for example, *'weak'* and *'provocative'*) and bullies (for example, the *'criminal bully'*). It suggests that behaviours which do not conform to the stereotype of bullying can be abandoned and escape governance. Foucault (1982) suggests that by fixing subjects within classifications, disciplinary sciences exercise power over individuals by labelling them good or bad, mad or sane. These discourses are not neutral and diminish individual differences. A Foucauldian (1979) reading implies that labelling people involved in bullying can result in them becoming progressively more controlled and regulated.

### **How Empowering is the Positivistic Approach?**

It has been argued that the positivistic approach can be empowering because it replaces myths, beliefs and superstition by discovering the *'truth'* of the world. It creates *'active subjects with certain characteristics'* and individuals can be empowered by learning and knowing about themselves and their label (Usher and Edwards 1994). A positivistic perspective on bullying could be considered emancipatory because it clearly defines bullying and develops labels and typical characteristics of bullies and victims. It can offer remedial strategies on how to tackle bullying that can be defined and measured and people could be emancipated by recognising their label as a bully or victim. However, Dews (1987) suggests that these categories disempower people by objectifying and making them subject to external regulatory power whereby one learns about the limits of one's possibilities. This implies

that once a person is labelled they are objectified, they may come to see themselves (and be perceived) only in terms of their label and limit themselves within this, for example, a victim may limit their perception of themselves to '*victim*' and may only use strategies to end their bullying that a '*victim*' might use. Other people may also only expect victims to respond to bullying in ways that victims typically do or bully them further because they are perceived as a victim.

### **Deconstruction**

Atkinson (2002) argues that although postmodernism has been criticised for a refusal to take responsibility, its '*playfulness*' can unsettle comfortable certainties, whereby experience is not pre-given but constantly constructed and reconstructed. Lather (1989) argues that just because postmodernism does not claim to know everything, does not mean that it knows nothing. Drawing on Atkinson (2002) and Stoudt (2009), questioning and deconstructing how bullying is conceptualised is a useful approach to constructing a more integrated understanding. Butler (1992) argues that deconstruction involves questioning, opening up and redeploying a term that '*previously has not been authorised*'.

Atkinson (2002) suggests that '*deconstruction is to take apart and reveal what is hidden but it does not mean to destroy or retreat into naïve relativism*'. Deconstruction can offer a powerful way forward in opposing the status quo by offering a viable alternative understanding of what is usually taken for granted. Blake (1997) argues that postmodernism is not relativism but it draws attention to the politics of knowledge and is sceptical of these views. Foucault (1974) suggests that our aim should be to uncover apparent neutralities in order to '*unmask the 'political violence'*' which is exercised through them (p.187). This implies that in deconstructing bullying this research will '*unmask*' dominant discourses of bullying. It calls into question previous ways of conceptualising bullying and opens up the concept to redeploy a more useful and relevant understanding. It can provide an emancipating approach by offering an

alternative to rigid, restrictive and pathologising ways of constructing bullying that is prevalent in the status quo.

### **Resistance**

Lyotard (1992) argues that resistance and subversion are the key postmodern condition that replaces the emancipatory promise of modernity. Perceptions which resist one other and are in conflict and in contradiction with one another are explored in this research. Foucault (1980) states that '*there is no power without potential refusal or revolt; where there is power there is inevitable resistance* (p.84). Analysing resistance enables oppression and emancipation to be explored as co-implicated in ever-shifting patterns arising from on-going power-struggles rather than considered as polar opposites (Usher and Edwards 1994).

Lather (2003) argues that taking a positivistic approach is a means used to control and regulate behaviour, and minimise resistance. This research is resisting the prevalent positivistic discourse of bullying by questioning and investigating modernist discourses of how bullying is traditionally constructed. It uses a Foucauldian perspective to resist a modernist construction of bullying that applies to all circumstances and acknowledges multiple perspectives and ambiguity so that a more complex understanding can be developed.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the theoretical perspective that is taken in this research. It uses a Foucauldian approach, which is considered as postmodern. Postmodernism is perceived as a development of modernity with a new wave of thinking and questioning of certain fundamental beliefs of modernism. However, it does not reject every aspect of modernism and acknowledges inequality. A discussion of the Foucauldian perspective on power and resistance; panopticism; and normalisation has been made in the literature review. It has also explained the relevance they have in terms of the theoretical perspective in this research. It has

argued that society is becoming more postmodern, for example, it has become more consumer-driven and individualistic. It has explained how it started to investigate bullying and how a list of characteristics of bullying were developed to guide the research on what experiences to pay attention to in order to avoid nihilism. It has discussed how this approach takes into account ambiguity, complexity, contradiction and messiness. It has critically analysed dominant discourses of bullying and as explained, using a Foucauldian perspective, how they are imbued within power relations. It has also explained how it aims to deconstruct traditional definitions of bullying in order to reconstruct bullying in a more fluid and multi-faceted way.

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methods used in this research and why they were chosen. It explains how qualitative techniques were used to examine how bullying is currently conceptualised and to re-conceptualise bullying in a more complex and integrated way. This aims to take into account different experiences of bullying which also investigates 'grey' areas, and takes into account subjectivity and individual differences. It provides a reflexive account of the ethical issues and sampling process, and explains why and how observations, focus groups and individual interviews were implemented. Finally, it explains how data was analysed using a Foucauldian perspective.

### **Pre-defining Bullying**

Bullying is studied from a Foucauldian perspective which perceives it as a fluid and problematic concept rather as a single, binary term that positivists use. Saussure (1974) suggests that no meaning ever resides in a single term. It could be that bullying does not have one universal definition because it is experienced differently by different people. Bullying is mainly studied from a quantitative perspective which stems from the Olweus tradition. It gives participants a pre-defined definition (Cornell, Sheras and Cole 2006). It is unsurprising that the perception of bullying they derive from participants resembles the definition they started with and this could be why Olweus' definition remains prevalent. Walton (2005) argues that a focus on statistics does not consider wider power relations in society because bullying is rooted in ideological relations of power.

### *Avoiding Categorising Victims and Bullies*

The emphasis of this research is on how children experience characteristics of bullying, rather than taking the common perspective of investigating what makes a 'typical' victim and bully (for example, Olweus

1993; Salmivalli et al 1996; Sutton and Keogh 2000; Elliot 2002). Kitchen (2000) argues that qualitative research is a useful tool to avoid labelling people and events. However, it could be argued that qualitative research also involves some degree of categorising, as criteria for membership is set up for people who belong to a particular category, although it is likely to be more fluid than a positivist approach. Kitchen (2000) found that people with disabilities were supportive of interviews because they allow respondents to express and contextualise their feelings, rather than having them pigeon-holed into boxes. They felt that questionnaires were often poorly conceived, restricted their responses, and led to a limited understanding.

Cornell, Sheras and Cole (2006) state that Olweus' self-report questionnaires and peer nominations are the most widely used instruments to assess bullying. They provide participants with a standard definition and ask questions such as *'how often have you been bullied at school in the past couple of months?'* Cornell, Sheras and Cole (2006) suggest that because these instruments vary in how they define bullying, the wording of questions and the time frequencies, they produce differences in the prevalence of bullying. Furthermore, requiring children to read and write down their thoughts or tick boxes can restrict them from expressing their thoughts, for example, some children may not be skilled enough in their reading and writing to express their ideas.

The peer nominations approach firstly advocated by Salmivalli et al (1996) is a popular way of examining bullying from the child's perspective (Mishna 2004; Cornell, Sheras and Cole 2006). Pupils are given a list of all the pupils in their class and asked to nominate them as a *'bully'*, *'victim'*, *'reinforcer'*, *'defender'* or *'outsider'*; and how often they occupy this role from *'never to often'* (Salmivalli et al 1996). Wilkman (2005) argues that concepts such as *'often'* and *'sometimes'* can vary in meaning and from person to person. Robson (2002) asks how much pupils think about what is being asked, and how much people can access due to recall difficulties. There are also ethical issues concerning confidentiality and

these have been raised in the *Introduction*. Salmivalli et al (1996) asked children what kind of behaviour of the victim is perceived by peers as provocative or starting/continuing the bullying? This pre-empts a response from pupils that blames and stigmatises victims in a way that may not necessarily have occurred if it had not been asked. Troyna and Carrington (1989) criticise studies which can reinforce discrimination such as asking informants about typical characteristics of ethnic groups.

### **Child's Voice**

In 2000 Craig, Pepler and Atlas suggested that research on bullying has mainly been restricted to a focus on questionnaires, teacher reports and peer nominations, which provide restrictions in assessing situational variables. Myers (2006) argues that they limit the voice of participants and prevent new concepts from emerging. Terasahjo and Salmivalli (2003) state that there are few studies which focus on children's views on bullying. Recently there has been some shift towards studying bullying from a qualitative perspective, although the quantitative approach still tends to dominate. Bosacki, Zopito and Dane (2006) argue that focusing solely on the voice of pupils and not imposing definitions and restrictions on how people perceive bullying allows pupils to articulate perceptions that fall outside of preconceptions.

Recently there has been a strong children's voice initiative in schools and policy. The *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003) agenda places strong emphasis on the child's voice, and many schools have school councils and 'bully boxes' where children share their comments and concerns with teachers. However, Arnot and Reay (2007, p.324) discuss the complexity and '*slipperiness*' of how pupil voice is used. They argue that there is not one authentic voice of a single social category and voices are differentiated between space, time, relation and place.

To make this research more inclusive and enhance the voice of children who are often neglected, children from various educational settings were included and these were children: who had been permanently excluded

from school; from working-class state schools; and in a private school. Voices of both males and female were examined. In all secondary schools a minority of children attained five A-C GCSEs. Knipe, Reynolds and Milner (2007) and John (1996) found that the voices of excluded children were infrequently heard in discussions of exclusion. Munn and Lloyd (2005) argue that their voices can offer insights into the practical difficulties and professional ideologies of exclusion. It has also been found that children with learning difficulties are often excluded from research on bullying (Mishna 2003; Chan 2009). Children from private schools are not often involved in research on bullying either (Stoudt 2009). Byrne (2004) argues that qualitative research can be particularly beneficial to explore marginalised voices which they believe '*have been ignored, misrepresented or suppressed in the past*' (p.182). This is partly because qualitative research does not impose rigid boundaries on participants and open questions can encourage participants to take more direction in interviews.

Children ranging from ten to sixteen years of age were included. Christensen and James (2000) argue that the experience of being aged ten can vary across and between cultures. This calls into question the age as a dominant signifier. Solberg (1996) suggests research should explore '*doing rather than being*' (p.64). This implies that the focus should be on children's experiences rather than their age.

To enhance participants' voice, I informed children that there was '*no right or wrong answer*' and that it was their experience that was being sought. Because children were interviewed, who are potentially more vulnerable than adults, I took particular care in being sensitive to signs of distress. I tried to make children feel at ease, for example, giving them the most comfortable chair, and listened to them and making them feel their views were important. I also encouraged children to express their own thoughts and feelings, regardless of whether they agreed with my own. Participants from all setting levels were included. Interviews were used to focused on verbal interactions to prevent participants' expressions being

limited by their written ability, and participants were invited to share their thoughts and feelings of school. The number and range of participants interviewed are presented in table one and table two.

### *Children's Perspectives*

I focused on the perspectives of children rather than attempting to investigate whether or not accounts were true or false. Kitzinger (2004) suggests that what people say about their experience '*does not spring uncontaminated*' from an essential way of knowing (p.128). The experience of children was perceived as both a representation and part of the world, as suggested by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007). This research uses a Foucauldian perspective which takes into account conflicting perspectives and ambiguity. As Whyte (1980) suggests '*men can and do hold conflicting sentiments at any given time*' (p.117). People may try to present themselves in a positive light in the interviews. Goffman (1959) suggest that people are motivated in their actions to protect their self-esteem and appearances. From a Foucauldian perspective, it implies that several children may display powerful discourses and truths such as they '*don't bully*' rather than allowing people to exercise power over them by labelling them as bullies.

### **Ethical Issues**

Ethical issues were considered throughout all stages of the research. The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) and British Psychological Society (BPS, 2006; 2009) ethical guidelines were adhered to. The priority was to respect and protect each individual's interests, and treat them as a free, equal and rational agent (BERA 2004). This is partly reflected in the diverse range of children from various types of schools (state, private and a pupil referral unit). However, encouraging inclusivity brought along ethical issues which are discussed in this sub-section.

### *Ethical Planning Prior to Implementing Research*

Prior to the research being conducted, I read about ethical issues and discussed them in supervision, with parents and teachers. I also attended

training on ethics at university. In adherence with BERA (2004) and BPS (2006) ethical guidelines, the following issues were taken into account prior to the research being implemented:

- Confidentiality was maintained. The potential of having to waive confidentiality if bullying is severe was discussed.
- Potential for harm and informed consent. Children were informed that discussing sensitive issues may upset them and were informed of their rights to withdraw.
- Consent was sought from children and teachers who were in *loco-parentis* because children are a vulnerable group.
- The vulnerability of some children was discussed with teachers. In the two state schools, teachers informed me of how vulnerable some of the lower set children were and the additional stressors they had at home. I observed a lot of teasing in the lower sets which made me aware that there may be particularly heightened emotions and tensions in the focus groups. However, in the interest of inclusion, it was considered vital to involve these children. Although I also aimed to be vigilant, end the interview and debrief children if they experience distress. Potential harm was also safeguarded from by listening to children when they were upset, comforting them, and displaying empathy.
- Children, parents and teachers were debriefed about the interviews about the main aims of the research after the interviews had taken place.
- A key point of contact was made in a teacher/parent (in all of the educational establishments) of who to refer children to and inform should stress or potential harm arise. I also gave my contact details to teachers/parents. This is in adherence with recommendations from the BPS (2006) that participants must be informed of how they can contact the researcher within a reasonable time.
- Reflexivity: Although, ethical issues were planned prior to the research being implemented, it was expected that I would deal

reflexively with specific problems individually as they arise, since not all issues could be planned, as suggested by the BPS (2009).

### *Consent*

In all the interviews (focus groups and individual interviews), consent was voluntary, and gained from the children and an adult who was a parent/guardian or in *loco parentis* (head-teacher/head of year/deputy-head), as suggested by BERA (2004). Consent was perceived as an on-going negotiation between the participant and researcher (BERA 2004; BPS 2006). Consent for observations in the school was not sought from individual pupils because observations did not particularly interfere with them going about their everyday experiences and children were observed in places where it was expected that other people such as teachers could observe them.

The BERA (2004) and BPS (2006) guidelines specify that participants should be informed of the aims of the investigation and all aspects of the research which might influence their willingness to participate before seeking consent. I informed children that the research was on their experience of school and bullying. It was thought that this would provide them with an idea of what to expect in the group discussion. I also informed them their interviews would be recorded and transcribed, and some of their statements would be published, but their names or school would not be mentioned and I cannot directly inform their teachers of what has been said.

### *Informed Consent about Potential Harm*

The BPS (2009) recommends that participants are given opportunity to understand the nature, purpose and anticipated consequences of any research. It recommends that researcher attempt to resolve dilemmas with reflection, supervision and consultation. I discussed with supervisors, teachers and parents that interviews about bullying may cause distress to children. However, it was agreed that I would be sensitive to distress, inform children about potential harm, right of withdrawal, and debrief them

(comfort children, leaving my contact details and sign-post them to an adult to discuss further issues should children feel distressed) to help eliminate these potential problems. The teachers and parents generally believed that it would be beneficial for children to discuss matters that directly concerned them. Some teachers/parents asked to be informed about the issues discussed. However, I reminded them that all data are confidential, unless children are at risk of harm.

The BPS (2006; 2009) states that researchers should assess risk prior to the research and inform participants of these to gain consent. When unusual discomfort, or other negative consequences might occur, the investigator must inform participants clearly of these additional risks prior to consent. Prior to the interviews, it was explained to children how discussing issues of bullying and sensitive issues may be distressing and make them feel uncomfortable. I discussed with children what distressing things might happen in the group interview (and individual interview) and agreed with children on some '*ground rules*', for example, confidentiality. I also informed them that discussing sensitive issues such as bullying could upset them. Children were reminded that they could decline to answer questions, end the tape and exit the interview at any time, and request that their data be destroyed. Children were also informed that they would be debriefed at the end of the interview.

Many participants were enthusiastic and spoke openly and at length about experiences in school that concerned them. However, one boy in the PRU asked for the audio recorder to be stopped, between ten and fifteen minutes into the interview. Consequently, the tape was stopped and I asked for consent to take some notes and if the data still could be used. The boy gave his consent. Although he did not have to give an explanation for his withdrawal, he said he didn't like the sound of the tape.

#### *Risk of Harm?*

The BERA (2004) and BPS (2006) ethical guidelines state that researchers have a primary responsibility to protect participants from

physical and mental harm and the risk of harm should be no greater than in ordinary life. The probability and level of harm arising from participation in this research was arguably no greater than children's everyday school life. It provided the opportunity to discuss bullying in an open and supportive way and could have been cathartic. It also focused on the common, mundane and everyday experiences of bullying rather than the serious cases and so it was expected that there was less chance of children being distressed by the interviews. This was particularly for the focus groups which involved general discussion of school and bullying, whereas the purpose of the individual interviews were to examine these experiences in more in-depth.

I did not expect children in the focus groups to discuss personal experiences of severe bullying. However, I was aware that some children might do this and was vigilant that if a child started to reveal a lot about their experiences of bullying then I would offer empathy and observe how other children behaved. If children ridiculed another child then I intervened by discussing how distressing experiencing bullying can be, how many people are affected by it and offer support by discussing my own experiences. I also attempted to distract children by following-up other conversations that were often discussed such as boredom. Using children from vulnerable groups created complex issues about children's ability to understand the nature and consequences of the study. When I discussed with children potential harm, withdrawal and debriefing, I used my experience as a teacher to discuss these matters at a level appropriate to their understanding.

It could be argued that children were of particular risk of harm in the focus groups since some of them were being teased. In all, except one of the focus groups, children were interviewed with pupils in the same form. Since children are already together in their form, regardless of whether they get along, interviewing them together was not out of the ordinary and fulfilled an aim of the research of examining their everyday experiences and interactions. However, from observing children, I was aware that

there was some hostility and tensions between some, and it was expected that these conflicts may be present in the focus groups. Discussing bullying might also further exacerbate conflicts already in the group and potentially harm children. However, to discriminate against children with learning difficulties by excluding them could be considered as unethical. It would also reduce the validity of this research. To counteract unpleasant interactions in the focus groups, having a researcher present meant that the group of children were directly supervised (unlike in the playground).

### *Inclusivity*

Articles three and twelve of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)* were adhered to. Article twelve specifies that children who are capable of forming their own views will be granted the right to express these in all matters affecting them. In compliance with article three, the best interest of the child was of primary consideration. The BPS (2009) recommends that researchers evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of various courses of action of those likely to be affected. Prior to the research being conducted it was discussed with the deputy-head in the state school whether to include children in the lowest set, because of their additional difficulties. I expressed that I wanted my research to be inclusive and did not want to exclude people because of their disability and that excluding them might be a strategy of people in authority preventing children with learning difficulties from expressing their voice. It was agreed that I could interview them although I would be particularly sensitive to this and adhere to follow ethical requirements such as debriefing. This is also in adherence with the recommendation from the BPS (2009) to avoid practices that are unfair and prejudice. I also aimed to be inclusive by encouraging all children to participate in the focus groups, for children to not interrupt one another and involve quieter children. However, even in focus groups where children appeared to get along well, conflicts were present. Wayne said he was '*picked on*' by a child who was in his focus group. Although he didn't label this as bullying, it made me aware that even when children experienced characteristics of

bullying they were not always obvious. This implies that in any focus group, bullying could be present.

### *Comforting Children*

BERA (2004) recommends that researchers recognise that participants may experience distress or discomfort and take necessary steps to reduce intrusion and put them at ease. I took measures throughout the interview to ensure children were not exposed to bullying. When one child commented that she used to get called '*pooh skin*', I said '*you're the same colour as me*'. When three children in a focus group said '*I feel thick/I'm thick*' I said, '*I've spent time with you and I think you're all clever in some ways*.' This demonstrates that the focus groups provided a comfortable and supervised environment. This can also be used to explain why some children who were vulnerable/experienced teasing occasionally received some support from other children in the focus groups.

BERA (2004) specifies that researchers must desist from any actions ensuing from the research process that cause emotional or other harm. The BPS (2006) recommends that researchers should make clear at the earliest opportunity the conditions under which the research may be terminated and terminate services when participants do not appear to be deriving benefit. In the third focus group with the lowest class in Woodlands School, children often called each other names. At first it was unclear to what extent this was '*normal*' and '*just a joke*' (it was frequent throughout the observations) or if it was bullying. As the focus groups progressed, and some children displayed distress, I realised it was bullying. The BPS (2009) suggests that researchers develop alternative courses of action in the light of contextual factors. Consequently, I spoke to children about the negative effects of this behaviour and how distressing it can be. I asked children to stop this and informed them that if it continued the interview would be terminated. However, children requested that I continue with the interview:

*I: "I think we're going to have to end this very soon"*

*R and V: No*

*R: No, us two are alright, it's them two who are messing about and he best get off my feet now*

*V: Can we be quiet and listen and can we do it [the focus group] every Thursday?"*

When the name-calling and teasing worsened, despite some of the children's pleas to continue, I turned the tape off, stopped the interview and debriefed the children. One child, Rachel, said that the constant teasing in her class made her feel suicidal. When Rachel was asked if the interview was causing her distress, she explained that it wasn't the interview as such but her constant experiences of teasing. The debriefing session allowed me to support Rachel to confront her feelings. Please see the debriefing section for further details.

### *Reflexivity*

In retrospect, I didn't expect there to be quite so many problems in the lowest set, and although I tried to take the role as a responsible adult, I was disappointed by how difficult it was for me to handle. Although children asked me to continue with the interview I decided that it was in their best interest to end the interview, speak to the deputy-head about this and debrief them. It is difficult to say whether I would do this again because there were some instances where the group dynamics were difficult to manage. Even though in the planning of this research I was aware that there were problems in the lower class, I did not want to exclude this group, just because of potential difficulties. If I were to do the focus groups again I would use a smaller group and have another adult present, for example, a teaching assistant. However, out of the ten focus groups there was only one that had to be ended. In retrospect, I would have ended the interview earlier. I did not expect there to be so many issues of bullying. However, I tried to deal reflexively with ethical issues as they started to occur. After the focus group which had to be terminated, I was careful to monitor children's interactions in the next ones. I became cautious about using focus groups with children who are

experiencing problems in their classroom relations, and ensured I did not use them in the PRU.

### *Confidentiality*

As specified in BERA (2004) and BPS (2006), data is confidential and no identifying information including children's names and schools are shared with a third party. All data is anonymised throughout the thesis and in any subsequent writing or publication. This includes individual names of children (children are given pseudonyms), school and class. Information such as quotations were not directly reported back to children and teachers in their school. Interview transcripts are kept in a secure environment throughout the period of the research and afterwards. In the individual interviews, I informed children that their data would not directly be reported back to teachers and other children. Although in the focus groups children could potentially inform other children of personal and sensitive information discussed. However, children were informed, prior to the interviews being implemented, not to discuss issues raised outside of the focus group and to maintain confidentiality. I was aware that in cases where children or others are at risk of serious harm then confidentiality may need to be waived (BERA 2004; BPS 2006). On one occasion, in an observation, I became aware of some children in year seven being violent to another boy and reported this to the head of year.

### *Debriefing*

BERA (2004) and BPS (2006; 2009) guidelines specify that it is good practice for researchers to debrief participants at the outcomes and nature of the research. This is to identify any unforeseen harm, discomfort or misconceptions and arrange for assistance as needed. I fed-back to teachers and parents that the study was about where bullying exists in children's everyday experiences, and teachers/parents were informed of the main preliminary findings in the study, for example, that a lot of children are teased and experience some form of bullying that upsets them in school.

BPS (2006) guidelines specify that it is important to refer clients to alternative sources of assistance so they can have a follow-up conversation with an individual who could help them after data collection. I gave parents and teachers my contact details and also of a teacher at their school (who I had organised the data collection with). I advised children to contact the teacher, should any problems arise from the research and told the teacher to contact me so I was aware of this. The BPS (2006) recommends that researchers should discuss with participants their experiences of taking part to access possible misconception of negative effects. I asked children how they felt after the interview and if they felt distressed. Throughout the interview, I remained vigilant to signs of distress and provided a more intensive debriefing for children who appeared to be experiencing severe bullying. In the focus group where there appeared to be lots of teasing, I explained how distressing bullying can be.

Towards the end of this interview one girl (Rachel) was in tears and reported feeling suicidal because of the name-calling in her class. Consequently, the interview was ended and the tape was turned off. I explained to children how much their behaviour was upsetting people and advised them to consider the influence their behaviour has on others. Rachel was given the opportunity to express how she felt and I supported children to listen to her in a supervised environment. Children apologised to Rachel and they reflected on their behaviour stating that they had not realised how upset they had made her.

After the interview, I spent time alone with Rachel and told her not to contemplate taking her life as she has so much to live for and to tell an adult, parent or teacher when she is upset. Rachel said that she felt better that children had listened to her and apologised, and said would speak to her parents and would not contemplate suicide. I also ensured she was not upset when she left the room. I informed the deputy-head and a teaching assistant who worked with the class about these issues and reminded them to keep me informed should children display signs of

distress after data collection. They said they would speak to the children. After the initial debrief, when I contacted the schools and parents a week later, they assured me that children were not distressed by the interviews.

In all the interviews where it appeared that children were being bullied, I talked to them about bullying after the interview. A quiet room was provided to make children feel safe and so I could give them reassurance. Some children asked to remain with me after the interview, particularly children who were having problems with other children. Attempts were made to raise children's self-esteem by advising them not to believe all the negative things the bully had said about them or feel inferior. I displayed empathy by explaining how upset and afraid I was when I got bullied to support children who were upset.

#### *Potential Benefits: Talking about Bullying*

It could be argued that more good than harm was done in these interviews. From the observations, it became apparent that teachers rarely discussed bullying with children, and these tensions were often repressed. It was therefore unsurprising that these tensions were present in the interview. However, discussing these issues gave children the opportunity to release their feelings and tensions in a supportive and supervised environment. They provided the opportunity for children to talk about distressing experiences that were present, but rarely talked about. Zerubabel (2006) suggests that silence can result in loneliness and isolation. He argues that by not talking about problems we may make them worse because we do not confront them. This implies that bullying should be discussed in order to be dealt with.

Zerubabel (2006) also argues that open communication brings us closer. Discussing bullying in the focus group raised awareness to children and myself of how unacceptable these behaviours are and children were given the chance, with my support to speak to other children about they felt. Discussing bullying in the focus groups may have brought children 'closer'

by encouraging them confide in each other, for example, children apologised to Rachel when they noticed she was upset.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

Data collection first started out broad and informal and then become more focused and concrete. It consisted of observations, focus groups and individual interviews.

#### *Purpose of Observations*

I firstly used observations to collect data. This was based on the premise that, it was worthwhile to speak informally to children so that I could ask them meaningful questions in interviews. By observing and interacting with children I built up familiarity and trust. I could also observe a multitude of events at once, for example, what children do and say whilst the teacher is talking. Observations enabled an exploration into natural behaviour and conversation first hand in naturally occurring settings and as it occurred, producing data on mundane and lived experiences that is high in ecological validity, as recommended by Besag (2006). Field notes were recorded in the way suggested by Silverman (2005), where short notes were taken during the observation and expanded afterwards. A journal was made to record problems and ideas, and a provisional running record of analysis and interpretation was recorded. Observations were also used to develop a thematic framework of what themes in interviews I should cover. I initially expected observations to have a large role; inform me of people's beliefs and behaviours; and that multiple methods would provide different aspects bullying, as suggested by Hammersley (1992). The expanded field notes were so detailed that they took several hours to write up. However, as data collection progressed, it was decided that because they were partial, they were a useful starting point but were not the focus of the research. However, observations enabled me to 'feel' some of children's experiences and develop empathy. I often heard children talk about being bored and when I was sitting in class with children I began to experience boredom and what it felt like: frustrating, distressing and trapped. I also became aware of how my behaviour

started to change whilst I was bored: sighing, tapping my leg, feeling frustrated, wanting to leave the classroom and doodling. I also noted other children doing the same. However, without asking children about it, I could not be sure that my interpretation about their behaviour was correct and I did not want to project my feelings onto them. It was vital that interviews followed observations and that I spoke to children in a more formal way. To enhance the credibility of the field notes I have included an example of one in the *Appendix B*, so that the reader can formulate their own opinion of the credibility of the observations, as suggested by (Bryman 1988). Because observations were just a recording of my perspective, only a minority of notes from the observations are in the *Findings and Analysis* chapter and the data analysis consisted mainly of data in the interviews.

#### *Focus of Observations*

Observations focused on children's daily experiences of school and how they interacted with other children and their teachers, rather than pedagogy. Observations involved sitting with children in lessons and being present at break and lunchtime. Many children showed interest and preferences for me such as saving me a seat, asking to spend break/lunch-time with me, and confiding in me for example about their thoughts and feelings about their friends and teachers. The way I worked with children was determined by the context in which the data was gathered; it was easier to interact with children who were not sitting in silence whilst the teacher was talking, although this gave me the opportunity to sit away from the children to observe and capture the '*bigger picture*'. In the observations, I made brief notes of their interactions and events that happened in the classroom and playground. I also explored interactions that I thought would be notable to follow-up, for example, when children teased each other and called each other names and I recorded what these names were. Conducting observations that mostly lasted for the school day meant that they focused on children's mundane experiences.

### *Familiarity in Schools*

Apart from Woodlands and the snowball sample, I had worked briefly in the schools where I collected data as a supply teacher/teaching assistant. The issues arising from this are discussed in the next paragraph. In Northfield, I collected data from year sevens who started attending the school when I finished teaching there; to my knowledge these pupils were not aware that I had worked there. In the private school, I taught in the sixth form for three and a half weeks and did some cover work, and I was not aware of having taught any of the children I interviewed. I had worked previously in the PRU for a couple of months. In the snowball sample, I interviewed children who I knew, or who knew children I knew. Overall, these matters did not appear to have a strong or adverse impact in how the children confided in me, this can be demonstrated by the rich and informative data in the next chapter. If any familiarity with children had an impact, it appeared to be in the PRU, since I did my observations a couple months after I had worked for three days a week as a teaching assistant with them for a few months. Hammersley (1990) argues that '*when the setting is familiar the danger of misunderstanding it is great*' (p.8). However, observing all the children prior to interviewing them was partly built on the premise that it would '*break the ice,*' and build up familiarity and trust. Atkinson and Hammersley (1994, p.249) refer to four problematic features of fieldwork identity:

1. Whether the researcher is known by all of those being studied, by some or none. I was more familiar to some children than others. The children who I interviewed who I had not met before still confided in me and having interviewed someone else who they knew may have helped with this. In the PRU, a minority of children asked if I would tell the teacher what they had said. Because I was a teaching assistant previously (I provided general cover for someone who was on sickness leave) they may have seen me as a position of authority and not confide in me. However, because I was a teaching assistant I had taken a more distant and less authoritative role than a teacher. I reminded and

reassured them that their interviews were confidential. These children were still open with me, for example, a boy informed me that he had been '*set on fire*' in the PRU and another child spoke fondly of when I worked there.

2. How much, and what is known about the researcher and by whom. Being familiar with some of the children meant that they knew some general things about me such as my age and the town where I lived. This made me more familiar and human to them, rather than being completely detached. It was hoped that trusting relationships would develop since I had shared some information about myself.

3. What sorts of activities are and are not engaged in by the researcher in the field, and how this locates them in relation to the participants' group. Whilst I was collecting data I did not teach children, so they may not have seen me in the same position of authority as a teacher. However, when they asked for help with their work I gave it.

4. What the orientation of the researcher is and how completely they adopt the orientation of insider or outsider. Some children were curious about my role; one child asked '*are you here cos you're only young?*' When I explained that I was observing children for my research, he asked '*are you an inspector?*' Being a female and quite young at the time (I was 28 and 29) I don't think the children saw me in a strong position of authority, particularly since I did not give them orders of what to do or '*told them off*', and spent time with them at break. One child distinguished my behaviour from other teachers '*you never tell us off for swearing like the other teachers*'.

#### *Findings of Observations and Focus Group Themes*

The findings of the observations were used to develop themes and questions to be investigated in the focus groups. The thematic headings in the focus groups included: '*general thoughts of school*', '*grading/setting, discipline/control*' and '*bullying*'. The '*general thoughts of school*' theme

developed from observing that children often commented on their thoughts and feelings of school, one question on the interview schedule was *'what do you think of school?'* The *'grading/setting theme'* developed from observing that children frequently discussed if children were *'swots'* or *'thick'*. This appeared to be important and influenced how children interacted with one another. The *'discipline/control'* theme concerned issues such as punishment, which was often discussed by children, and how children reacted to the authority of the teacher. It also included a question on boredom *'do you ever get bored at school?'* *'Bullying between pupils'* was also a theme. In the observations, I witnessed lots of name-calling and one question in the focus group interview schedule was *'what name calling have you heard in school?'* As these interviews progressed and children openly discussed name-calling, I proceeded to ask more specific questions on name-calling such as *'why do people call each other names?'*

#### *Purpose of Focus Groups*

Focus groups opened up the topic and allowed for an exchange of ideas and opinions (Knipe, Reynolds and Milner 2007). Although Rubin and Rubin (1995) argue that people may not be open in focus groups, as Scott (2000) found, in these focus groups, with the right encouragement children expressed their thoughts, and most talked openly and enthusiastically. Focus groups were also used to examine the way children interacted with one another. Mixed gender focus groups also allowed the ways females and males interact to be examined. Please see *Appendix C* for the focus group interview schedule and *Appendix F* for a transcript of a focus group interview.

#### *Constructing Individual Interview Schedules*

The findings from the focus groups were used to develop a thematic framework for the individual interviews. Interviews seek to access the lived experience of people by researchers listening in-depth (Nunokoosing 2005; Bosacki, Zopito and Dane 2006). It has been argued that questionnaires are better at dealing with sensitive topics due to a lack of

direct contact (Robson 2002). However, in the interviews participants were given '*space to talk*' and interviews were flexible enough to focus specifically on their experiences especially where sensitive questions are asked (Fontana and Frey 2000; Rapley 2004). Semi-structured interviews were used to hone in on the experiences that were relevant to participants (O'Kane 2000). They allowed for some consistency in areas covered but also considerable freedom in the amount of attention given to different topics. Semi-structured interviews were preferred over unstructured interviews to avoid participants talking on a tangent about issues that have little relevance to the research question. Open-ended, semi-structured interviews were more responsive to the participants rather than the researcher's agenda, and a guide rather than a structured format (Rubin and Rubin 1995; Wilson 1996; Robson 2002).

Byrne (2004) argues that open-ended interviews can achieve more depth and complexity than surveys. One question that could be raised in this research is, why not use questionnaires or surveys? Multiple-choice questionnaires are often used to research bullying where categories are provided by the researcher for the participants to choose. This method restricts responses by assuming that the definitions can be broken down into categories, which are accurate and agreed with by participants (Cullingford and Brown 1995). Cicourel (1964) argues that standardised questions can create detachment from how people think so they often lack ecological validity. Whereas open-ended and flexible questions encouraged children to exercise their voice, rather than restrict it. For example, when a participant told me that a boy had been beaten up, I asked him what had happened rather than sticking rigidly to the interview schedule. Because bullying was perceived as a subjective experience, it influenced the way interviews were conducted; for example, in some interviews children spoke mainly about teased by pupils others spoke mainly about being '*unfairly punished*'. This resulted in varied interview transcripts and interview questions as they represented the different perspectives and experiences of children. Because of this, some interviews may appear to be very different to each other since follow-up

questions emerged spontaneously in reaction to the participants' comments, as suggested by (Marvasti 2004). Silverman (2006) also suggests that interviewers should go beyond questions in an unforeseen way to enhance the credibility and thoroughness of this research. I used reflexivity to cater the questions to the participant's responses and referred to the interview schedule less as I became more familiar with it. To some extent, similar themes were raised, although some children placed more importance on them than others, for example, violence, teasing and boredom were discussed by most children.

### *Following up Questions*

Sometimes, as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (1995), the emotional tone was pursued rather than the content of the answer such as '*how does that make you feel?*' to examine their feelings and emotions, which were considered to be relevant issues when investigating bullying. It also helped participants feel the interview was more natural, and they had some control. I informed participants that I wanted to ask them about their experience of school and discuss issues such as bullying. To clarify matters, I asked participants if they had any questions prior to and after the interview. I attempted to build rapport by asking how they were. I informed children at the beginning of the interview that there were no right or wrong answers and that I wanted to ask them about their thoughts and feelings. I used various prompts and follow up questions to derive more in-depth information as suggested by Robson (2002), for example, when children talked about boredom, I asked them what it felt like. Occasionally I shared my own experiences with participants to encourage them to continue, as suggested by Seidman (1998), and help build up trust and an equal true-to life conversation. However, to avoid detracting attention from the interviewee, I did not talk about these issues at length. As recommended by researchers such as Rubin and Rubin (1995), interviews stopped when theoretical saturation was achieved, whereby data confirmed analysis rather than added anything new to the research. This occurred after six focus groups in state schools (four in Woodlands and two in Northfield), four focus groups in private school and twelve individual

interviews each in state schools, private school and a PRU (36 in total). Please see *Appendix D* for the individual interview schedule in the PRU and *Appendix E* for the interview schedule in the state schools' sample and private school. Please see *Appendix G* for a transcript of an individual interview in the PRU, *Appendix H* for a transcript of an individual interview in the private school, and *Appendix I* for a transcript of an individual interview in the snowball sample.

### *Details of Observations and Interviews*

In Woodlands School, five observations were made. All these observations involved children from different forms of year seven classes (highest ability class, second highest, middle, second lowest and lowest class) and lasted the school day. Four focus groups were also implemented. I chose the people in the focus groups, and who were mostly people I had got to know through the observations. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Despite the natural setting of observations, most of this research is concerned with interviews, since they can provide less subjective data. Silverman (2006) suggests that, in contrast to field notes, researchers can return to transcripts and audio recordings as they develop new hypothesis and recordings can be replayed. Sacks (1984) argues that we cannot rely on our notes or recollections of conversations and it is impossible to remember the actual sequence of talk. Transcribing interviews can also be considered as '*research activities*'. Silverman (2005) suggest that it involves close, repeated listening to recordings to reveal previous un-noted features. Others can also read transcripts and decide whether they agree with the interpretation (Sacks 1992). This is in contrast to observations where the reader only has access to the notes and interpretations of the researcher.

In all interviews, apart from Northfield (where I was not given permission to record interviews), all interviews were transcribed. Silverman (2005) argues that producing transcripts is not straightforward. When I transcribed the interviews, I attempted to write down word for word what children had said. I also noted down pauses but only when they were

significantly long. There were some difficulties with audio recording multiple voices in focus groups because people often talked over one another and it was not always possible to denote overlapping voices. However, as recommended by Silverman (2005), I transcribed what I heard as faithfully as possible. In the transcripts, I initially included quite a lot of accented talk, particularly in the first interviews. However, when I presented some of the data at conferences, some people said they did not know what some words meant. Consequently, as I wrote up my chapter I used more standard English, apart from when it appeared to be important not to. Although interview transcripts were not perfect, they adequately served their purpose and captured sufficient details for analysis, as suggested by Silverman (2005). Transcripts were improved, for example, when a couple of sentences appeared to be significant but I did not understand some words, I listened to that part of the tape again slowly to try to understand these words, as recommended by Sacks (1992).

In Northfield School, I observed children four times. I observed the '*Learning to learn*' lesson which lasted from morning until to lunchtime. I mainly observed one class (middle set) but it was combined twice with another of slightly lower ability (middle/lower set). On two occasions, I also observed the highest set in the afternoon. For the focus groups, the teacher asked the class who wanted to be interviewed about bullying and what they thought of school, at which point a boy said '*bad*' and the teacher replied '*excuse me*'. This gave children the impression that it was unacceptable for them to say anything negative about school. This is discussed further in the '*why not teachers?*' sub-section. That boy did not volunteer but twelve other children raised their hands out of 22, and I interviewed these in two focus groups. The two focus groups lasted fifteen minutes because I waited almost two hours into the lesson before the teacher gave permission for the focus groups to begin, and the interviews took place behind a curtain in the school hall whilst the two classes made rockets. Although I was given initial permission to record the interviews, on the day I was asked by the class and deputy head-teacher not to

record the interviews. I took notes which were typed up immediately afterwards.

In the private school, four observations of the year seven classes were implemented. They lasted the entire school day (highest set, second highest set, second to lowest set and lowest set), apart from the last class (second highest set), which, following instruction by the head of year seven, I observed in the morning and then interviewed the children in the afternoon. Four focus groups were then carried out and teachers chose who would be interviewed. Pupils in all of the four setting levels were interviewed in the focus group and individual interviews (highest, lowest, middle lowest and middle highest). Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

In the PRU, I had worked temporarily as a teaching assistant. Having worked there previously enabled me to become more familiar with participants before I interviewed them. I was granted permission by the head-teacher to make notes of my observations to develop a thematic framework for the interviews whilst I worked there. The pupils who were interviewed were volunteers in years ten and eleven. Because of the difficulties in the PRU with group interactions only individual interviews were used. Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

The snowball/opportunity interviews consisted of ten people. Some of these children lived locally and one participant was a daughter of a family friend who helped recruit more participants. I also interviewed two boys who I privately tutored for English and one of these boy's sisters. These children were useful sources of information and I could build on the relationship that had already been formed with some children. They were also available and accessible to me (opportunity sample). Only one female in this sample was at primary school. The other participants were at secondary school and ages ranged from ten to fifteen years.

Interviewing children outside the school environment created a more relaxed atmosphere and resulted in children from three more schools being involved. Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

## **Sampling Process**

### *Selection of Participants*

57 participants across schools were interviewed in the focus groups (26 males, 31 females) and 32 participants were interviewed in the individual interviews (eighteen males, fourteen females). In total (focus groups and individual interviews) 84 children were interviewed. When I contacted six schools to ask permission to collect data in their schools three schools declined: one school did not reply, one deputy head-teacher refused, and another emailed me to tell me that they were too busy.

Participants were selected from six schools: four secondary state schools, one private school (secondary) one PRU (secondary) and one pupil was from a primary state school, the age of participants ranged from ten to sixteen years. The district in West Yorkshire where all the schools were from is predominantly working-class and, apart from the private school (and the primary school), the schools had a GCSE pass rate below national average.

The primary school was also in a predominantly working-class area but since it was a snowball sample, I am unsure of the exact details of the primary school and the two state schools because I did not visit them. The private school was quite prestigious but not the most prestigious one in the area. It appeared to have a good reputation for sports and most children lived within a seven mile radius. Children in the state schools often lived in the town or village in which the school was located and most others lived no further than three miles away. Children in the PRU were from different parts of the district in West Yorkshire and most travelled between nought to nine miles.

### *Purposive Sampling*

Purposive sampling was primarily used to recruit participants where people most relevant to the research question were used, as suggested by Mason (1996). Silverman (2006) states that it is important not to impose unnecessary parameters that might restrict sampling. Although some sampling could have arguably been considered an opportunity sample, there was rationale behind selecting the people who were interviewed. Examining year seven pupils (aged eleven to twelve) starting secondary school enabled an exploration of what children had learned and were learning about the norms of secondary school and using focus groups and observations at another secondary school added depth to this. Again, the focus was on the year sevens. It was the age at which it was felt that, as Scott (2000) asserts, most children are fully able to articulate their perceptions and beliefs. However, considering that a child from primary school was used and the sample ranged between children aged ten to sixteen, quantitative issues such as age were not the main focus on selecting participants. Instead, the focus was on the perspectives of children.

Using different participants (for example, children in the highest, middle and lowest set classes) from different settings (state schools, a private school and a PRU) deepened and broadened understanding, as suggested by Garratt and Hodkinson (1998). It also was used to explore interrelations between groups (Silverman 2006). This limited subjectivity and bias as the researcher learned to empathise with different perspectives and ensure certain accounts are not privileged (Rubin and Rubin 1995). Using pupils from the PRU derived partly from listening to participants discuss children who were excluded from school, as suggested by Silverman (2006). They were also coming to the end of their schooling so it enabled an exploration into their reflections of school as they were preparing to leave.

The private school was the only school that I returned to after the focus groups. Woodlands School did not get back to me to arrange the individual interviews. At Northfield, it became difficult to collect my data. This is because the focus groups were done on a stage behind a curtain where two classes were doing activities, this compromised the participants' confidentiality. The school did not allow me to record children and did not give me enough time to do thorough focus groups. The deputy-head teacher also said he was not sure whether they wanted me to return because he needed to be clearer about exactly what I was doing. It seemed as if teachers had become wary of me. I decided not to request to return and that a snowball/opportunity sample would make it easier to reach the participants and better ensure their voice and confidentiality.

At Woodlands School, it appeared that once I had finished the focus groups and the deputy head-teacher had let me use his room for the day, he did not want to be inconvenienced by more interviews. In the last cycle of the focus groups, I broadened the age group of the participants and used a snowball sample. This was an opportunity and purposive sample because it valued the perceptions of children above their age or school. I interviewed children who were available and whose parents gave them permission to be interviewed. This consisted of children from three more schools (two state schools and one primary) in a more informal setting of their own homes which offered a more informal and less restricted setting than school. An example has been described of how a teacher may have influenced the type and number of participants in Northfield School. In the snowball sample, I was not associated with any school, neither did I know any teachers there.

Interviewing a child from primary school contributed to the purposive sample whereby participants relevant to the research question were chosen. When I had interviewed a child from a state school, his mother suggested that I interview her daughter who was from primary school.

She mentioned that she has problems with her friends whereby they ostracise and tease one another. It seemed nonsensical to exclude her because she was at primary school, particularly since I was aware that issues of bullying within friendship groups had started to arise within my interviews.

### *Sampling: Group and Individual Interviews*

Some individuals interviewed within schools contributed to an opportunity sample because I worked in partnership with the schools and was constrained to the schooling timetable (and sometimes who teachers chose to be interviewed). In the private school focus groups, teachers chose the children who were interviewed. I am unsure of the exact criteria individual teachers chose for selecting participants but I was informed that in the private school the children in the lowest set had passed their French test. In the private school, the individual interviews were mainly conducted at lunchtime with volunteers. However, I chose the children who I interviewed in the Woodlands school and these were mainly children I had got to know through the observations.

In all focus groups, apart from one, children were interviewed with peers from their ability-streamed class. In the focus group where children were mixed ability, two children (one male and one female) were from the middle set and four children were from the highest set (two males and two females). This was because when I gave the deputy head-teacher a list of the participants who I would like to interview, he mixed them together as one focus group. On a practical level, this allowed an exploration into how children in different classes interacted with each other. This could have resulted in them being less open, but it did not appear to be the case. However, although issues of streaming were discussed in all focus groups, in the mixed-ability focus groups, children in the top set discussed more openly the ability and rewards of children in the middle/lower sets. Ethical issues have previously been discussed.

Occasionally, some participants were interviewed individually twice (one private school, two state school, and one pupil referral unit). Five pupils (three females and two males) who were interviewed in the focus groups of the private school were also interviewed in the individual interview. This was to develop emerging themes from the first interviews. Six participants in the group interview were not used in the individual interview and this broadened and verified themes beyond what might have occurred by interviewing the same people. Children who were interviewed twice were volunteers who had the opportunity (for example, a free lesson) and who I felt gave enough information for me to delve deeper into in a second interview. Only one boy requested to be interviewed twice who I refused because he was booked to have a session with a psychotherapist and I did not want to interfere with that.

#### *Why Not Use Teachers?*

The range of participants recruited from different institutional settings was taken at the expense of interviewing teachers. This enhanced understanding of children's perspectives and ensured that they were not compromised. Alderson (2000) states that '*children are the primary source of knowledge about their own views and experiences*' (p.253). This implies that to find out about children it is important to speak to them. I was also concerned that teachers may impose their voice on children, particularly since they were older and in more powerful roles. An example of how a teacher reprimanded and restricted a child's voice in Northfield School when he referred to school as '*bad*' has been discussed and demonstrates how teachers can restrict children's voices by their interpretation of what behaviours are acceptable. Because many people are silent about bullying and that some teachers may be concerned for the reputation of the school, some teachers may not be as open as children. Since this research focused on exploring the voice of the child it took measures to reduce elements which may compromise their voice, and one of these strategies was to avoid using teachers. However, there were

potential ethical issues with using children as the primary source to describe their world and these have been discussed.

It could be argued that using only children may provide a restricted way of examining the research question. However, this research aimed to explore children’s perceptions in-depth rather than broadly examining both teachers and pupils. To some extent, the teacher’s role was examined through the lens of the child, and children demonstrated a complex understanding of their perspective and position. It has also been found that teacher’s perceptions can significantly differ to pupil reports (Roland and Galloway 2002). Rather than comparing teachers’ and children’s views, this research was dedicated to analysing, in depth, the perceptions of children. Neither is it focusing on school documents explaining school policies of how things should be, but rather it is focusing entirely on how everyday experiences in school are perceived by children.

Table One demonstrates the number of interviews and participants (and their gender) in the focus groups:

**Table 1: Focus Groups, Participants, and their Gender**

<b>Education Establishment</b>				
	<b>Woodlands School</b>	<b>Northfield School</b>	<b>Private School</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b><i>Focus groups</i></b>	4	2	4	10
<b><i>Participants</i></b>	21	12	24	57
<b><i>Males</i></b>	11	3	12	26
<b><i>Females</i></b>	10	9	12	31

All participants were from year seven. Interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, apart from at Northfield where interviews lasted approximately fifteen minutes.

*Focus Groups to Interviews*

Learning difficulties: Children in the two lowest set classes in Woodlands School received support for their reading and writing through ‘nurture

classes', and many discussed having significant difficulties with reading and writing. Children interviewed in Northfield School were in the middle-lower group and were described by teachers as having difficulties learning information. In the private school, there was one child in the highest set who was in a class a year above his age group. All except one child were white. This reflected the demographics of the predominantly 'white' area where the research was conducted.

Table Two demonstrates the number of participants, age range and gender of individual interviews:

**Table 2: Number of Participants, Gender, and Age Range in Individual Interviews**

Education Establishment				
	Private School	PRU	Snowball Sample	Total
<b>Participants</b>	11 <i>(1 male interviewed 2x)</i>	11 <i>(1 male interviewed 2x)</i>	10 <i>(2 males interviewed 2x)</i>	32 <i>(4 males interviewed 2x)</i>
<b>Age Range (yrs)</b>	11-12	14-16	10-15	10-16
<b>Males</b>	5	8	5	18
<b>Females</b>	6	3	5	14

- Interviews lasted between ten and 60 minutes but most interviews lasted for 35-40 minutes.
- Interviews were recorded and transcribed.
- Children from three different schools were used in the snowball sample (two secondary state schools and one primary state school).
- In the private school interviews, five participants (three females and two males) were interviewed who had been previously interviewed in the focus groups.
- In the snowball sample, two people were interviewed at the same time.
- Setting levels of participants ranged from highest to lowest sets.

- Two of the males who had been interviewed twice were interviewed at the beginning of the study (prior to the observations) and a year later (whilst the snowball interviews were being implemented).
- All children in the individual interviews were white, reflecting the demographics of the area.

### *Learning Difficulties*

In the individual interviews, there were fifteen out of 32 participants who I am aware of who had learning difficulties:

- Private school: One male said he had difficulties with writing and received learning support.
- Snowball sample: Six children received support for their learning and were in the lowest classes (four males and two females), including one male who was officially diagnosed with dyslexia.
- PRU: Eight children had an identified learning difficulty:
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder four children (three males and one female); dyslexia (one male); statemented with learning difficulties (one male); diagnosed with learning difficulties I do not have exact details, but he referred to it as a '*mental block*' (one male); significant/severe reading and writing disability (one male).

### **Thematic Headings**

The findings from the focus groups and observations were placed into themed headings and questions to be developed further in the individual interview schedule. These themes are also in table three. See table four for themes and example questions that were used in the focus groups and individual interview schedules.

Using themes (headings and questions) developing from emerging findings from children ensured that that questions were rooted in the data, it also ensured the child's voice was present, although I interpreted their voice. The aim of the interview schedule was to encourage participants to address each of the themed-headings rather than rigidly follow each

question in the interview schedule. Themes were not raised in any particular order, this enabled the interview to be focused on the issues children raised rather than to impose a rigid structure onto them. However one of the first questions asked was *'what do you think of school?'*

**Table 3: Thematic Framework of Questions in Focus Groups and Individual Interviews**

Themes	Focus Groups	Individual Interviews	PRU Interviews
<b>General thoughts of School</b>	*	*	*
<b>Grading/Setting</b>	*	*	
<b>Discipline/Control</b>	*	*	*
<b>Bullying</b>	*	*	*
<b>Boredom</b>		*	
<b>Voice</b>		*	
<b>Ability/Value and Esteem</b>		*	*
<b>Development through School</b>		*	*
<b>Influence of School</b>			*
<b>Relationships</b>			*
<b>Agency</b>			*

- \*Indicates themes that were used in the interviews.
- Interview schedules were the same for private schools as state schools.
- The *'ability and esteem'* in the individual interviews was changed to *'value and esteem'* in the PRU interviews. Both focused on the effects of streaming and academic achievement, for example, *'do you feel clever at school?'* However, in the PRU children were not as overtly ranked through streaming, and this was explored in a more subtle way with questions such as *'do you feel valued?'*

**Table 4: Focus Group and Individual Interview Themes and Examples of Questions**

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Example Questions</b>
<b>General thoughts of School</b>	What do you think of school?
<b>Grading/Setting</b>	How do you feel about the sets you are in?
<b>Discipline/Control</b>	How do you think teachers control their class?
<b>Bullying</b>	Why do people bully?
<b>Boredom</b>	Do you get bored at school?
<b>Voice</b>	Do you feel important in school?
<b>Ability and Esteem</b>	Do you feel clever?
<b>Value and Esteem</b>	What do you think people expect of you?
<b>Development through School</b>	Are people kind to you?
<b>Influence of school</b>	What influence do you think being with all excluded pupils has on your behaviour?
<b>Relationships</b>	What do people think of you?
<b>Agency</b>	How do you feel when you look back on your years in school?

*Developing Themes from Focus Groups to Individual Interview Themes*

As data collection progressed from the focus groups to the individual interviews, the interview questions became more specific, as suggested by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007). In the individual interviews the theme of *'general thoughts of school'* remained. This was because in the group interviews children often commented on their thoughts of school, for example, *'boring'* and *'alright'*. It seemed useful to follow this up and see what other issues children discussed in the context of this response. The *'grading/setting'* theme extended from the finding in the observations and focus groups of how children distinguished one another on the basis of their ability and class, for example, highest and lowest set.

The theme *'discipline and control'* expanded on the focus group theme and focused on how teachers react to children's behaviour and how they are punished and rewarded in school. To expand on the findings in the focus groups, more specific questions were asked in the individual interviews. The *'bullying'* theme developed from the focus groups and

consisted of questions that focused on pupil-pupil bullying, with more specific questions in the individual interviews, for example, *'have you ever been bullied; what do teachers do when there is bullying?'* The *'voice'* theme was raised in the individual interviews with children from state and private school. It was associated with whether children felt they were listened to by teachers and this was often discussed in the focus groups.

*'Ability/value and esteem'* was concerned with how children perceived themselves as individuals such as if they felt clever, it expanded on the *'grading/setting'* theme by exploring how children felt about the way their ability was perceived. As previously discussed, in the PRU, questions on streaming were not as asked as overtly than in the other individual interviews. The theme *'boredom'* arose from the observations and the focus groups, as many pupils commented frequently on experiencing boredom and so it became a theme with a few questions, rather than just one question in the focus groups.

Because the experience of children excluded from school was observed to be different from that of those in mainstream schooling, slightly different themes for the interview were derived. The *'influence of school'* theme was used to examine the influence that being permanently excluded from school had on children, they often discussed this in the observations. The *'development through school'* theme emerged from the finding in the observations that, since the children were near finishing school, they often spoke about where they would *'end up'* and their what previous experiences of school. In the individual interviews, this theme focused on if they felt people cared for them in school, it was often raised in the focus groups. However, in the interviews, I rarely raised this theme since it was often mentioned implicitly throughout the interviews.

The *'relationships'* theme developed from observing that children in the PRU often talked how others perceived them, for example, if they were respected and this theme allowed this be further explored. In the PRU, I included *'agency'* as a theme. This seemed to be an important issue,

particularly since they were preparing to leave school and get a job and examined issues such as whether children felt they could improve their circumstances.

### **Validity in Qualitative Research**

Bloor (1997) argues that techniques to validate data are reflexive elaborations rather than 'tests'. Reflexivity was used throughout this research where I adjusted the way I did my research based on emerging findings whilst I was collecting and analysing data, for example with sampling, ethical issues, interviews and observations. However, this research went beyond reflection by using techniques such as analysing data line-by-line and using all interview transcripts to derive themes. Furthermore, as suggested by Silverman (2006) long extracts of data, questions that provoked answers and the context of which responses are often presented in the *Findings and Analysis* chapter to show the reader where the data came from. The Foucauldian perspective of examining multiple perspectives and complexities could also be considered as validating data where quotations which contradicted each other were also analysed.

Sparkes (1995) argues that narratives express the values of the narrator. Reissman (1993) and Cicourel (1964) raise questions concerning which quotations were chosen and which ones were left out because some voices have to be restrained and different interpreters allow different voices to dominate. However, quotations from all children in the individual interviews are used in the *Findings and Analysis* chapter. As suggested by Lundy (2007) a wide range of participants were used and not just the most articulate. For children who were not as articulate as others, I used certain techniques to ensure that we understood one another. I asked participants to explain their views to ensure I interpreted them accurately, refined/simplified questions if participants said they did not understand and often used language that children used rather than academic jargon. Collecting a wide range of interviews enabled an in-depth understanding

of bullying to be developed. Almost all participants in this study were of white/British ethnic origin and so it is limited in the extent it can be applied to understanding racial issues in bullying. However, issues of difference, segregation, and inclusion were examined and can be understood through the different groups that were explored.

### **Qualitative Research and Understanding Social Processes**

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) refer to '*legitimation crisis*' which '*makes problematic the traditional criteria for evaluating and interpreting qualitative research*' (p.17). Coffey and Atkinson (1996) suggest that qualitative data pays attention to detail and is used to develop theoretical ideas about social processes that go beyond the data. Silverman (2005) states that quantitative research aims for generalisability where the aim is to feel confident about the representativeness of the sample. However, generalisability is not regarded as an issue for qualitative researchers. Mason (1996) argues that qualitative research should provide explanations that have wider resonance. Flyvbjerg (2004) criticises debates about representativeness and argues that it is a mistake to assume that the further we move away from a specific case, the more valid is our knowledge. This overlooks the ability for qualitative research to give us insight into local practices.

Flyvbjerg (2004) argues that formal generalisations should not be overvalued. Single cases are crucial in attempting to refute initial hypothesis, like *Popper's* suggestion that the observation of a single black swan would be sufficient to falsify the generalisation that all swans are white. This implies that it is vital to explore cases of bullying which do not typically conform to traditional definitions and that examining exceptions is just as important as generalities. Flyvbjerg (2004) argues that the typical or average case is often not the richest in information. Atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information because they activate more actors and mechanisms in the situation studied. This implies that although this research is a smaller study than most positivistic approaches, it provides

rich and meaningful descriptions of everyday life and can be used to better understand it, rather than just attempting to generalise them.

### **Interpreting Data**

Data was analysed using qualitative analysis and a Foucauldian perspective. Bullying was investigated as a fluid and slippery concept that examines different cases individually with their ambiguities, complexities and contradictions. Different perspectives and severities of bullying were analysed and subjectivity was acknowledged. The characteristics of bullying in *Appendix A* were used as a guide of what experiences to pay attention to. This was used to investigate and conceptualise bullying beyond just repeating powerful discourses. It meant that experiences associated with bullying that are not classified by traditional definitions as bullying could be examined i.e. the 'grey' areas such as bullying between friends.

#### *Phase 1*

As soon as the interviews had been transcribed, I analysed the interviews line-by-line and wrote notes. After one year, I put the data into sub-themes (small initial themes), then themes (broader themes) and then thematic headings. The three thematic headings emerged of '*pupil-pupil bullying*', '*daily experiences in school*' (for example, teacher's role and intellectual ability) and '*autonomy*' (voice and agency). This ensured I had some '*critical distance*' and was used to discover new themes from the data that had not previously emerged, for example the finding that people bully to be popular.

When I placed the data into small themes (sub-themes) I went through each interview and noted down a sub-theme, a page and interview transcript of where they emerged. Examples of these sub-themes include being frightened, upset and angry. These were placed into the sub-theme '*feelings*', which went into the theme of '*forms and affects of bullying*' and went into the thematic heading '*pupil-pupil bullying*'. Children explained

that people bully to get attention and the bully has lots of *'friends,'* and these sub-themes were placed under the thematic heading of *'bullying achieves power over others'*. This larger theme was placed under the thematic heading of *'pupil-pupil bullying'*. The thematic heading of *'pupil-pupil bullying'* consisted of bullying that mainly involves pupils, and in its most traditional sense, for example teasing and ostracism. More systemic and *'grey'* areas of bullying went into the other two themes.

The second thematic heading was *'daily experiences within school'* and this focused on themes that were raised regarding school beyond pupil-pupil bullying and which appeared to be systemic such as *'boredom'*. There was a sub-theme for teachers picking children out which went under the theme of *'teacher's perceived abuse of power'*. Some pupils also spoke positively about teachers and themes such as *'friendship with teachers'* went under the *'teacher's role'* theme.

The third thematic heading was entitled *'autonomy'* and this concerned *'voice'* which was analysed as a by-product of children's experiences with schools and the extent to which children felt they could freely express themselves, it included the sub-theme *'restricted voice'*. It also included *'agency'* which involved examining the extent to which children exercised resistance and took into account how societal (for example, social class) and psychological (for example, intellectual ability) factors influenced agency. It included the sub-theme *'restricted agency.'*

### *Phase 2: Examining Themes*

Because a Foucauldian perspective argues against the use of binaries, the purpose of establishing themes was used to derive the main issues, for example, *'people get bullied for grassing'* and *'people bully because they are bored'*. These themes acted as an initial guide before data was analysed in a more intense way. They were not a rigorous, rigid and exhaustive coding criteria. Having a rigid and rigorous coding criteria would have been at odds with the Foucauldian perspective of examining

fluidity and not establishing rigid categories. As data analysis progressed, I explored the fluidity of these themes and the way they interweaved and overlapped, for example, the sub-theme '*hostility between groups*' (in the '*establishing order*' theme and '*daily experiences of school*' thematic heading) is inter-linked with '*pupil-pupil bullying*', for example, '*swots*' get bullied'. Please see *Appendix J* for these themes. This includes the thematic headings, themes, sub-themes and examples of the sub-themes.

When children felt upset when they experienced the characteristics of bullying in *Appendix A* then it was considered as bullying of some severity. For example, when children felt distressed because they were being teased, it was considered as bullying but when they did not then it was considered as a '*grey*' area. I analysed how a child could be bullied in different ways, for example, by other pupils (peers and older/younger children) and their teacher. Teachers could both bully and be bullied by pupils and the term '*picked on*' was often used to describe this. Systemic bullying focused on the effects of social and institutional factors in school, such as streaming. However, streaming was not automatically considered as bullying but when children felt distressed because of this then it was considered as bullying, for example, if they felt upset because they felt they were perceived as thick. To ensure the text was not fragmented by these themes, I returned to reading the interviews in their entire form so as not to separate the data from its context, as suggested by Gadamer (1979).

### *Phase 3: A Foucauldian Analysis*

When the above themes had been developed, a Foucauldian approach (1979; 1980) was used to analyse the findings in a theoretically framed way. This concentrated on his understanding of power, panopticism and normalisation. Power was examined in a fluid way that existed on different levels so that bullying between pupils; pupils and teachers and on a systemic level was investigated. This meant that everyday power struggles could be examined, such as where teachers can bully pupils and also where pupils can bully their teachers. Because a Foucauldian

perspective rejects binaries, it was used to examine complex relations and different severities of bullying that range from 'grey' experiences to those that are clearly bullying. Principles of panopticism and normalisation were applied to the data. From a Foucauldian perspective, although everyone is in the panoptic, their position varies and this influences how much power they can exercise and how closely observed they are. Through powers of normalisation, people are put into hierarchies and those who do not conform are subject to punishment and exclusion. This places them under increasing surveillance which subjects them to further punishment. This research examined how children's position in school influenced how they experienced bullying, such as social class.

This was used to understand the findings such as streaming, where people were put into hierarchies and children in the lower sets were most likely to experience exclusion and punishment, as suggested by Foucault (1979). When children were distressed by this it was considered as bullying, when they did not appear to be distressed by it, it was considered as a 'grey' area. Resistance was theoretically framed as being imbued within power and was analysed as being influenced by their position in the panoptic. The multiple forms of resistance and agency people exercised were also examined (Foucault 1980). One example of this is in the way children exercised voice. Those who openly disagreed with teachers exercised resistance but were usually punished and this subjected them to further surveillance and punishment. To avoid this, some children suppressed their voice and resisted punishment but they also became compliant. This is an example of how power inherent in bullying was examined in a way which could take into consideration systemic factors and how it did not have to be exercised to be effective, as a Foucauldian (1980) perspective implies. As Foucault (1980), suggests, this is power being exercised in its most 'ideal' form through observation and gaze. The weight of power was also examined whereby it was taken into consideration that the more people exercised power, the heavier it could throw its weight and this was used to analyse findings such as how people

can get bullied for 'grassing'. The most significant findings were: *inadequacy of current definitions; who is vulnerable to panopticism and normalisation?; boredom; popularity; positioning of the teacher; and resistance and autonomy.*

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed reflexively the methods used in this research. It has explained how qualitative techniques were used to investigate and push the parameters of how bullying is currently conceptualised. It has analysed how, exploring in-depth different individuals who have different perspectives and are from different backgrounds, can be applied to understand bullying in a way that is broader than traditional definitions and focuses more specifically on their individual experiences. It has discussed how data was analysed in order to explore experiences of bullying which are more complex, fluid and multi-faceted than the prevailing positivistic approach.

## CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the research findings. It discusses experiences of bullying which vary in severity. It analyses different forms of bullying: verbal (for example, name-calling), physical (for example, hitting), psychological (for example, humiliation), relational (for example, being ostracised). It also examined different modalities of bullying (pupil-pupil; pupil-teacher; and systemic). This research focused on what characteristics of bullying children experienced (for example that are in the *Appendix A*) rather than simply whether children labelled them as bullying. This meant that complex, messy and specific experiences were examined. This research acknowledges subjectivity and individual differences and resists a binary positivistic approach to understanding bullying.

### Understanding Bullying

These research findings demonstrate that bullying is difficult to neatly define. Although Chan (2009) argues that bullying is an '*elusive phenomenon which has defied attempts to define it*', there are several definitions of bullying, although the Olweus definition is most often used. However, this research demonstrates that this definition is problematic and is limited in addressing the mundane and everyday experiences of bullying which vary in severity, as suggested by Stein (2003) and Besag (2006).

Characteristics of bullying, such as teasing and humiliation were examined although not every single experience of these was automatically considered as bullying. Children's feelings were taken into consideration and some '*grey*' areas were identified. Teasing has long been associated with bullying (Burk 1897). For Olweus, teasing and name-calling has to be repeated, intentional and with a clear imbalance in power to be considered as bullying. However, as Morita (1996) argued, name-calling

can vary in severity ranging from *'having fun'* to making children feel suicidal. One girl in this research said she felt suicidal because she was called names, and this is further discussed in the *Methodology* chapter. This also demonstrates that individual differences and feelings are important:

*"There's boys bullying me... [they] call me names all the time."*

(Nicole, year 10, Parklane School)

*"A bit of name calling but...not really bullying."*

(Paul, year 7, private school)

Several children reported feeling upset because of name-calling. Melanie was upset when Lee *'took the piss'*, although she laughed and retaliated. Because Melanie was upset by the teasing, it was considered as bullying:

*I: "Do you think there's bullying in this school?"*

*M: No, nothing at all. I think everyone has a laugh with each other, it's like with me and Lee Baker he'll take piss out of me, I'll take piss out of him but we always end up laughing about it ...Only thing pisses me off is Lee Baker, all he does at school is 'my mum's bought me this, my mum's bought me other. He'll always say it to me, and I just sit there upset and keep it inside. 'Well what does your mum buy you, fuck all?', and he'll know he'll be winding me up but I won't bite on that, if I do I'll honestly just kick and punch him... so I turn around, 'well you're a spoilt little bastard aren't you?'. He goes 'I'd prefer to be spoilt than not spoilt' and I'll just fuck it me and I'll just start laughing."*

(Melanie, year 11, PRU)

Olweus (1993) argued that intentionality was used to *'rule out nonserious negative actions,'* but severe and harmful bullying can occur when people are not being serious, as suggested by Cullingford and Brown (1995) and Morita (1996). Furthermore, people were not always certain whether acts

of teasing were intentional, as suggested by Ofsted (2003). It potentially gave children who teased others justification for their bullying. This supports Naylor et al (2006) that intentionality was not perceived as particularly important to children when defining bullying:

*“There’s people that just think that it’s OK to bully people and then at the end stop and say, ‘oh it was only a joke’.”*

(Jessica, 10<sup>th</sup> focus group, private school)

### *Resisting being Classified as Bullies and Victims*

Despite all the examples of maltreatment of children, out of the thirty-two pupils interviewed in the individual interviews, only seven children directly referred to themselves as currently being bullied: one private school (male), one in the PRU (male) and five in the state schools (two females and three males). No one directly identified themselves as a bully, although Jack spoke about being violent to ‘swots’. Children discussed their experiences of being called names, left out and ‘*beaten up*’ but rarely classified this as bullying. However, when they were asked to describe bullying they often gave these examples. Often children were more willing to talk about their family members being bullied or discuss how they had been bullied in the past, rather than label their current experiences as bullying. This was particularly pertinent in experiences of bullying which did not fit traditional definitions of bullying, for example bullying between friends.

Traditional definitions can be associated with a Foucauldian (1982) perspective that power is exercised over people when they are classified as victims or bullies. Once people are identified as victims, they were often subject to further bullying. It could be that some children perceived their experiences in a more fluid way than traditional definitions of bullying, it appeared that children only considered themselves as victims when bullying was so severe that they felt it embraced their identity.

From a Foucauldian (1979) perspective, to admit to being a bully or victim is to be positioned under *'the gaze'* of the panoptic where they are closely observed. It can also be associated with normalisation whereby people who are identified as bullies and victims are under heightened pressures to conform to what is considered *'normal'*. Through this, they are subject to further bullying and their experience of being docile bodies (objects of control and manipulation) increases. When children resisted being labelled, they resisted being *'objects of surveillance, examination and governance,'* and being progressively controlled and regulated (Foucault 1979). Although being a victim and bully was often stigmatised, bullying was often perceived as *'natural for a school.'*

### *Power Imbalance*

There were multiple perspectives about whether violence was considered as bullying. Some pupils succeeding academically were inclined to claim that there was no bullying, or that it was minimal. Olweus (1993) and Morita (1996) do not automatically classify violence with bullying unless it was intentional, repeated and involving a clear imbalance of power. Children in the PRU also often referred to physical violence as *'not bullying'*. However, following Naylor et al (2006), repetition may not be particularly important in defining bullying, when children experienced violence, most of them were frightened it would be repeated. This supports Monks et al (2009) that bullying does not have to be repeated if the victim continues to feel frightened. Some researchers (such as Myers 2006) and children directly associated violence with bullying, Alex considers being beaten with a plank of wood as bullying and thinks that *'they'll do it again'*. However, when Duncan had his teeth *'smashed'* by another boy, he did not consider this as bullying; partly because he said he provoked him. In this research, these examples are considered as different severities of bullying. In support of Myers (2006), the fights that boys had were not forgotten about, when Duncan was *'banged'* several boys informed me of this even though it had happened a week ago. This

also demonstrates the psychological effects of violence, where *'punishment strikes the soul'* (Foucault 1979):

*"There isn't bullying at this school. Duncan got banged last week."*

(Gavin, year 10, PRU)

There was lots of physical violence in the PRU and in the state schools, particularly between males in the lower sets and some of these children hit their bully. However, they were more likely to be excluded from school and experience systemic bullying, this is discussed later in the chapter. This can be associated with Foucault's (1979) concept of panopticism, where he argues that when people are in a field of visibility they become constrained by power and may try to resist it. However, the more they do, the heavier becomes the weight of that power. This also demonstrates that it can be impossible to establish a clear imbalance of power.

*"I got bullied in primary school. That's why I don't let no one bully me now. It was all way through primary school until about year six when I turned round and hit 'em."*

(Carl, year 11, male, PRU)

In retaliating to bullying, Carl exercised resistance and *'regained'* some power. However, he used his power in a way where he physically hurt his bully and made others frightened of him. From a Foucauldian perspective Carl's reaction can be considered as an abuse of power, even in self-defence because he used his power to hurt someone and put them under his control as docile bodies. He is bullied but also bullies. He does not have to directly exercise his power to have influence, his power is that people are frightened of him. For some children, being frightened was part of their everyday experience *'every corner you go around you have to be suspicious in case someone tries hitting you.'*

### *Persistence and Severity*

Although bullying was often considered as 'normal' and a daily occurrence, for some it was more severe than others, as suggested by Stein (2003). Severe bullying was often persistent, could worsen and continue for several years (Myers 2006). If victims call their bully names it rarely stops the bullying, and can result in them being punished and perceived as a bully for retaliating; if pupils hit the bully then they can get excluded from school for a few days and in severe cases permanently. This can reinforce the feeling of victimisation. It can be associated with Foucault's (1979) concept of delinquency where once a person is under the gaze and a prisoner (i.e. labelled as a victim), they become targets of supervision, which sends many of them back to prison '*they can put them in isolation and not me for me sticking up for myself*':

*"It's going to be same as yesterday. It's not going to get better."*

(Maria, year 6, primary school)

*"The stick thing doesn't happen daily, but something will happen daily."*

(Edward, year 7, private school)

Often, when children defended others who were victimised, they were placed under the gaze and bullied, and several children reported this. This demonstrates that when someone is victimised their opportunities to escape bullying are reduced, as suggested by Terry (1998). This supports Lee's suggestion (2006) that a loss of power can occur because of bullying. Furthermore, children who bullied were often perceived as children who were victims. In having power exercised over them, they wanted to exercise their power:

*"Most people that bully me have been bullied before and they've just had enough of it and want to be on other end of the stick."*

(Helen Year 10, Townville School)

At times, younger children had to accept some forms of bullying and assertion of dominance from older children such as being pushed and kicked. However, in some cases younger children tormented older children. This demonstrates how embedded within school the use and abuse of power is:

*“Year nines are worst, like registration this morning, me and Bill had to go up to Science block and see Miss Curran and they’re all there kicking us, pushing us.”*

(Chris, 4<sup>th</sup> focus group, Woodlands School)

This demonstrates how current definitions are restricted in examining the sophisticated and subtle forms of bullying. Instead, they stigmatise a minority of ‘abnormal’ people identified as victims or bullies. Often these children are males who often misbehave, are not achieving academically, or are from deprived backgrounds (Ofsted 2003). This is associated with Foucault’s (1972) explanation of how labels are used to exclude and exercise power over certain groups, as discussed earlier.

#### *Popularity: Bullying achieves Power over Others*

A Foucauldian reading implies that bullying achieves things for people, and one of this was popularity, it was one of the most common reasons children gave for why children bully. *‘Popularity’* was not used in its traditional sense of being *‘liked’*, as suggested by Salmivalli (2010). Rather, it was associated with *‘showing off’*, being *‘better than everybody else’*, and *‘respected’*. This expands on Sutton’s (2001) finding that bullying is a means of achieving power and supports Myers (2006) that people keep others in place by bullying. From a Foucauldian perspective, their position in the panoptic gives them power to exercise over others.

The power of popularity was exercised over peers where people were objects of control and manipulation and, to some extent, became docile bodies. This strength is beyond their own individual strength, as Terry (1998) suggested. In support of Duncan, and on the contrary to Myers

(2006), some popular children had things that might be traditionally considered as 'weaknesses,' for example, being small or wearing glasses, but, as found by Duncan (1999), they can obtain power. From a Foucauldian perspective, this demonstrates that power can come from below and is *'not in anyone's hands'*:

*"All the populars bully the unpopulars...they bully them if they had glasses but if there was someone popular who had glasses they wouldn't bully them."*

(Kimberly, year 7, private school)

Some popular children who bullied were considered as liked by peers and teachers and there was fluidity in how people perceived popular people. However, to some extent this is not surprising, since power is appealing to people. As a Foucauldian perspective implies, people can resist the power of the popular bully, for example, *'I'm surprised people haven't had enough of him'*.

#### *'Bystanders'*

These findings challenge bystander theory by demonstrating that children are not necessarily complacent and neither do they choose to ignore bullying, as Sullivan, Cleary and Sullivan (2004) suggest. The issue is more complex. Matthew may appear to be a bystander but he had to play a game where his 'friend' (David) whips him because he does not want to be left without any 'friends'. Although David is smaller, he has the power of the peer group. It is difficult to clarify where this power comes from. It appears to come from the peer group where David and his 'friends' can exercise normalisation and surveillance to exclude people who do not conform. This suggests that often children don't openly resist the popular bully so they can avoid being under the gaze and subject to normalisation where they could be excluded and more susceptible to bullying. People don't have to directly experience power to be effected by it, as suggested by Foucault (1980) *'the perfection of power should render its actual exercise unnecessary'*. This demonstrates how the experience of being a

bystander was often fluid and children did not directly refer to themselves in this way. From a Foucauldian perspective, 'bystanders' were involved in bullying, to some extent like spectators were in a public execution, where they were frightened, witnessed the punishment and to some extent took part. This re-establishes the group and the power of the popular bully. This supports Green's (2001) statement that all pupils were influenced by being in a bullying climate.

### *Ostracism*

Olweus' definition of bullying cannot explain how popularity is a motivator to bully, since popularity concerns power which is fluid. As suggested by Dixon (2011) and Salmivalli (2010) people were often frightened of being ostracised if they resisted the popular bully. 'Outsiders' are placed under the gaze and are excluded by peers. Contrary to most research on gender, such as that by Besag (2006) and Myers (2006), issues of popularity and ostracism were found to be as prevalent in boys' relationships as girls'. There were several children in school who reported feeling isolated and alone whereas popular children had many 'friends':

*If they're popular, if you start on them, you'll get the whole group on you."*

(Matthew, year 7, private school)

*"I feel like I haven't got many friends, sometimes I'm just on my own in the playground."*

(Maria, year 6, primary school)

Children may also feel ostracised because of their ability/disability. Walton (2005) refers to picking teams as relational bullying for the last one to be picked. Although Luke describes having sympathy for ostracised individuals he does not try to change this and also suggests that teachers can be involved. From a Foucauldian (1979) perspective, ostracism relies on principles of normalisation where people are fixed into positions, individual difference is excluded and an abnormal, shameful class is

created. There is not always a clearly identified perpetrator behind ostracism. Being associated with a stigmatised group can make individuals susceptible to bullying solely through observation:

*“I play for the football team and everybody treats me better with teachers. Sometimes when they’re by themselves you tend to feel sorry for them when you’re just watching them and there’s no one talking to ‘em.”*

(Luke, 4<sup>th</sup> focus group, Woodlands school)

*“I’m already pointed at for being a dirty mosher, so I’ve got to be quieter, keep a lower profile.”*

(Vanessa, year 10, PRU)

Vanessa refers to a mosher as someone who is different to most people but she states that it is difficult to explain what a mosher is *‘I don’t know.’* A common form of bullying for some males was being teased for being *‘gay’*, *‘they’d write things in the back of it like I’m gay but you can’t rub stuff off’* which lead to further victimisation and potential ostracism. This can cause distress, *‘it made me feel that I hated my life’* and is associated with imposing normalisation of what it means to be masculine, those who do not conform can be bullied, as suggested by Walton (2008).

Foucault (1977; 1980) implies that certain groups are more susceptible to having power exercised over them. In this research, children with learning difficulties were particularly vulnerable and many of them reported being excluded from normal friendship groups and put with stigmatised groups, this is discussed later in the thesis. In this research, ostracism was not less substantial in younger pupils and children considered to be *‘less intelligent,’* as found by previous research (Ahamd and Smith 1994; Bjorkvist 1994; Sullivan, Cleary and Sullivan 2004).

As suggested by Foucault (1979), all children felt under the gaze and panoptic, for example, most pupils thought they looked different in some

way such as their height or a birthmark. However, although everyone was subject to normalisation, some people were more vulnerable, such as those who thought they looked particularly different, as found by Sweeting and West (2001). Children in state schools were the most open about this. Some children tended to internalise the attributes for which they were bullied and believed themselves to be abnormal. As Foucault (1979) points out this power does not need to be explained, it must trigger a reaction for the required behaviour and can be associated with Foucault's concept of docile bodies. This demonstrates the importance of considering the effects of bullying even after the experience:

*"They used to call me malteser, because of shape of my head [points to head]"*.

(Alex, year 10, Townville School)

People cannot always change the things they are bullied for, but if they could, several of them would. Expecting victims to change also This is associated with Foucault's (1979) concept of normalisation and panopticism which exclude certain groups, put them under surveillance and create opportunity for people to be in the abnormal category and targeted for punishment. It supports the notions of what bullying is based upon, i.e. imposing standards of what is normal and abnormal. However, some people who experienced bullying resisted in some ways for example, by adjusting to being *ostracised*. Helen sat by herself '*under the tree on the grass... then I could have my calm*'. Bullying can result in disengagement and self-exclusion '*my mum's kept me off school.*' Some children reported that they attended private school because they had previously been bullied in a state school '*at my old school I got bullied and had to leave that school.*'

### **Intellectual Ability**

#### *'Thick' Label*

Labels concerned with intellectual ability were more fully embraced than bully and victim labels. Most children with learning difficulties, in the lower

sets and the PRU were often perceived as 'thick' internalised this label, suggesting that their low setting represented their entire ability. This can be associated with how Foucault (1972) explains that labels cause divisions and are assumed to be fixed inside of people. From a Foucauldian (1979) perspective, children were placed into ranks and hierarchies and an abnormal, shameful class was created and they were put under the gaze. Several children in the lower sets reported 'I feel *thick*' and *I'm thick*':

*"We're bottom because we're thickest."*

(Kimberly, year 7, female, private school)

As Hepburn (1997) suggests, teachers are also caught up in these technologies of power, and children who did not conform to educational values are perceived in a fixed and shameful way, even by teachers. Two teachers explained to me: '*we call them the diddlydonks, they're not the brightest.*'

The PRU was perceived as an establishment for people who are not clever, and was referred to as a '*window licker*' or '*spaca school*' and was associated negatively with a child's intellectual functioning. As a Foucauldian perspective (1972) implies, their labels excluded and stigmatised them:

*"Nobody sees anybody here as clever, all students are like 'you're here for same reasons, we're all retards'."*

(Vanessa, year 10, PRU)

Some children resisted these labels and those who felt they were perceived as 'thick', believed they had capabilities. This finding was more prevalent in the private school, where children had to pass a test to attend. This supports Foucault (1972) that fixed labels are actually changeable. This demonstrates the multiplicity in the voices that were used and that children can exercise some agency over their classification:

*“They think that you’re thick but you’re actually not.”*

*(Kimberly, year 7, private school)*

Some children suggested that upsetting someone because of their disability and physical appearance was bullying *‘it’s making somebody upset by their disability or what they look like or if they’re really clever.’* This demonstrates how people have different perspectives of bullying, suggests that people’s feelings are important, and that bullying is associated with issues of inequality in society where people can be bullied just because they belong to a devalued group.

Many children in the lower sets reported being *‘picked on’* by pupils and teachers, several of these had learning difficulties. To some extent, this can be associated with Mishna (2003), who found that children with learning difficulties were at greater risk of victimisation. Being bullied because someone is classified as unintelligent is not something children can escape from by changing schools. This can be associated with Foucault’s concepts of streaming and panopticism, where one placed under supervision, people become targets of surveillance. It can also be associated with normalisation where groups who do not conform are excluded.

The relationship between teachers and pupils can be associated with the police-prisoner relationship where once people are identified under the panoptic, they become targets of increasing surveillance and punishment. Children in the lower sets or who had learning difficulties spoke more often about being unfairly punished, put in isolation, sent out of class, and made to do work which was beyond their ability, which often made them feel humiliated and distressed. This is considered as systemic bullying. When the teacher is involved and upsets children because of this, it is

considered as pupils being bullied by teachers:

*“I came to high school not knowing how to read or write and I used to get bullied for that.”*

(Helen, year 10, Townville School)

*“I said ‘Miss, I’m not being funny but I’m not reading out loud because I’m not very good at reading’, she went, ‘so what, just read out loud’ and I said, ‘no’ so she gave me a detention.”*

(Stephanie, year 10, Parklane School)

This research suggests that excluding certain groups of children from research such as children with special needs limits the ability to address the different forms and dimensions of bullying. As suggested by Davis, Watson and Cunningham-Burley (2000) this research examined some structural barriers of children with learning disabilities, for example, the impact of streaming. Even material in school, such as displays on the wall reinforced the inferiority of some children, for example, *‘boys who read are superior beings’*, this demonstrates how power can occur solely through observation and the gaze (Foucault 1979).

Rigby (1997) associated bullying with being a ‘loser’ but as Yoneyama and Naito (2003) suggest, the notion of being a ‘loser’ has not been thoroughly investigated, however, this research examined this theme. Several children felt resentful about the way rewards were administered, for example, being picked for *‘pupil of the week’*. Typically, rewards were given to a minority but were often perceived as a punishment to the majority who did not get them. Pupils could also feel *‘picked on’* whereby a teacher could reward everyone except one pupil. From a Foucauldian perspective, rewards created hierarchies, excluded groups and put everyone under observation and in their place, where the winners and losers are highlighted with the aim of producing docile and capable bodies. The way rewards are administered can create hostility and

resentment towards people, perpetuate bullying and made individuals subject to the control and manipulation of the teacher:

*“Mr. Turner said he had rewarded everyone apart from Justin.”*

(Observation, year 7, Woodlands school)

In the lower sets, often children’s achievement was not appreciated as they were positioned as inferior. Often, despite their best efforts they cannot escape their ‘thick’ label.

*“Normally it’d be brainy groups that they’d pick for best work but people that have [special] needs and stuff they tend to pick them because they’re not right good.”*

(Martin, 1<sup>st</sup> focus group, Woodlands School)

Often people with learning difficulties were bullied persistently by different people. This suggests that the term persistence should be used rather than repetition and places emphasis on the victim’s experience rather than the behaviour of the bully. In support of Foucault’s notion that power is not in anyone’s hands, children in the highest sets were also subject to panopticism and normalisation which often adversely influenced their self-esteem. Children in the top sets and several children in private school explained how they felt they were not always able to reach the standards expected of them and often felt inferior:

*“You’re expected to set a standard but in some subjects you can’t step to that standard because you’re not as good in them as another person.”*

(Tamara, 8th focus group, private school)

Streaming was constructed as a cause of much conflict and bullying. Being in a ‘bottom’ set can create distress, anger and self-loathing; it is a place where no-one wants to be. This provides data to substantiate Munn’s (1999) argument that that an individual who does not conform to

academic or sporting standards can experience isolation or rejection which can be perceived as bullying. In this research, and as Epp and Watkinson (1997) suggest, the hierarchies and measures that streaming places on children and how they are excluded from certain groups is systemic bullying when children are distressed or burdened by this. Many children did feel distressed because of this:

*“I can’t read books or I can’t copy down writing or do long writing because I just start crying because my brain’s not active enough (starts to cry)...It just makes me feel dumb.”*

(Helen, year 10, Townville School)

Several pupils suggested that being in the middle set was better because of the negative consequences of being in the ‘top’ or ‘bottom’, which could subject children on either extremes to be vulnerable to bullying. Laura refers to being in a bottom set as a punishment, suggesting the adverse perception that a child in a bottom set may experience. ‘Swots’ tended to be bullied because being obedient, on good terms with teachers and achieving highly can set pupils against their peers. This study expands on findings such as by Reay and William (1999) and Ma (2002) highlighting that pupils can be left out and suffer hostility for being clever. From a Foucauldian (1979) perspective, normalisation and surveillance make it possible to punish, through streaming. All pupils were influenced by the abnormal-normal distinction and being on either extreme can make a pupil particularly susceptible to the ‘gaze’. The creation of a good and bad group was a way of normalising people, as suggested by Foucault (1979) and was inherent in bullying. Being in the middle-set created less visibility:

*L: “I want good grades, I don’t want to be really brainy but I don’t want to be really dumb, I want to be in the middle...”*

*I: How would you feel if you were in set B2?*

*L: I'd feel mad with myself that I tried my best but I got a punishment."*

(Laura, year 7, private school)

Jealousy was also cited as a reason for bullying. It is associated with children having a positive attribute, which is often academic or sporting success and can cause resentment in others. From a Foucauldian perspective, it could be argued that jealousy was concerned with people having power that someone else wanted:

*"I'm head girl and they're jealous because they wanted to be it, so I can't even mention head girl in front of them."*

(Maria, year 6, primary school)

Just because pupils can be bullied for being at either extreme of the intellectual ability spectrum does not mean that they are on par with each other. 'An education' and getting a good job was perceived as an important element of school. Children perceived getting 'an education' with getting high grade GCSEs (A-Cs). This supports Foucault (1980) that some positions permit more power than others. Pupils bullied for being a 'swot' are not subject to as much punishment from teachers or picked out unfavourably by teachers, and have more chance of achieving good qualifications:

*H: In the end it's all about education*

*I: What is it about education?*

*H: Because you need GCSEs to get a good job, good GCSEs."*

(Helen, year 10, Townville School)

Although most children reported that 'school is OK,' some said they hated it. Often children with learning difficulties or who were badly behaved stated that they did not like school. This could be because they are less likely to gain the 'good education' that children thought was important,

Jack referred to school as '*a load of rubbish*'. Their exclusion and punishment through normalisation and panopticism excluded them. Some children reacted in the way Foucault (1979) described prisoners who became angry with the world around them and wanted revenge. Jack explained that he thinks that 'swots' are treated better, they are the 'teacher's pet' and '*if they do something wrong teacher will tell 'em answer*':

*I: "Why does it bother you that they get treated better?"*

*J: Because everybody's same*

*I: So what might you do to a swot who annoys you?*

*J: Call 'em a swot, donkey-nut their tie (laughs)*

*I: Do you think there's anything good about being a swot?*

*J: Yeah, when you grow up you get a good education".*

(Jack, 2<sup>nd</sup> interview, year 8, Parklane School)

### *Different Forms of Interaction*

The bullying of children in the state schools was evident throughout the observations and focus groups, particularly in the lowest set for example, '*I'll bray you*', '*little scruff*'. These ethical issues have been discussed in the *Methodology* chapter. I also observed teachers overtly referring to children in the lower sets as smelling badly '*Mr. Robson tells me I can sit between the two smelly girls at the back.*'

The level of disturbance in the state schools (even when children knew they were being recorded) and the difficulty I had to encourage children to listen to each other made me realise how difficult it can be for teachers to establish order and how restricted their power can be. Although bullying in the state school sample was more obvious, bullying in the private school was still present, although it did not interfere as much with the focus groups. In the private school, despite a few comments that could be interpreted as a little off-hand, for example, '*have you said anything yet,*' they co-operated quite well and did not interrupt each other as much.

However, after the group interview three children informed that they had been '*picked on*' by some of the people who they had been interviewed with in the focus group. This could have resulted in these children being subdued or not speaking openly about bullying on tape. Wayne was less vocal about his experiences of bullying in the focus group than in the individual interview:

*W: "Last Friday in DT someone burnt my pencil case with a soldering iron... I was quite angry at the time*

*I: Did they do it intentionally?*

*W: Well I don't think you can put a soldering iron into a pencil case by accident*

*I: Who did that?*

*W: David Jones, who was working with us when we did that 'all group'."*

*(Wayne, year 7, private school)*

This supports Foucault's (1979) suggestion that '*good crimes go unnoticed*'. A Foucauldian perspective suggests that these issues concerning social class could be concerned with struggles for power and class domination where some working-class children are resisting middle-class power that is imposed upon them. Children who experience more punishment may want more power and exercise this in the form of revenge.

### **Perceptions of Punishment**

Pupils were rarely perceived as autonomous agents but instead as people who should be deterred from engaging in misbehaving. Again, this links to Foucault's concept of bodies being the object of manipulation and conditioning. Often punishments were perceived as being unsuccessful in improving behaviour and were associated with children avoiding detection, feeling unfairly punished and wrongly accused '*you get dun for something and you didn't do it*'. Often children did understand why they were punished. A Foucauldian (1979) perspective implies that punishment can

make people feel angry:

*“All detentions I had, they were all piss taking bastards.”*

(Duncan, PRU, year 11)

*\*“When you’ve been naughty they give you a detention and they won’t actually tell you what you’ve done wrong.”*

(10<sup>th</sup> focus group, private school)

[Please note a \*next to all initials in the focus groups indicates participants are female].

Few children behaved well all the time, or fully embraced rules. However, girls often resisted discipline in a quieter way and overall, boys tended to be shouted at more than girls *‘when we’re getting told off the girls take their chances to talk while we’re getting shouted at.’*

### *Social Class and Punishment*

Children who were most frequently punished were working-class males (and females who had ‘bad boy’ traits), several of these had learning difficulties. Children could receive the same punishment such as being sent out of class for a wide range of behaviours, from forgetting a pencil to being aggressive to a teacher. This is a zero tolerance policy and can be associated with Foucault’s (1979) suggestion that the best way to avoid serious offences is to punish the minor seriously.

Being segregated from other pupils and punished often did not improve their behaviour and resulted in further punishment, resentment, disaffection and victimisation. Often children felt angry and wanted revenge, their morals deteriorate, they become subject to more normalisation and surveillance. This can also be associated with Foucault’s (1979) analysis of prisoners where he argues that once people are prisoners they have power abused over them. Surveillance puts them under supervision (in this case by teachers) which means they are

targeted by teachers and results in further observation, normalisation and punishment. The more they resist, the more power and punishment is exercised over them.

PRUs can be perceived as putting all the 'bad kids' together, making their behaviour worse and segregating them from 'normal relationships' and mainstream society. Foucault's writings on prisoners are that they feel an injustice, and can regard society as an enemy:

*"They've had bad experiences in their lives and you get used to listening to 'em talking about being naughty and then you be naughty and you can't help it."*

(Duncan, 2<sup>nd</sup> interview, year 11, PRU)

Often these pupils were picked out persistently by their teachers but generally did not directly refer to this as bullying, for example, when Tristan refers to always being blamed by his teacher for other people's mistakes he considered it as being '*picked on*'. However, in cases where they felt distressed at being '*picked on*,' it was considered as bullying. Several children felt '*picked on*' by teachers. Children also suggested that some methods of imposing discipline such as isolation could have adverse psychological and physiological side-effects and were often perceived as maltreatment. This supports Foucault's (1979) power of administration and notion that punishment has more psychological than physical effects:

*"Can't do isolation, never done it, never can, I've always walked out of it, I can't just sit there and look at a black-board, you always sit there...you don't do shit, sit there for six hours, what's point? ... I get migraines."*

(Grant, year 11, PRU)

*'People Bully because they're Bored'*

Almost all children reported experiencing boredom. Boredom created a sense of emptiness, as suggested by Breidenstein (2007) and children's minds 'switching off', 'it turns to jelly and we think about anything'. A Foucauldian (1979) perspective implies that children are conditioned to become docile bodies partly because time is divided into specific segments and often children do not pass onto one activity until they have completed the other. Children discussed how time was something over which they do not have control 'it just makes you feel like you hope when break-time or dinner-time or home-time comes.' For children at private school, there was a particular sense of there being no end to school. This suggests that being a docile subject can be experienced in multiple ways and can filter into other aspects of an individual's life.

*"Me and my mum on Saturday went shopping and then on Sunday some of my friends came round and they stayed 'till goodness knows what time and I went to bed and I saw my schoolbag in the corner and I went, 'oh no', I had four pieces of homework to finish."*

(Jessica, 10<sup>th</sup> focus group, private school)

Boredom is associated with agency and resistance because some children discussed trying to overcome boredom but many felt they could not. This suggests that people could invest in concentration and reduce boredom, since concentrating on their work might occupy and deter it. This was not a choice everyone could equally make. Newberry and Duncan (2001) found that that 'delinquent children' had a higher tendency to experience boredom. In this research, children who were most disengaged from school, for example, with learning difficulties and/or who usually misbehaved or were in the PRUs often reported experiencing boredom. Foucault (1979) suggests that prisoners have an unnecessary and useless existence which isolates them. This implies that children in detention or isolation are more likely to experience boredom, which implies that they are more likely to be disruptive and engage in bullying.

The most damaging forms of boredom were found in the most disengaged, Oliver was not able to do his work because of his learning difficulty whereas pupils who were succeeding academically, such as Paul, could see a purpose and an opportunity to achieve at school. Consequently, boredom was less of an issue to Paul.

*I: "Why do you think teachers are expected to control their class?"*

*O: They're in charge of the lesson aren't they*

*I: Why can't pupils control themselves?*

*O: Work that you get given."*

(Oliver, year 10, PRU)

This research provides evidence that children engage in bullying and being disruptive because they are bored, *'when it's boring loads of people mess about and throw things.'* However, other researchers such as Rigby (1997) just indicated an association between bullying and boredom rather than investigating whether there was one. In this research, it was found that bullying and being disruptive was so children could *'have a laugh'*, provided a sense of control, stimulus and entertainment. For some pupils, bullying was an outlet of frustration from being controlled. It suggests that some pupils may bully to get some power that has been taken away from them and links to Foucault's (1979) research on criminals who may want revenge:

*P: "They should find something else to do instead of bullying people*

*I: Why do you think they do it?*

*P: Because they get a laugh out of it*

*I: Why do you think they want a laugh?*

*P: Because they're bored."*

(Peter, year 10, Parklane School)

## **Children's Perceptions of the Teachers' Position**

### *What Teachers do about Bullying*

Despite recommendations for teachers to protect children from bullying (Ofsted 2003; DCSF 2007; Bansel et al 2009 and Chan 2009), the level of responsibility teachers took in handling bullying was usually low. Bullying is not completely hidden from teachers as previous literature has suggested (e.g., Morita 1996; Myers 2006; and Yoneyama 1999) and many children reported that name-calling and ostracism, even in the teacher's presence, was often ignored *'they're not bothered about it and they don't realise that there's some people that have killed themselves'*. However, it is rarely officially reported to them.

When parents tried to reduce bullying, they tended to report it to teachers. The teacher's power was restricted by their position in the panoptic where they were subject to normalisation and observation, as suggested by Foucault (1979). This influenced how they dealt with bullying since teachers were under the gaze to ensure they dealt with bullying in traditional ways expected. This was often by punishing and shouting at bullies, giving them detention or exclusion. This did not stop the bullying, it reduced it temporarily, but it often reoccurred and, in several instances, worsened. Present systems to reduce bullying as suggested by Ofsted (2003) Smith (2000) and Besag (2006) can exacerbate bullying rather than reduce it. However, bullying also has power over teachers. One child explained how her teacher *'gets sick of it'*.

From a Foucauldian perspective, punishment was prevalent in school and often created more anger in pupils that they then took out on others. Several children got bullied for *'grassing'* where *'if you told you get called a grasser.'* This can be associated with a Foucauldian perspective which implies that the more people are bullied, the more likely they are to be further bullied. For example, *'when the teacher is walking off the boy gets worse and he starts bullying'* and *'I told teacher and then that lad come back and hit me because he says I'm a wus.'*

### *Disruption*

There was quite a high level of disruption in schools although it appeared to be particularly prevalent in the lower sets of state school and the PRU:

*“Kids messing about, chewing gum all over, staff shouting, people running about.”*

(Jack, 1<sup>st</sup> interview, year 7, Parklane School)

Some children in lower sets said that it was difficult for them to achieve academically because they were placed with other disruptive children. From a Foucauldian perspective, they were placed with other people who had been excluded from ‘normal’ classifications. This made some children feel angry and want revenge. Children who are badly behaved and disruptive, to some extent, also had power over teachers and pupils. They are noticed and teachers and pupils can be bothered and adversely influenced by them. It can also gain peer approval since pupils are challenging their teacher. Sarah suggests that these children are disruptive *‘to get attention and have friends’*. However, when their behaviour is noticed and reprimanded by the teacher they lose some power. This supports a Foucauldian (1979) perspective that the more people resist power, the heavier it throws its weight.

There was a wide cross-section of children who were adversely affected by disruption and children in the private school were also dissatisfied with this. It adversely influenced learning because *‘you can’t concentrate right’* and resulted in teachers finding it difficult to teach effectively:

*“It annoys me because the teachers have to keep telling ‘em to stop... and then the teacher just shouts at them and it makes me jump.”*

(Natasha, year 7, private school)

This is reinforced by the finding that some children, especially in the private school and higher sets of state school, tended to appreciate strict teachers who could reduce disruption. Means used to impose order consisted of policies which teachers were obliged to follow such as issue warnings and detentions. This supports Hepburn's (1997) finding that teachers are under normalisation and observation pressures to be responsible for the learning and behaviour of pupils. Dealing with disruptive behaviour was often based on a hierarchical model where one form of sanction tended to occur before the other such as first and second warning. This can be associated with Foucault's (1979) suggestion that punishment is graduated and linear:

*"I observe the notice-board behind Mr. Stuart's desk and there are notices of rules, rewards and sanctions. On Mr. Stuart's desk there are green behaviour slips to sign. There is a pyramid shaped hierarchy of how to control pupils' behaviour, for example, first warning, second warning."*

(Northfield School, observation)

Several children reported that teachers did not set a good example to pupils and were hypocritical, banning them from behaviours they themselves engaged in *'we're not allowed to eat in the classroom and they're allowed to sit there eating.'* However, some children felt their teacher was helpful, for example, in resolving conflicts, *'we've got Miss Baker and Miss Lee so if there are any fights in class Miss Baker can sort it out.'*

When people were distressed because they were shouted at by teachers it was considered as bullying. When people did not appear to be upset by it and it may have been a one-off instance, then it was considered as a *'grey'* area. Children often discussed being shouted at by teachers and most of them felt that they did not deserve it. Several children felt *'picked on'* and upset when they were shouted at *'when you do something, you get shouted at and it makes you hurt and you start to cry.'*

Some children retaliated when they were shouted at, so it wasn't necessarily a useful way of teachers controlling their class, despite Eslea et al's (2002) implication. However, the quotation below suggests that there is a *'nice way'* to shout. This was often done teachers shouted at no-one in particular but some people were still upset by it:

*"Most of the class do shout back at him when he shouts at them because he doesn't shout in a nice way, he's really shouting."*

(Stephanie, year 10, Parklane School)

#### *Fluidity of Power with Teachers and Pupils*

Although Foucault (1980) acknowledges inequality in power, he also acknowledges that power is fluid and can come from above and below. Reflecting this, it was found in this research that teachers could be bullied by pupils, as suggested by Terry (1998). Sometimes children ridiculed teachers and expressed their dislike. Teachers who looked/behaved differently, for example, those who had a speech impediment or teachers who displayed animosity towards children were particularly vulnerable to bullying. Bridgette called one of her teachers *'spit-nose... because he's gay, he shouts at you for getting your planner out.'* This can be associated with normalisation and panopticism where teachers who did not conform, were particularly subject to observation and normalisation pressures. However, as Hepburn (1997) suggests, teachers are under surveillance to encourage children to learn, and one way to do this is to highlight children's deficits. Some students who feel *'the power of administration'* take out their revenge on their teachers.

In the PRU, Simon speaks with contempt for Margaret (teacher), ridiculing her physical appearance *'she's fat and ugly'*, stating *'I hate Margaret'* and that he will do whatever he wants to do to her. He resisted and stripped her of her authority by holding and tipping tables up in her lesson. 'Soft' teachers who did not establish their authority could also be susceptible to being *'picked on'* and some children who felt they could have power over

their teachers, abused it. Children in the PRU spoke more openly about challenging their teachers, it could be that because they had experienced more power being exercised over them and had more anger to vent:

*“If teacher was a push over then that was it, that was just one of the best lessons, she just got it for the rest of the year.”*

(Catherine, year 11, PRU)

This implies that when people do not use their power, they may have it abused over them. Some children reported positive feelings towards strict teachers who were liked and respected by some pupils. Key to this were the teachers who could control and manage their class and some children felt safer when teachers used their power. This was particularly appreciated in private school:

*“The strict teachers are better at teaching you because the nice ones just let you play games and you forget everything.”*

(Kimberly, year 7, private school)

However, some pupils perceived strict teachers in a negative way, but this was teachers who they felt targeted them, rather than making them feel safer. These teachers often enforced normalisation and panopticism through exclusion:

*“You get three comments and you get a detention and then it just leads up, I just think they’re trying to getting you kicked out.”*

(Grant, year 11, PRU)

### *Dynamic Power Relations between Teachers*

Some children felt *‘picked on’* by the way teachers interacted with them. This suggests that systemic and pupil-teacher factors are enmeshed, and can be experienced as bullying. Jack refers to teachers suppressing his voice as bullying *‘you can’t give you your own opinions, you can’t talk to ‘em’*. Some children said they felt unfairly *‘picked on’* for: forgetting a pen,

not reading out loud in class when they have dyslexia, being the only one in class who did not get rewarded, or being told that their performance was *'rubbish'*. When children discussed how distressing these experiences were, they were considered as bullying. This can be associated with Foucault's (1979) notion that prisoners (children) under the gaze of the police (teachers) are the targets of supervision which results in further punishment.

Previous research has not captured the complexity of pupil-teacher relations with respect to bullying. Teachers are caught up in powers of normalisation and surveillance and are positioned to keep children under control and follow school rules. This also implies that expectations of teachers to influence pupils and be the *'social engineers of change in their classroom'* (Chan 2009 and Eslea et al 2002) are too simplistic. Although Yoneyama (2008) argued that bullying is used by teachers to manage their class, some children retaliated and used their power over their teachers, for example, displaying anger and aggression.

Statements such as *'strict teachers control their class'* and, *'children do not behave for soft teachers'* place teachers in a position where they are required to use their power. Strict teachers are perceived as being able to control the class but can be perceived as *'picking on'* children and abusing their power. These findings support Foucault (1980) by demonstrating that this power is fluid, dynamic and determined by the teacher's position in the panoptic where there is no absolute point, for example, Steve, a teacher in the PRU, was described as *'picking on'* pupils and *'picked on'* by pupils:

*"Steve, I've tried to crack him so many times...because every-time someone said something, he always said 'Tristan', even when it wasn't me he still said 'Tristan'. Like, fucking 'don't be saying me you gimp'."*

(Tristan, year 11, PRU)

## **Pupil Voice**

### *Children's Voice in School*

Despite initiatives such as *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003), it was found that children have little voice in school. This applies to children, albeit differently, from all backgrounds. It ranges from children who argue with the teacher and who lose voice when they are punished, to those who are obedient and learn to suppress their voice and accept the authority of their teachers. This is associated with Foucault's (1979) concept of power and where the power people have is effected by their position, although not everyone has equal amount of power. In terms of exercising voice, Martin refers to himself and other pupils as being like 'Stacey,' who has difficulties in articulation and expression '*you don't express yourselves as much as you want.*' This can be associated with Foucault's (1979) concept of docile bodies.

Voice can be associated with bullying because people who are bullied experienced restrictions in being able to express their voice, for example, they are '*bullied for grassing*'. This supports Yoneyama (1999) and Foucault (1979) that their role as docile bodies increases the more power is exercised over them. Bullying tends to be persistent because when people are bullied their sense of agency and voice becomes increasingly restricted and the more they resist this power, the heavier it becomes. Some children attributed teachers not listening to and responding to them as a reason for bullying '*I'd go and tell teachers and they'd do nothing, they'd stick us in same lesson.*' Because teachers had limited power, their ability to support children was restricted. However, some children spoke about teachers listening to them and reducing bullying '*once I told Christine [teacher] that was it, Brian [head-teacher] and everybody listened and it stopped.*'

## **Voice in Research**

In support of Arnot and Reay (2007), there is complexity and '*slipperiness*' of how pupil voice is used. This sub-section further explores to what

extent children felt they could exercise their power by speaking openly about their experiences, as suggested by Wright (2008). However, it is recognised that just because some children may have been more reserved than others it does not necessarily mean that they are more bullied.

#### *Working-class 'Voice'*

As Foucault (1980) suggested, class domination effects people's position and so people from different social class backgrounds are likely to exercise voice differently. Several children, particularly, working-class with learning difficulties, spoke openly and unashamedly throughout the interviews. They often spoke about bullying '*people call me sumo*' and '*my brother gets called Dumbo*'. It could be taken to demonstrate their trust in me. However, it seems more a case that they can exercise their voice. As Foucault (1980) suggests, resistance is multiple, and although many of these children did not report bullying, they talked about it and resisted the isolation of being silent about it, as suggested by Zerubabel (2006). Helen openly discussed how she is bullied for being overweight. She could have changed her '*helmet head*' hairstyle that she is teased for, but she resisted. Alex said he couldn't be happier in his home and lifestyle that children referred to as '*gypo*'. Even though they are treated as inferior, they have a sense of worth. However, it is not clear what influence this might have on them in the longer term. A Foucauldian (1979) reading implies their psychological resistance strengthened their soul and gave them some power.

#### *Restricted Voice*

Several children in the private school did not exercise voice in such a strong or emotional way as children from the other schools. This was particularly pronounced for children in the higher sets where they seemed to be advocates for their school. From a Foucauldian perspective (1979), they could be considered as docile bodies who are capable, obedient and uncritical. The girls at the private school were not as expressive about their emotions and experiences, as suggested by Reay (2001) and Impett

et al (2008). It could be argued that being highly obedient could result in the children's inner moral guidance being filtered out (Milgram 1963), although the girls were not highly obedient all the time.

In the private school, girls had to wear skirts, and in the state schools girls had to wear a skirt for netball matches regardless of how cold the weather was. Their bodies were objects of control and manipulation, as suggested by Foucault (1979). They justified this ruling in terms of it enhancing their femininity by making them *'look like a girl'*. A Foucauldian perspective implies that the private school discourages girls from having control over their bodies and the greater children resisted, the more they were punished:

*"It was a really freezing cold netball match and I had my trackie bottoms on and Miss gave me a red card."*

(Kimberly, year 7, private school)

*"I'd like trousers but I'm fine with skirts, we've tried to campaign for trousers but the headmaster says 'no'."*

(Sandra, year 7, private school)

Being 'feminine' was not as important to girls in the state schools and a minority of girls suggested that girls who wear skirts may be perceived in a more sexual way. Stephanie explained that she always wears trousers, so that a male teacher who *'looks up girls' skirts'* cannot look up hers. In this respect, she has resisted being a docile body because she can protect herself:

*S: "We're allowed to wear skirts for school, and he'll walk past and drop a pencil so he can bend down and look under table, and if you're walking out of classroom, he'll look at your bum"*

*I: Are you allowed to wear trousers?*

*S: Yeah, that's why I always wear trousers."*

(Stephanie, year 10, Parklane School)

Several children, particularly well-behaved and middle-class girls resisted authority and exercised some control in a quieter way, they were less likely to be identified as misbehaving than 'bad boys'. 'Bad boys' were particularly under the gaze and, from a Foucauldian perspective, their behaviour made them targets of surveillance which subjected them to further punishment.

*S: "You're not allowed to wear black trainers, but I've got some, but I never get caught... they don't really look at mine*

*I: Whose trainers do they look at?*

*S: All bad people."*

(Sarah, year 11, Townville School)

#### *'Bad Boy' Voice*

Children who overtly resisted teachers in state schools tended to be working-class boys who sometimes spoke to their teachers aggressively and were '*picked on*' and punished. Once identified, they were subject to increasing observation, normalisation and punishment, as Foucault (1979) implies. This is considered as a form of systemic and bullying by teachers that varies in severity when children are hurt by it.

As Foucault (1980) suggested, resistance is multiple. In misbehaving, children resisted the teacher's authority, yet they also became more subject to the teacher's authority through supervision and punishment. Arguably, they would have more power if they resisted being under the gaze and punished by teachers. However, their sense of agency can be restricted depending on their circumstances and this is discussed below. Often, these children did not express their views formally to their teachers but this could be partly due to other factors such as learning difficulties. Gavin had dyslexia and was not able to write down information for a psychologist about 'what a teacher should know about pupils'.

Children reported that although teachers may not have much power in handling and reducing bullying, they hold ultimate power over the child when they exercise voice or disagree with teachers. In the PRU, Simon explains *'no-one listens anyway in this school'*, he referred to the interview as a *'waste of time like school'* and thought people would think of him *'what a cunt'*.

Many children felt they were not treated with respect by teachers but were expected to give them respect. Children in this category were predominantly working-class boys in the state school and PRU, this can be associated with the prison-delinquent cycle where certain groups are used to establish the power of the dominant class and certain positions permit supremacy (Foucault 1979; Foucault 1980):

*"Just because I'm a pupil that doesn't mean that I have to be treated with less respect, that I should have to give them respect but they're giving me no respect."*

(Grant, year 11, PRU)

This could be taken to support Twemlow and Fonagy's (2005) finding that teachers were more likely to bully children in schools with high reports of suspension. However, the matter is more complex and pupils in private school also had power exercised over them in a more subtle way where sometimes children experienced power solely through observation and gaze, for example, although some girls resisted having to wear skirts, most girls did not even try.

#### *'Good Pupil' Voice*

Children who were highly obedient and succeeding academically, particularly in the private school also had their voice restricted. They learnt that their power was restricted and to accept the power of others. They were often more restrained in expressing their feelings and felt pressured to conform to school rules and norms. Consequently, they had submitted part of their autonomy and voice. However, they exercised

voice in some ways and as Bourdieu (1990) implies, in not challenging systems, their restriction in power has long-term benefits such as opportunities to succeed in their education. Laura describes what she has learnt from being on the school council *'you get to know what people want and what you can't have'* and Jessica explains about her teachers *'they've already been at school and learnt everything so we accept that.'*

### **Agency**

Often children suggested their agency was strongly bounded by inequality and their social circumstances. This can be associated with a Foucauldian (1979; 1980) perspective that the power individual's have can depend on their social class. Several children permanently excluded from school discussed having restricted choices, many of which were a result of their exclusion. They were able to gain few qualifications, regardless of how hard they worked and often suggested that they are *'gonna get nothing out of it.'*

Many children excluded from school or who were often punished suffered from family problems, which restricted their chances of succeeding highly in education, Melanie reports living alone *'in a caravan because I got moved about'*. In support of De Pear and Garner (1996) exclusion and disadvantage were strongly associated. This research supports the widely held finding that children from deprived backgrounds have less chance of succeeding in education, and this limits their agency (Hodkinson and Bloomer 2001). If children had great difficulties in reading it made it extremely difficult, and in some cases impossible, for them to do their work. Jack discussed wanting to enter the army *'because there's hardly no writing.'* However, agency was fluid throughout an individual's day and life and a child who usually misbehaved still sometimes exercised their agency by improving their behaviour:

*"My mum's bought me 50 pencils from the pound shop and twenty pens so I can't forget 'em now."*

(Shaun, year 8, Townville School)

As previously discussed, children who were repeatedly targets of punishment experienced the heavier weight of power the more they resisted. They experienced being docile bodies by being subject to control and manipulation. Some of them also became obedient and compliant because of repeated punishment. They stopped resisting the teacher's authority, suppress their voice and accept the unfairness of the situation. Jack explained that when he gets put in isolation he feels like *'going back out there and telling 'em what I feel like'*. However, he explained that he does not do this now and has improved his behaviour. He has learned that, although it is not fair, *'they're always gonna beat you'*.

Excluded pupils who will not achieve a place in college, or get any qualifications, and some of whom struggle to even remember the answers that the teachers give them, can give up because there is such a low likelihood of success. Some children believed that if they did not get taken out of the PRU then their life would be ruined. Again, this can be linked with Foucault's (1979) writings on the restricted agency of prisoners where once identified as a prisoner it is difficult for them to be anything else:

*"All people that are bosses of all schools they just threw us in a corner and said, 'they can be dossers of the world'."*

(Seth, year 10, PRU)

I was informed by teachers and career officers that there was *'no chance'* that Oliver would get a place at college, Oliver was aware of this and saw little point of trying to study:

*I: "Do you think deep-down that you could do well at something?"*

*O: If I tried*

*I: And do you think you're ever gonna try?"*

*O: No*

*I: Why not?*

*O: Too hard.”*

(Oliver, year 10, PRU)

Some children exercised personal control such as deciding to be well-behaved and to study. Often these children had the opportunity and ability to succeed academically such as children who were in high sets and/or private school. Jessica is grateful for being in a private school and states that *‘some people don’t get the opportunity to come to a really nice school’*. It could be argued that they are being docile bodies in following the traditional path set for them by being obedient and conforming. However, as Bourdieu (1990) specified, children have an interest in following school systems for practical benefits:

*“I always try and do my best, try and get better, sometimes it’s hard because if say like last time you did an absolutely great one and it’s hard to keep up to the same standard but as long as you keep on trying.”*

(Paul, year 7, private school)

Although children in the private school tend to have financial and familial support to succeed in education, the girls were preventing from exercising agency in terms of wearing trousers. Some children tried to make things work for them despite difficulties. External factors such as family and financial support can also be important in this respect. Catherine (in the PRU) stated that *“my grandma would pay for me to go to university’*. These children did not want to follow the biography expected of them, resisted their position under the gaze and strove to improve their lives *‘I wanna prove them wrong that I can actually do something’*.

These pupils struggled throughout their education to have voice, *‘stick up for themselves’* and be treated with ‘respect’. To succeed, children who had misbehaved were beginning to be obedient and accept their teachers’

authority (even though they don't always agree with it). They resisted their life-path and strove for more educational opportunities. They had learnt to allow teachers and the school to exercise power of them, which to some extent made them docile bodies. However, in giving up their resistance, they gained greater power in terms of succeeding in later life, by '*getting a good job*' and also in the short-term in school by not being so much under the gaze and directly targeted for punishment.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that bullying is entrenched in children's daily experiences of school. This research has discussed how complex bullying can be. It varies in severity, and is experienced differently by different people. It also occurs between pupils, teachers and pupils and at the systemic level. This chapter has demonstrated how traditional definitions are limited in addressing children's everyday experiences of bullying. It was found that several children often experienced characteristics of bullying and the extent to which this was considered as bullying varied according to how severe it was and how it made them feel.

Most children did not perceive themselves as being bullied (and no one categorised themselves as a bully). Children resisted observation and normalisation powers inherent in these categories. This research has found that children often bully to be popular and achieve social power over peers. Popularity also relies on the powers of normalisation and the gaze whereby often people are frightened of resisting the power of the popular bully because they may become closely observed, pressured to conform to norms and susceptible to being excluded.

This research has analysed how bullying can be experienced in a systemic way with no identified perpetrator, for example, children being distressed because they feel people perceive them as thick. Teachers are also influenced by powers of normalisation and panopticism where they are closely observed and are expected to conform to norms and instil

these in children. Teachers who do not conform are susceptible to bullying.

Children who do not conform to educational standards, for example, who often misbehave often find that once identified under the panoptic they are targets of increased supervision and punishment. This can make children angry and want revenge. This also applies to children who are bullied who also become targets of increased supervision, exclusion, pressures to conform and further bullying. When they resist bullying by reporting it, often the bully exercises more power over them and they are bullied for '*grassing*'. Several children also reported that boredom is a reason why children bully. Through boredom, the power of time is exercised over children and they feel under its control. This was particularly the case for children who found it harder to engage with learning such as children with learning difficulties. This becomes a vicious cycle where through experiencing boredom children are likely to likely to be punished and isolated which makes them more disruptive, angry and more likely to experience and engage in bullying.

All children in school had their voice restricted, but the way this was restricted depended upon their position. Children who often misbehaved usually expressed their views in a confrontational way, particularly in the PRU, and were likely to be punished. However, children who were highly obedient, for example, the girls in the private school experienced being the objects of control and manipulation by not being allowed to wear trousers. However, several children who misbehaved decided to be obedient. For some children, the extent to which this is considered as resistance is limited since they often reported feeling '*beat*' by their teachers. To some extent, this can be considered as compliance and being a trained docile body where power is exercised in a sophisticated way through observation rather than being directly exercised. This demonstrates how resistance is imbued within power, and how multiple it is.

# CHAPTER SIX: SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

## **Introduction**

This chapter provides a theoretically informed account of the most significant findings of this thesis. It discusses the original contribution to knowledge which lies in the way it takes into account the complexities, messiness and 'grey' areas of bullying. It includes a new definition of bullying and a multi-faceted diagram which demonstrates this complexity. It also analyses the limitations and aims of this research. Finally, it includes reflections of my research journey.

## **Significant Findings**

### *Inadequacy of Current Definitions*

Despite various attempts to define bullying, it remains an ambiguous concept (Ofsted 2003; Besag 2006; Chan 2009). Although Olweus' (1993) definition is most often used, it is based on a binary approach. Such definitions are inadequate ways of understanding children's daily experiences and how they can perceive and experience bullying differently. However, a Foucauldian perspective enabled this to be investigated in a more fluid way that takes into account different severities of bullying ranging from clear to 'grey' and children's feelings were examined. When characteristics of bullying were investigated such as teasing and ostracism, it was found that many people experienced bullying.

Instead of just examining bullying that is restricted to pupils, this research highlights the importance of different levels and natures of power and the power struggles that are present in every relationship. This enabled different modalities of bullying to be analysed so that bullying between pupils; between pupils and teachers; and systemic bullying were investigated. A broad range of experiences were also analysed from friends who bully each other to bullying involving a clear imbalance of

power. The position of people and their susceptibility to bullying depended on their place in the panoptic and how much power of normalisation was on them. These are discussed later in this chapter.

When children were asked '*what is bullying?*' they often referred to the characteristics listed in *Appendix A* such as being 'picked on' and ostracised. However, when they experienced these, several children did not refer to them as bullying. Many children referred to behaviours such as upsetting someone because of their intellectual ability as bullying, some children said that teasing and name-calling was bullying but some said it was not. However, some children stated that name-calling can make people feel suicidal. This suggests that children have different views of bullying that depend on specific experiences. However, when children felt distressed when they experienced characteristics of bullying, it was considered as bullying.

Despite many children regularly experiencing maltreatment, few of them identified themselves as victims and no one labelled themselves as a bully. This supports Foucault's (1972) notion that binary definitions which are assumed to be fixed inside a person are actually fluid and changeable. It could be argued that children label themselves as a bully or victim when bullying is so severe that they think it defines them. From a Foucauldian perspective (1977; 1979; 1980), avoiding these labels resists being in a vulnerable position through normalisation and surveillance. Through surveillance, once an individual is identified as a bully or victim they are classified as abnormal, excluded and under the control and manipulation of others. Through normalisation, there is strong pressure on them to conform, for example, by not behaving like a victim. This results in more power being exercised over them and subjects them to further bullying and punishment where they become objects of surveillance, for example, victims get bullied for '*grassing*', bullies are put in isolation. In resisting these labels, children resist having governance and power exercised over them.

As Foucault (1980) implies, there is inequality in the panoptic and some people are more likely to be observed. Normalisation and panopticism focused more on disruptive children than people who engaged in bullying. Because many children who were disruptive had learning difficulties and were from working-class backgrounds, they often experienced systemic bullying more than other children, and were targeted and harmed by these technologies of power. The behaviour of children in the PRU was particularly more under the gaze, after each day, teachers wrote reports on their behaviour. Bullying to be popular, and that involves children who are succeeding academically, escaped many of these normalisation and surveillance powers. It was often admired and respected and children did not experience as much punishment for it. As a Foucauldian (1979) perspective implies, the most sophisticated 'crimes' tend to go unnoticed.

#### *Who is Vulnerable to Panopticism and Normalisation?*

Children with learning difficulties were particularly under the gaze and subject to more powers of normalisation and punishment. Through the hierarchies and exclusion in school, for example exams, an abnormal and shameful class was created. Partly through streaming, an incapable group '*at the bottom*' is created who are more likely to experience punishment from teachers because they don't conform to education standards. They are also more likely to be ostracised by peers because of their fixed and derogatory status.

From a Foucauldian perspective, 'delinquents' are also under the gaze in many ways, and in this research this includes people who are disruptive. Through panopticism, they are more likely to be watched, this subjects them to increasing surveillance, normalisation pressures and punishment. Through the exercise of this power, children labelled as 'thick' and/or 'disruptive' are vulnerable to and experience bullying at a systemic, teacher and pupil level. Because power can occur solely through observation and the gaze, placing someone in a position through streaming can be used to exercise power over them. The postcard '*boys who read are superior beings*' reinforced the inferiority of certain children.

People who look different physically or behave differently were also under the gaze of power-knowledge. Through this, they are likely experience bullying, further punishment and increasing pressure to conform.

Bullying leads to further punishment, observation, normalisation and further bullying. This can be used to explain how bullying is often persistent and gets progressively worse. Resistance often leads to increasing supervision, pressures to conform and punishment. This resembles the delinquent-criminal-prison cycle where those targeted by police are subject to increasing supervision, which sends many of them back to prison. The more children resist bullying, the more they are bullied; for example, they are likely to be bullied for *'grassing'*.

In the panoptic, children who are achieving academically (*'swots'*) are under the gaze of their teachers in terms of their academic performance. Their behaviour is noticeable and, to some extent, abnormal (albeit in a more positive way than children in the lower sets). Their mistakes and faults are highlighted as they often experience increased supervision and are targeted by their teachers. They can become docile bodies who experience increasing pressures to conform, be obedient and maintain their position at the top of the education hierarchy. However, because *'swots'* conform to educational standards (by achieving academically and being obedient), they have more power from their teachers than children in the lower sets. However, they tend to lose power with their peers because their high performance is under their gaze and they can be bullied by them.

*'People Bully because they are Bored'*

The finding that some pupils bully because of boredom suggests that there is something in the everyday experience of school which perpetuates bullying. Children described how they felt controlled and entrapped by boredom. However, people are influenced differently by boredom, depending on their position. This can be associated with Foucault's concept of docile bodies where their body is caught in

constraint, obligation and prohibitions. Boredom limits children's sense of agency because they often feel they cannot escape it. Through streaming, children in lower sets are given work that is less academically challenging than children in the higher sets. Yet their intellectual ability can circulate and is more fluid than this, for example, they may not be able to demonstrate their understanding in writing if they have dyslexia. If children cannot read what is on the boards, then they are more likely to disengage from learning and not feel stimulated. Through increasing pressures of boredom, children with learning difficulties are more likely to have a more unnecessary and isolating experience, as suggested by Foucault (1979). Punishing children through useless and unnecessary tasks, for example, detention and isolation creates more boredom, anger and a desire for revenge. This makes their behaviour worse as *'punishment strikes the soul'* (Foucault 1979). This is an experience of bullying which makes some children more frustrated, angry and likely to engage in bullying.

Bullying gives children some power when they experience boredom. This subjects them to greater powers of observation and punishment, so the more they are disruptive and bully, the more they are punished. However, children can resist this cycle and not engage in bullying and being disruptive. However, experiencing boredom and not resisting it is often perceived as punishment. However, if they cannot do their work their sense of agency is restricted. They are unlikely to reap the rewards of their efforts by achieving *'good GCSEs'*. This demonstrates how complex and multiple resistance is, and how, as specified by Foucault, it is embedded in power. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

#### *'People Bully to be Popular'*

Children often bully others to gain social power and those with social power can abuse it. This power is not necessarily physical or intellectual strength and is better explained by Foucault's (1980) concept of power which depends on an individual's position in the panoptic. Popularity instils normalisation. Ensuring conformity and excluding those who do not

conform reinforces the power of popularity. Popularity is based on how much power popular people are perceived to have. Individuals tend not to exercise their power over the popular bully because they do not want to be exposed under the gaze. They can become subject to pressures of normalisation through conformity, perceived as abnormal and excluded should they openly resist the popular bully. For people to remain popular, the majority should believe or behave as if they believe in their social power. It also relies on people not resisting their power to a great degree and where people who resist are punished. However, children could use their power and resist the popular bully because popularity is fluid and not fixed. Although Foucault's notion that '*power is always there*' implies that if children who are popular lose their power then it is likely that someone else will take their place.

#### *Positioning of the Teacher*

As Foucault (1980) implies, there is no one ultimate source of power and teachers do not have complete power over children. Teachers are in a different place in the panoptic to children and, in many ways, have more power over children. However, teachers are in a different place to one another and some are more vulnerable. This can be associated with normalisation where teachers who do not conform, for example, have a speech impediment, are vulnerable to bullying. Since power is fluid, children can gain power over their teachers.

Teachers have powers of surveillance and observation exercised over them (for example, by children) which require that they and impose hierarchy and exclusion and ensure that children conform to educational standards. This is to the detriment of those who struggle academically and are disruptive. The teacher is expected to encourage children to learn and achieve in school, however children in the lower sets may struggle to do this at the levels expected. The panoptic puts them in a position where they are particularly under the gaze. As a Foucauldian (1979) perspective implies, supervision from teachers targets them and subjects them to further punishment. If teachers do not conform to these

expectations then they are subject to increased pressures of normalisation, surveillance and punishment. Teachers' power in the panoptic and powers of normalisation positions teachers to use and sometimes abuse their power over certain children.

Through surveillance and normalisation, the teacher's power is limited. Part of this is from the children themselves: they have expectations of how a teacher should be, and those who stray too far from the norm can be vulnerable to bullying. Consequently, systemic and teacher bullying may overlap and it is not always clear when teachers are doing their job or bullying pupils, in many circumstances, they have the opportunity to do both. This research suggests that whether behaviour constitutes bullying depends on the specific situation and that it is important to consider the influence this has on children and if it causes them distress.

Even if teachers are doing what is expected of them, they may still be bullying pupils, for example, rewarding every child apart from one; or causing a child distress because they are the last ones to be picked in P.E. Many children are distressed and harmed by this. To some extent, children can resist being closely observed, for example, by not being disruptive, although it is particularly difficult for them to avoid being targets of punishment when they are supervised.

Powers of normalisation and surveillance influence how teachers reduce bullying. From being under observation, for example by children, they are expected to following norms when it comes to handling bullying and they are rarely 'empowered' to reduce it. This involves relying on systems currently in place such as detention and exclusion. Teachers who do not follow school norms come under increasing surveillance, punishment and bullying. However, a few teachers resisted, what appeared to be the norm of *'ignoring bullying'* by giving particular time and attention to reducing it.

### *Resistance and Autonomy*

In this thesis, when voice and agency are combined, it is considered as autonomy. However, through the panoptic, everyone's power was restricted, albeit in different ways. This also links to bullying, because the more power the bully exercised, the more this restricted children's autonomy.

Children experienced being docile bodies in different ways. Students who were obedient and were succeeding academically, were trained to be capable, submissive and the object of constraint and obligations. It could be argued that because they were obedient their agency was restricted. However, their position in the panoptic often protected them from being bullied by teachers in the way that working-class males with learning difficulties were. They were vulnerable in other ways, however, for example, the girls in the private school had to wear skirts. They sacrificed exercising agency in the short-term so they could have long-term opportunities. However, there is fluidity in their role and they were not well behaved all the time. Nevertheless, when they misbehaved they were less likely to be targeted by teachers. However, children who were achieving academically felt distressed by the pressures on them and feared being punished if they underperformed. This was perceived as systemic bullying.

As Foucault (1980) argued, ideally power is exercised through observation and the gaze without having to be exercised; for example children on the school council who learn *'what people want but cannot have'*. A Foucauldian perspective suggests that some children are controlled more than others. Children's sense of agency was significantly influenced by their intellectual ability and social class. It was also fluid and varied, for example, some children labelled as bad decided to be good and work hard. However, several children followed the biography expected of them. Since resistance is multiple, their resistance depended on their personal, intellectual and social circumstances and changed throughout their days.

Children who resisted their teacher's authority by being disruptive often become subject to control and manipulation through increased punishment. When people are bullied, their power and opportunities of resistance are limited. However, resistance is multiple and imbued in power and several children who experienced systemic bullying learned that *'they're [teachers] always gonna beat you'*. They suppressed their voice and resistance, obeyed their teachers and became compliant. Their experience of systemic bullying put them under the most overt pressures to become docile bodies. However, when they became compliant, they resisted being targeted for overt punishment and became less visible and subject to normalisation. However, they could not overtly express their voice. This demonstrates that these children could not exercise complete resistance and traded in one form of power for another. However, resisting overt punishment appeared to give them more power than being persistently subject to it. It appears that it is often power at the systemic level that usually gains victory and people who are subject to the most observation and normalisation powers have the least power.

Because people are often silent about bullying, several children were afraid that if they reported bullying they would be bullied further. It could be argued that reporting bullying gave more power to teachers which children felt was further abused over them. However, when children discussed bullying they resisted the isolation of silence. Children can psychologically (to some extent) resist powers of putting themselves under the panoptic and pressures of normalisation by rejecting what the bully says about them and refusing to accept and believe it. From this, they can achieve psychological powers of self-acceptance and esteem and be less of a victim. Although it is not complete resistance, it still carries weight. However, the more severely children are bullied, the less power they have to resist it.

### **Contribution to Knowledge and Originality**

This research is an original contribution to knowledge because it conceptualises bullying in a way which takes into account complexities; ambiguities; messiness; multiple perspectives; and experiences of bullying which '*slip through the net*' of traditional definitions. Its originality lies in the entirety of its multi-faceted understanding of bullying.

A Foucauldian perspective was used to investigate everyday lived experiences of bullying, as opposed to the disembodied and abstract positivistic perspective of bullying traditionally used. These definitions tend to focus on isolated, stereotypical and extreme experiences. However, this research takes into account how an individual's sense of the world differs depending upon their position. In the panoptic, certain people are more under the gaze and experience more pressures to conform to norms. It also demonstrates that in some ways children can exercise resistance and agency. However, this is also influenced by their position, for example, their intellectual ability.

The model that this research presents takes into account different severities, modalities and forms of bullying. It also considers people's feelings, perceptions and their position in the panoptic. It is a contribution to knowledge in finding that current definitions of bullying are limited in capturing children's daily lived experiences. This research has demonstrated how labels of bullies and victims are used to exercise power and control over certain people, put them under the gaze, exclude them and subject them to further punishment and bullying. It has demonstrated that children don't perceive themselves in a fixed way as bullies, and rarely as victims. However, most children suggested that they experienced characteristics of bullying, such as ostracism, teasing and humiliation. This was used in this research as a more fluid way to examine bullying and demonstrates the importance of moving beyond labelling people as victims and bullies. This research can be used to examine the complex experiences of bullying in everyday life, for example, bullying that does not involve a clear imbalance of power.

In the panoptic, those identified as conforming the least are subject to more normalisation pressures and are more vulnerable to the gaze of knowledge. This explains how certain children who do not conform (for example, to educational or peer group norms) are targeted more than others. Once bullied and under the gaze, people are more likely to be more bullied. This research has also contributed to knowledge in investigating how power and bullying can occur solely through observation and the gaze, for example, ostracism. Conceptualising bullying as normal, rather than abnormal, allowed the reasons why people bully, such as boredom and popularity, to be investigated. In losing power in one way, some children strive for power in another.

One contribution to knowledge is finding why people bully to be popular. People bully to be popular because they gain social power and people who have social power can use it to bully. Children are influenced by the spectacle where they witness the power of the popular bully and are afraid to go against it. This bullying instils normalisation and people who resist the popular bully are often subject to close observation, exclusion and bullying. It relies on the control and manipulation of individuals and groups as docile bodies. This highlights the complexity and fluidity of the power inherent in bullying.

This research highlights that some children bully because of boredom. Although most children reported experiencing boredom, children with learning difficulties are most likely to feel boredom because they are often less engaged in school. They may bully to gain some power back, since their boredom is perceived as punishment and power being exercised over them. This becomes a vicious cycle because they are subject to more boredom when they are punished, for example, detention. It also resembles the prison guard-prisoner relationship of Foucault (1979).

Although some researchers perceive teachers as having the power to handle bullying, this research considered how through panopticism and normalisation, their power was limited; however they generally had more

power than children. Teachers were subject to normalisation and panopticism where they were expected to handle bullying using official strategies in school. If they do not conform to the norms in school, their behaviour is under the gaze and they experience increasing pressures to conform and are susceptible to punishment and bullying. Teachers are also positioned to exercise powers of normalisation and observation over children. Children who do not conform to educational standards, such as working-class children who are disruptive are often under close observation, more likely to be segregated, excluded and subject to more punishment.

The Foucauldian perspective took into account how people can exercise resistance and autonomy which is multiple, for example, by reporting bullying. However, many children thought they would be bullied further if they reported it, this implies that the more children resisted the bully, the heavier the bully threw their weight. It suggests that once people are targets of bullying, their ability to resist it becomes increasingly restricted. However, children resisted the silence of bullying when they talked about it. Some children who were previously disruptive resisted being targets for punishment by suppressing their voice and obeying their teachers. They had experienced the heavy weight of punishment and had become compliant and docile bodies. However, power was exercised in a more sophisticated way where once they had been trained to be docile bodies, it did not have to be exercised over them but was present solely through observation and the gaze. This research also examined how children have different restrictions on their autonomy based on their social circumstances, for example, social class. This research has also developed a new 'definition' of bullying that takes into account this complexity.

As suggested by Popper's logic (Flyvbjerg 2004) it highlighted single cases that traditional definitions do not examine such as ostracism that did not have a clearly identified perpetrator. Because this research used qualitative data, the theoretical ideas about social processes can be

developed that exist beyond the data (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). Therefore, some of this research can be applied to understanding bullying in other areas such as in the workplace. These are discussed further in the next chapter.

### **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying involves unwanted, negative experiences. The individual feels it is difficult to defend themselves, but there does not have to be a clearly defined power imbalance for bullying to occur. These negative experiences vary in severity, there are clear experiences of bullying and 'grey' areas. Bullying includes forms that are verbal (for example, name-calling), psychological (for example, humiliation), physical (for example, being hit) and relational (for example, ostracism). Occasional name-calling or teasing that does not upset an individual is not automatically considered as bullying but it is not safe to assume that mild name-calling and teasing is not bullying; and this is considered a 'grey' area. However, some forms of name-calling and teasing can be considered as bullying that is so severe it can result in suicide and so attention must be paid to other factors, such as whether the person feels upset. These experiences can be intentional or unconscious by the person doing the bullying.

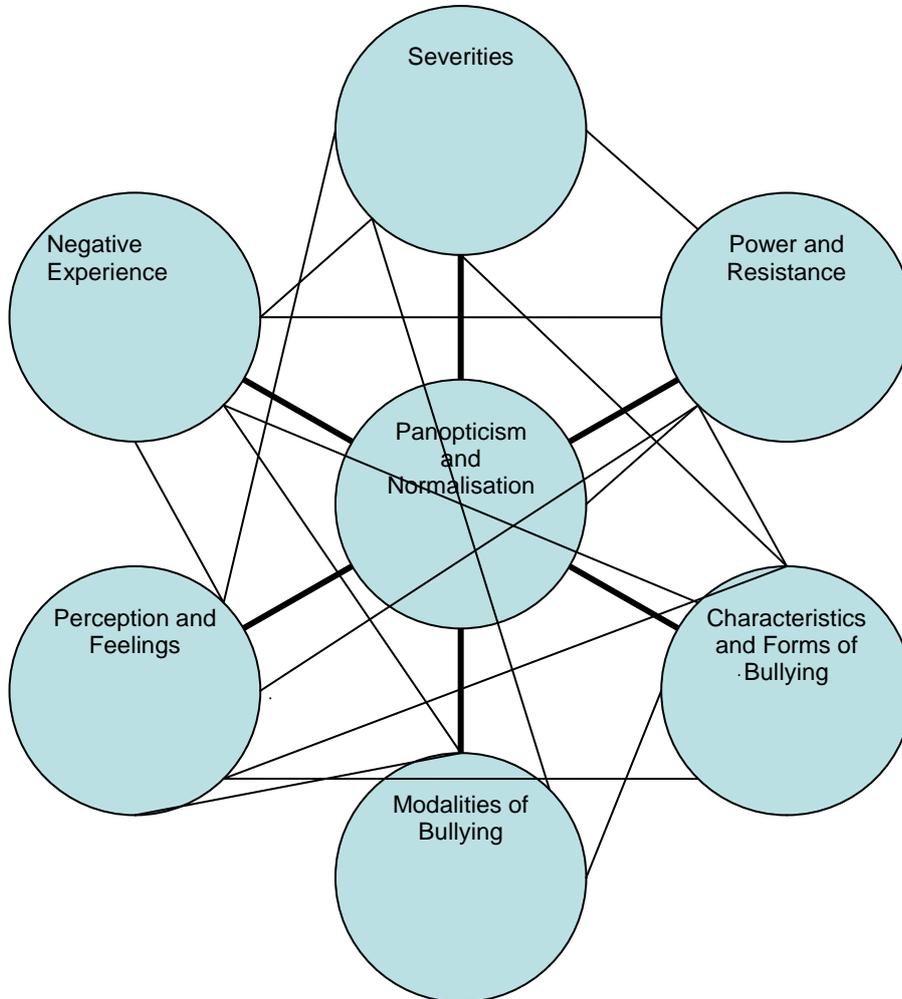
Children's perceptions of what constitutes bullying vary, although there are some experiences that most people would identify as bullying. Most people do not report bullying because they are frightened that it will get worse. People who experience bullying may not identify themselves as a bully or victim, because using these labels may make them more susceptible to bullying. When people express experiences described in this definition then they could be referred to as *'being bullied'* or *'bullying'* rather than *'I am a victim or bully.'* Bullying can be persistent but does not have to be, particularly if it causes distress between individuals. Bullying can happen in any relationship, for example, between friends.

School bullying involves fluid modalities at the following levels. Bullying can occur between pupils, for example ostracism. Teachers can bully

children, for example, causing them distress because they have publicly humiliated them. Children can bully teachers, for example, embarrassing them by calling them names. Children can also experience systemic bullying which is where certain children are maltreated because they belong to a stigmatised group and they feel distressed by this, for example, children in the lowest set who are upset because they think they are perceived as 'thick'. When people are bullied their behaviour often becomes more closely observed, and their differences/discrepancies are highlighted. Consequently, once people are targeted, they can become susceptible to more bullying.

## Multi-Faceted Diagram of Bullying

Diagram 1



Bullying is conceptualised as being influenced by panopticism and normalisation. These involve how closely observed children are and the pressures that are imposed on them to conform to norms. This model takes into consideration: negative experiences; power and resistance, different forms and modalities; perceptions and feelings; and different severities. The bold lines demonstrate how the sub-themes inter-link with the main theme (panopticism and normalisation). The other lines indicate how the sub-themes inter-link with each other. The diagram depicts the messy, complex and multi-faceted approach to bullying.

*Examples of How Themes Inter-link:*

**Negative Experiences:** Negative experiences, for example, vary depending on the modalities and forms of bullying.

**Forms and Characteristics of Bullying:** Different forms of bullying, for example, name-calling vary depending on severity.

**Modalities of Bullying:** Children experience panopticism and normalisation differently depending on whether it involves pupils, teachers or is at the systemic level.

**Perceptions and Feelings:** These are linked to other areas, for example, people's feelings vary depending on how much resistance they can exercise towards their bullying.

**Power and Resistance:** The extent to which people feel power is abused over them varies according to the severity of bullying.

**Severities:** There are different severities of negative experiences and modalities of bullying.

### **Limitations**

It could be argued that because this research is not a large sample from a survey that the findings cannot be generalised. However, an advantage of qualitative data is that it investigates group processes and this can be applied to other places where these group processes occur. Issues of boredom and popularity are likely to be prevalent in other schools (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). Because this research adopted a Foucauldian perspective, it investigated multiple perspectives and voices. However, different perspectives and experiences of bullying could not be smoothed over into one binary definition and ambiguities and 'grey' areas remained. This was considered as a strength of the study because it was used to investigate the limitations of traditional definitions and develop a multi-faceted understanding of bullying.

This research focused on face-to-face interactions and did not examine cyber-bullying, although exploring this would have extended on understanding the nature of bullying. Further study could extend the research to primary schools. This could be examined through a

longitudinal study to investigate what children learn about bullying throughout their schooling. To some extent, this was examined as children discussed their present and past experiences but it was not the focus of the study. The child's voice was filtered through writing this thesis. However, measures were taken to utilise their voice such as including quotations from all children in different circumstances (in the individual interviews) and which contradicted one another.

This data was taken from schools in an area of West Yorkshire which is predominantly working-class and although the private school is considered as relatively 'privileged', it was not one of the most prestigious private schools in England. There may also be some PRUs which do not have such a high proportion of children with learning difficulties; and which give children the opportunity to take a substantial number of their GCSEs. In all schools (apart from the primary school), children were in streamed classes. There may be limitations in terms of applying this research to mixed ability classes where findings of *'we're in the bottom set because we're the thickest'* may not apply as strongly. However, children identified 'swots' and 'thick' children within their own classes, so it is likely to have some applicability. The purpose of this research was not to examine or develop interventions that might 'work', although some recommendations developed from the data.

Because the emphasis was on the interview being led by children and themes were developed from participants, not all themes were covered equally. This reflects the importance of the children's voice taking precedence over the interview schedule, although it appears that the voice of girls in private school was better explored than the voice of boys in private school. This could be because the girls' autonomy and resistance seemed to be particularly restricted and became of interest in this research. Because no one labelled themselves as a bully, this research focused primarily on the experience of bullying rather than being a bully. However, as discussed throughout this thesis focusing primarily on bully and victim labels is restrictive and inaccurate.

### **Did the Research Achieve its Aims?**

This research achieved its aims of examining children's everyday experiences and interactions (between pupils and pupils and teachers) and where bullying exists within this. To do this, the research focused on characteristics of bullying and how these were experienced, this was used to overcome focusing on the most extreme experiences. The research also achieved the second aim of investigating different dimensions of bullying. These included different severities, modalities and forms of bullying. It also took into account children's feelings and multiple perspectives. It explored different ways of experiencing bullying in different schools, however this was not systematically examined, but was used to add more depth and complexity to understanding bullying.

Analysing different modalities of bullying meant that bullying between pupils (for example teasing); teachers and pupils (for example, humiliation); and at the systemic level (for example, when children with learning difficulties felt distressed because they were not able to do their work) were investigated. The focus on everyday experiences meant that perspectives were examined between teachers and pupils and ambiguity and messiness were analysed rather than bullying as a binary concept. The teachers' role was investigated where their power was conceptualised as fluid, involved struggles between individuals and was '*not in anyone's hands*'. Powers of normalisation and panopticism were perceived as influencing teachers and how they interacted with and treated children. The focus of bullying was on the power struggles in normal relationships and so a multitude of experiences were explored and a multi-faceted conceptualisation of bullying was developed where bullying was found to exist within the capillaries of everyday life and relationships, as a Foucauldian perspective implies.

### **Reflections**

I have realised how bullying is a complex phenomenon that can be experienced in many ways. I feel I have a better understanding of the restrictions that teachers have and how they are obliged to adhere to

school policies. I thought that there was more that teachers could have done about bullying and expected them to act in more autonomous, caring and responsible ways. I also expected children to do more about bullying and was surprised at the hopeless situation they presented. However, the more I analysed the findings, the more I realised the different ways they resisted bullying, for example, by speaking openly about it so they don't feel as isolated and lonely.

I have learned how children can take advantage of teachers, for example, if they are 'soft', and it has made me realise that, in future, I will be more firm with children and accept my role as a responsible adult. I was surprised how children traditionally considered as 'bystanders' were affected and how many of them were frightened of bullying. I have realised how certain behaviours which may appear to be 'harmless fun' can be more distressing than they appear, and I am reminded of times when I have witnessed these interactions as a teacher and have just laughed at them. I have learned about the extent to which being 'popular' is a motivation to bully, the amount of children with learning difficulties that get victimised, and the complex nature of this victimisation. I have also learnt how people can feel bullied solely through observations and normalisation pressures, and that they do not have to directly experience bullying to be affected by it. I thought my own experiences of bullying as a child was severe, exceptional and rare, but now I realise they are experienced by many children.

I have admired many of the children who took part in this research for being honest and endearing and don't believe anyone should be ashamed to say they are being bullied. Data from these children is a snapshot of their life some time ago and their experiences go on; many of them have probably experienced bullying since these interviews. However, partly through its understanding of the fluidity of power and the multiple forms of resistance, this research offers hope that bullying can be handled better. These are addressed in the next chapter.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has analysed the significant findings of this research. It has demonstrated how limited traditional definitions of bullying are in addressing children's experiences of bullying, different severities, modalities and forms of bullying, and how people experience bullying differently.

The power of teachers is limited and they are expected to handle bullying using the procedures in school. If teachers do not conform to what is expected of them then they can be placed under the gaze and vulnerable to bullying. The position of the teacher is to supervise children to ensure they conform to educational standards. Children who do not conform to educational standards, such as those with learning difficulties, experience increased supervision, pressures to conform, punishment and bullying (from teachers pupils and at the systemic level). Through streaming, their ability is assumed to be fixed and they are often associated with an incapable and shameful class. This feeds into their relationship with teachers which can become strained. Peers also often perceive these children in a derogatory way and they can experience being ostracised and called names, such as thick, which often causes them distress and is a form of bullying. People who regularly experience punishment can become angry, want revenge and so they may engage in bullying.

Through categorising people as victims and bullies, people become targets of supervision and experience increasing powers of normalisation and observation. However, most people resisted this power by not categorising themselves in this way. One main reason why people bully is to be popular because they gain social power over peers. Popularity relies on people having social power and peers not resisting their power. Often people accept this power because they don't want to be under the gaze, excluded from peers and bullied. This research has explained why people bully because they are bored. Boredom is a form of power, control and punishment exercised over children. Children with learning difficulties often experience this more because it can be harder for them to engage

with their work. This can result in them being disruptive, which means they are more likely to experience further boredom and punishment. They may engage in bullying to get some control and power back and take out their anger on others.

This research has demonstrated that resistance is imbued within power. Although resistance is multiple, the power people have to resist is influenced and restricted by their place in the panoptic. Children can exercise voice in different ways, depending on their position. Talking about bullying resists being silent about it, but reporting it can result in more bullying. Resistance is also linked with the conditioning of docile subjects. Through systemic bullying, children are conditioned to lose their voice, be obedient, and comply with the teacher's authority. Those who resist the teacher's authority are regularly punished and experience increased supervision which makes many of them feel '*beaten*' by teachers. Those who do not resist the teacher's authority, often do not exercise their voice and accept their teachers' power. However, teachers do not have ultimate power and are subject to multiple forms of resistance being exercised by children throughout the school day. This demonstrates how, the more people resist power, the heavier it throws its weight. The power that gains the largest victory is usually at the systemic level.

This research is an original contribution to knowledge in how it has investigated the complex issues of where bullying exists in children's everyday experiences and how people experience bullying differently. It has examined how issues such as boredom, popularity and the teacher's role interweave and are associated with different forms, severities and modalities of bullying. To conclude, bullying exists within the capillaries of children's everyday experiences of school.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

## Implications

Although this research used a small sample and generalisation is inappropriate, its findings help to understand social processes and provide explanations that have wider resonance beyond the data (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Mason 1996). Recommendations are likely to be applicable to other schools, and to some extent, the workplace. They have been drawn from cases that do not conform to traditional definitions, for example, bullying that does not involve a clear imbalance of power (Flyvbjerg 2004). These recommendations have also been drawn from participants who have different perspectives and are from different backgrounds such as working-class and middle-class children. They also take into account different severities, forms and modalities of bullying.

## Recommendations

### *Reduce the Stigma of the Bullying Label*

It has been found that most children involved in bullying are reluctant to be identified as a bully or victim. This implies that teachers, pupils and policy makers should also use terms such as '*experiencing bullying*' or '*engaging in bullying*' because bully and victim labels are often ineffective. Children could also refer to themselves as being victimised (particularly when it is severe) and those who often bully people could be referred to as 'bullying' and not necessarily a bully. This means children can resist being subject to powers of normalisation, and having a fixed stigmatised identity. However, since there are some clear cases of bullies and victims it is important not to reject these labels altogether. Although changing the label is not expected to stop bullying, using less stigmatised terms may encourage more people to admit to being involved in bullying. Bullying should also be recognised in varying in form and severity. Using clear binaries of what bullying does and does not involve also gives an

opportunity for statements such as *'bullying does not happen in our school'*.

This research has demonstrated how widely children are affected by bullying. It is therefore important to encourage children not to be ashamed of being bullied and to have the courage to admit to being bullied and engaging in bullying. One way to do this is to encourage people to talk more openly about bullying which is discussed below. Another recommendation is to promote understanding of why people bully, for example, often people bully to be popular. This research also suggests that interventions aimed specifically at reducing bullying are likely to be ineffective in dealing with the underlying factors associated with bullying such as boredom. Dealing with boredom involves engaging children's interests and this is discussed later in this chapter.

#### *Nip Bullying in the Bud to Avoid 'Crisis Interventions'*

This research has found that bullying often gets progressively worse. Therefore, when it has occurred, teachers (and managers in the workplace) need to check it has not recurred, even when it has been reported. Often bullying is not completely hidden from teachers even though it is rarely reported to them. This suggests that teachers should be concerned when they see people being maltreated, for example, persistently called names, and should explain to children that this is unacceptable and can be hurtful. This can be raised in class but if teachers think it may lead to further victimisation, it could be discussed in small groups or with individuals.

#### *Punishment and Talking*

Dealing with bullying in its extreme and typical form by using interventions such as isolation can target certain individuals. Children who were often punished in this research tended to be working-class males in lower streams. The way punishment was administered often made people angry and want revenge. It did not encourage them to reflect on their behaviour, and removed responsibility from pupils.

One way to deal with 'bad behaviour' is to encourage children to talk about their problems and ask them why they are misbehaving rather than immediately punishing them, as some children suggested in this research. When children are throwing pens around the room, the teacher should take them aside and ask them '*why did you do that?*' However, policy-makers and head-teachers need to give teachers the time opportunity and training to do so. This is particularly important because these children often encounter difficulties such as family problems which can make them more susceptible to '*unfair punishment*' and bullying.

It would be beneficial for schools and policy-makers to carefully consider the early stages of exclusion, for example, a reading difficulty can result in a child being unable to participate in learning, become overtly disruptive and more inclined to be punished. Isolation should only be used when children are a severe threat to themselves or others. Although it could be argued that isolation provides an opportunity for the majority of children to work without major disruption, it arguably borders on abuse.

Children in this research suggested that outright punishment methods tend to make bullying worse once children return to school, and those who are bullied are often frightened of these methods. Sophisticated and popular bullies usually escape being noticed by policy and interventions. For bullying to be perceived as '*uncool*' it is important to show children it is not acceptable. If a teacher is aware that someone is persistently engaging in bullying, then they should encourage the victim to report it, support the victim and encourage other children to support and report bullying. When someone is being severely bullied and the bully refuses to desist, then exclusion may be necessary as a last resort. However, prior to this, teachers should try to get the person to understand the hurt they have caused, listen to how it makes the 'victim' feel, and the consequences of this.

This research has examined children in PRUs, which is often where excluded children go. It suggests that they are not an optimal place for children with their widespread violence, segregation and 'boring' activities. One recommendation is to send them to 'retreats' first where they are encouraged to talk about and reflect on their behaviour, have counselling and support. This is especially helpful for people who engage in bullying because their underlying problems can be addressed. Although this research has not examined whether this would be effective, it has demonstrated that children are not encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and implies that it would be beneficial if they did.

#### *Talk about Bullying: Resist the Silence*

People should be encouraged to discuss more openly things that are upsetting and bothering them. However, they are often afraid to say when they are bullied. When children are punished it does not encourage discussion and reflection. It has been discussed in the ethics section that talking about bullying and maltreatment in a supportive environment can help reduce isolation and loneliness (Zerubabel 2006). Because people are often silent about bullying, when they talk about it they are resisting it and have the opportunity (albeit restricted) to do something about it. Schools should encourage this 'talking culture' and give teachers time to facilitate it. It is likely to help reduce disruptive behaviour and bullying and contribute to a better learning environment. Since this research has found different severities and forms of bullying, teachers could recognise this when they talk to children and encourage them to be aware of this.

#### *Resist 'Popular Bullying'*

The finding that most children suggested people bully to be popular suggests that parents and teachers should pay attention to the dynamics of popular groups, for example, who is 'in' and who is 'out'. Since people who are ostracised from certain groups are likely to be experiencing bullying. Teachers should recognise the social gains that people can have through bullying, rather than just perceiving it as negative and unrewarding behaviour.

These findings also have wider resonance to people who have social power in other areas of life, for example, managers in the workplace. Because of their position, people with social power can have influence over large groups. However, the social group has the power to question and resist their power. To do this they should recognise and exercise their power. It is unlikely that an individual alone resisting bullying will change the power dynamics (although it is a start) others need to start to support this so that they group can use their power and resist that of bullies.

### *Give Teachers More Power to Deal with Bullying*

If teachers are expected to do something about bullying then it is important to encourage children to report it. Some strategies have already been suggested whereby teachers can handle bullying in a more effective way, for example, talking about bullying before punishing 'bullies'.

Teachers should be given more authority to deal with bullying, but their role is currently restricted. They should be placed in a position where they are not so susceptible to bully children, for example by persistently targeting certain children for punishment. There should be procedures in place to acknowledge how teachers can bully pupils, these could include examples of what experiences constitute teachers bullying pupils and specify what people can do about it, for example, who to report it to.

There should also be acknowledgement some pupils can bully teachers and there should also be procedures in place for this. Systemic bullying could also be recognised and recommendations put in place by schools of how to deal with this. This could be concerned with a code of conduct where people in school are encouraged to treat people respectfully. Teachers and children should be encouraged to speak respectfully to each other and not shout, this is likely to set a good example to discourage people from bullying and make it less 'normal'. Communication skills such as talking, listening and reflecting should be

encouraged in schools. Teachers should be able to reduce disruption more, however many children find school boring. Consequently, school should be made more interesting. This is discussed in more detail in the boredom section of this chapter.

To reduce disruption, anger and bullying, children need to feel they can exercise more voice and autonomy. However, this is beyond the power of individual teachers. Policymakers could give teachers time to provide more one-one tutorials from a specific person, for example, in pastoral care where children can make appointments so they can help them overcome their difficulties, however, this is likely to be expensive. Initiatives to reduce bullying by giving pupils opportunities to express themselves such as bully boxes would be more effective if more time and opportunity was given for teachers to listen to children. These issues could be dealt with in some of the Personal and Social Education (PSE) lessons. For children to feel that teachers will listen to them when they report bullying, they need to think that they listen to them in other ways.

### *Thorough Investigations of Bullying*

When bullying is reported it is important that the teacher thoroughly investigates the details of what has happened, for example, someone may have retaliated and hit their bully rather than being a violent bully. Bullying can be a 'grey' area and teachers need to look deeply into the details and carefully examine events. They could also speak to other witnesses. However, they should be aware that witnesses may be afraid to discuss bullying with them.

Although reporting bullying may make individuals more vulnerable, it is important to tell people so they can help. Children should tell parents and teachers and pupils who they trust and they discuss strategies and how to best approach bullying. If the bully retaliates then people should continue to try to reduce the bullying rather than be frightened by it. Schools and policymakers need to make it as easy as possible for people to report bullying but if written reports are given priority over verbal reports this

places the least literate at a disadvantage and to some extent denies them voice.

### *Recognise Vulnerable People are often Bullied*

People can be particularly vulnerable to bullying if they do not conform to standards expected of them, for example, if they have a learning difficulty. Policymakers should try to prevent these children from being so vulnerable to bullying. It is important to recognise and build on people's abilities rather than disabilities. There could be opportunity in the curriculum, or as part of PSE lessons, where people can build on their talents and what they are good at. There could also be events at certain times of the year where children can demonstrate the different things they have learned and the talents they have. It is also important that teachers are careful about how they speak about people who may not be achieving the academic standards expected of them. Teachers and children should more openly recognise and talk about their achievements in order to improve their self-esteem.

To encourage children to accept difference and enhance their self-esteem teachers should promote the notion that even though all children are different and make mistakes, they do not deserve to be bullied. They could show children that they accept difference and have more tolerance when children make mistakes. They could also encourage children to help one another. If a child forgets their pen, teachers should advise them that they remember it next time and encourage another child to lend them a pen rather than sending them out of class and excluding them from learning. This will also encourage a more stimulating, inclusive and supportive environment. However, because this research has found that children and teachers are used to children being overtly punished when they make mistakes, it may be difficult for people to adjust to working in this way.

### *Agency, Resistance and using Power*

This research has demonstrated that people often lose power when they are bullied. However, because power is fluid and is not completely in anyone's hands, they can exercise resistance. Firstly, they could psychologically resist, question the power of their bullies and reject what they say about them. Resisting bullying by speaking about and reporting it has already been discussed. Children who are bullied should find some self-acceptance for themselves by recognising that they should be treated with respect, regardless of what other people think of them. It is also important for people to find attributes in themselves and others that are positive and that they think favourably of.

Children who misbehave and feel '*picked on*' by their teachers can resist punishment by improving their behaviour and doing their work. It could be argued that this is just compliance. However, they will have more power since they will not be repeatedly punished. It does not necessarily mean that they completely suppress their voice and be defeated. If they concentrate on their work, they have less chance of being targeted and more chance of reaping both long-term and short-term education rewards. Although they may still not be able to achieve the same educational rewards as more able students, it puts them in a position where they are less likely to be segregated.

### *Make School more Interesting to Reduce Boredom*

Boredom was found to be a common reason for why people bully. It was often experienced by children, particularly those who are the most disengaged. This implies that different ways of teaching and examining children should be used more widely such as audio recording so children who have learning difficulties can perform better. Streaming can make children vulnerable to bullying and perceived as '*thick*' or a '*swot*'. To reduce this stigma, mixed ability classes could be used in some subjects such as Art, and if someone is talented in something in the lowest set then they could go in higher sets for this.

Encouraging children to reflect on their behaviour rather than just punishing them can be used to engage children more. Teachers should encourage children to be more involved with their social world, for example, contribute to their community by being involved in with the local council, rather than writing lines. Curriculum and pedagogy could be more flexible to allow children to learn some subjects that they enjoy and find interesting. To capture children's interest teachers could encourage children to learn something that they find interesting and where they can exercise their choice and agency such as researching a topic they find interesting.

Other strategies include reducing class sizes so teachers can engage with children and be able to notice and respond to children when they are disengaged. However, this is likely to be expensive although it will be more stimulating for children and help them develop. It would be beneficial for lessons to be shorter so that activities can be broken up and that time does not drag. This is particularly useful for children who may have a shorter attention span and also when certain tasks that children are learning are difficult. When children appear to be bored then it is beneficial to change activities. This will help reduce boredom because children feel they have control. Teachers could also have a 'voice box' where children can post their comments about school, and teachers could read and respond to their comments.

### *Encourage Children to Take Responsibility*

Children should be encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and the influence it has on others. If a person has caused distress by making a humiliating remark, then they should take responsibility for their behaviour and the upset caused, regardless of whether they admit they caused harm. Teachers could encourage children to apologise for their behaviour and reflect on it. They could watch films about the adverse effects of bullying, if they have damaged someone's property then they could pay for the damage. They could also be encouraged to write about the effects their bullying may have on their victim. The teacher or person

who is bullied could explain (with support from a teacher) how their behaviour has made them feel, so the bully can reflect on it. It is not acceptable to point to someone's physical and intellectual imperfections, laugh at them and upset them. It is also important to consider how certain behaviours which may seem harmless fun such as name-calling can offend and upset someone to the point they feel suicidal.

### *Encourage Recognition*

This research has demonstrated that overt rewards for example, 'pupil of the week' can be counter-productive, create hostility and perpetuate bullying by arousing anger and feelings of low self-worth in those who don't get rewarded. Children who are often rewarded may be under the gaze, perceived as *swots* and experience bullying. Recognition could be used instead where attention is paid to improving children's everyday environment. Some suggestions include teachers listening to children and responding to them more; keep children stimulated; ensure their environments are comfortable where they have enough space, comfortable chairs and are spoken to with respect.

### **Directions for Further Research**

Further research should take into account the complexity of bullying. It could further examine bullying as involving different forms, modalities and severities; and consider different perceptions and feelings. This research has highlighted the magnitude of bullying of children with learning difficulties, and research would benefit from further investigating such matters. With increasing surveillance and restricted privacy on social networking sites such as Facebook, it could be argued that people are willing to put themselves under the gaze and that there are perceived advantages for doing this. The effects this has in relation to bullying warrants further investigation. It would be interesting for further research to examine where bullying exists in the everyday interactions on the internet; in the workplace; and within the family context. Further research could also investigate bullying that occurs, solely through observation and the gaze alone, so that bullying would be examined in its most

sophisticated form and systemic bullying could be more thoroughly analysed. This research demonstrates the complexity of the teachers' role in handling bullying and this warrants further investigation. Further research could investigate more thoroughly when teachers and pupils use and abuse their power over each other. Whilst this research has explored the child's voice and perceptions of bullying, it would be interesting to examine to what extent teachers believe they are listened to and can exercise their voice. Further research could also examine how bullying is dealt with through popular culture, for example, books and films. This research has demonstrated that children perceive that bullying can achieve things for people. Although this research has not investigated the workplace, it implies that research should examine bullying by people who are admired and succeeding in their careers such as executives.

## REFERENCES

- Aalsma, M.C. and Brown, J.R. (2008) 'What is bullying?' *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 43, (2) pp.101-102.
- Ackers, R.I. (1968) Problems in the sociology of deviance *Social Forces*, 46, p.463.
- Ahmad, Y. and Smith, P.K. (1994) Bullying in schools and the issue of sex differences. In Archer. J. ed. *Male violence*. London: Routledge, pp.70-83.
- Ahmed, E. (2006) 'Understanding bullying from a shame management perspective' *Educational Psychology*, 23, (2) pp.25-39.
- Alderson, P. (2000) Children as researchers: The effects of participation rights on research methodology. In Christensen, P. and James A. eds. *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.241-254.
- Allan, J.A. (2009) 'The importance of being a lady hyper-femininity and heterosexuality in the private, single-sex primary schools' *Gender and Education*, 21, (2) pp.145-158.
- Arnot, M. and Reay D. (2007) 'A sociology of pedagogic voice: Power, inequality and pupil consultation' *Discourse Studies in the Cultural Policies of Education*, 28, (3) pp.311-325.
- Aronwitz, S. (2004) Foreword. In Dolby N. and Dimitriadis, G. eds. *Learning to Labor in New Times*. London: Routledge, pp.ix-xiii.
- Askew, S. (1989) Aggressive behaviour in boys: To what extent is it institutionalised? In Tattum, D.P and Lane, D.A. eds. *Bullying in schools*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham books, pp.59-72.
- Atkinson, E. (2002) 'The responsible anarchist: Postmodernism and social change' *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 23, (1) pp.73-87.
- Atkinson, P. and Hammersley, M. (1994) Ethnography and participant observation. In Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp.248-261.
- Bandura, A., Ross, D. and Ross, S.A. (1961) 'Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models' *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 63, pp.575-582.

Bansel, P., Davies B., Laws C., and Linnell, S. (2009) 'Bullies, bullying and power in the context of schooling' *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 30, (1) pp.59-69.

Barrett, M. (1991) *The politics of truth: From Marx to Foucault*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. (1993) *Imitations of postmodernity*. London: Routledge.

Baxter, J. (2002) 'A juggling act: A feminist poststructuralist analysis of girls' and boys' talk in the secondary classroom' *Gender and Education*, 14, pp.5-19.

Beck, U. (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.

Becker, H.S. (1963) *Outsiders: Studies in the sociology of deviance*. New York: Free Press.

Besag, V.E. (1989) *Bullies and victims in schools*. Buckingham: Open University.

Besag, V.E. (2006) *Understanding girls' friendships, fights and feuds: A practical approach to girls' bullying*. Maidenhead: Open University.

Best, S. and Kellner, D. (1991) *Postmodern theory: Critical Interrogations*. London: Macmillan.

Bjorkqvist, K. (1994) 'Sex differences in physical, verbal and indirect aggression: A review of recent research' *Sex Roles*, 30, (3/4) pp.177-188.

Blake, N. (1997) 'A postmodernism worth bothering about: A rejoinder to Cole, Hill and Rikowski' *British Journal of Education Studies*, 45, (3) pp.293-305.

Bloor, M. (1997) Techniques of validation in qualitative research: A critical commentary *In* Miller, G. and Dingwall, R. eds. *Context and Method in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, pp.37-50.

Boaler, J. (1997) 'When even the winners are losers: Evaluating the experiences of top set students' *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 29, (2) pp.165-182.

Bosacki, S.L., Zopito, M.A., and Dane D.V. (2006) 'Voices from the classroom: Pictorial and narrative representations of children's bullying experiences' *Journal of Moral Education*, 35, (2) pp.231-245.

Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J. (1994) Introduction: Language and relationship to language in the teaching situation. *In* Bourdieu, P.,

Passeron, J. and Saint Martin, M. eds. *Academic Discourse*. Cambridge: Polity, pp.1-34.

Breidenstein, G. (2007) 'The meaning of boredom in school lessons: Participant observations in the seventh and eighth form' *Ethnography and Education*, 4, (1) pp.93-108.

British Educational Research Association (2004) *Revised ethical guidelines for educational research*. Nottingham: BERA.

British Psychological Society (2006) *Code of conduct and ethics*. Leicester: BPS.

British Psychological Society (2009) *Code of conduct and ethics*. Leicester: BPS.

Brown, B. (1990) Peer groups and peer cultures. In Feldman S.S. and Elliott G.R. eds. *At the threshold: the developing adolescent*. Cambridge: Masc.: Harvard University Press, pp.171-196.

Bryman, A. (1988) *Quantity and quality in social research*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Burk, F. (1897) 'Teasing and bullying' *Pedagogical Seminary*, 4 pp.336-371.

Burns, D. and Walker, M. (2005) Feminist methodologies In Somekh, B. and Lewin, C., eds. *Research methods in the social sciences*. London: Sage, pp.67-73.

Butler, J. (1992) Contingent foundations: feminism and the question of postmodernism. In Butler J. and Scott, J. eds. *Feminists theorise the political*. New York: Routledge.

Byrne, B. (2004) Qualitative interviewing. In Seale, C. ed. *Researching society and culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Sage, pp.179-192.

Chan, J.H. (2009) 'Where is the imbalance?' *Journal of School Violence*, 8, (2) pp.177-190.

Cheminais, R. (2006) *Every child matters: A practical guide for teachers*. Oxon: David Fulton Publishers.

Christensen, P. and James, A. (2000) Introduction: Researching children and childhood: cultures of communication. In Christensen, P. and James A. eds. *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.1-8.

Cicourel, A.V. (1964) *Method and measurement in sociology*. New York: The Free Press.

Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1990) *Making sense of qualitative data*. London: Sage.

Cohen, A.K. (1955) *Delinquent boys: The culture of the gang*. London: Macmillan.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994) *Research methods in education*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. London: Routledge.

Cole, M. (2003) 'Might it be practice that it fails to succeed? A Marxist critique of claims for postmodernism and poststructuralism as forces for change and social justice' *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24, (4) pp.487-500.

Connell, R.W. (1989) 'Cool guys, swots and wimps: The inter-play of masculinity and education' *Oxford Review of Education*, 15, (3) pp.291-303.

Corker, M. and Shakespeare, T. (2002) *Disability/postmodernity: embodying disability theory*. London: Continuum.

Cornell, D. Sheras, P.L. and Cole, J.C. (2006) Assessment of Bullying *In* Jimerson, R and Furlong, M.J. eds. *Handbook of school violence and school safety*. New York: Routledge, pp.191-209.

Costanzo, P.R. and Shaw, M.E. (1996) 'Conformity as a function of age level' *Child Development*, 37, pp.967-975.

Cowie, H. and Jennifer, D. (2008) *New perspectives on bullying*. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Coyne, I and Monks, C.P. (2011) An overview of bullying and abuse across settings. *In* Monks, C.P. and Coyne, I. *Bullying in different contexts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Craig, W.M., Pepler, D.J. and Atlas, R. (2000) 'Observations of bullying in the playground and in the classroom' *School Psychology International*, 21, (1) pp.22-36.

Crotty, M. (1998) *The foundations of social research*. London: Sage.

Cullingford, C. and Brown G. (1995) 'Children's perceptions of victims and bullies' *Education 3-13*, 23, (2) pp.11-17.

Curtis, P. (2008) 'State urged to help deprived children to communicate' *The Guardian*, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, p.12.

Czarniawska, B. (2008) Humiliation: A standard organizational product?' *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 19, (7) pp.1034-1053.

Darley, J. and Latane, B. (1968) 'When will people help in a crisis?' *Psychology Today*, 2 pp.54-57, 70-71.

Davis, J., Watson, N. and Cunningham-Burley, S. (2000) Learning the lives of disabled children: Developing a reflexive approach. In Christensen, P. and James, A eds. *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.201-224.

De Lamater, J. (1968) 'On the nature of deviance' *Social Forces*, 46, (4) pp.445-455.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2000) Introduction: the discipline and practice of qualitative research. In Denzin N. K, and Lincoln Y. S. eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn. New York: Sage, pp.1-28.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2007) What does the law say schools and local authorities should and can do about bullying? *TeacherNet* [online] Available from <<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/behaviour/tackingbullying/safetolearn/whatthelawsays>> [Accessed 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010].

Department for Schools and Families (2003) *Every child matters*. Norwich: Stationery Office.

De Pear, S. and Garner, P. (1996) Tales from the exclusion zone: The views of teachers and pupils exclusion from school. In Blyth, E. and Milner, J. eds. *Exclusion from school: Inter-professional issues for policy and practice*. London: Routledge, pp.149-158.

Derrida, J. (1998) *Limited inc.* (tr. Weber, S. and Mehlman). Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Devine, D. (2003) *Children, power and schooling: How childhood is structured in the primary school*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham.

Dews, P. (1987) *Logics of disintegration: Poststructuralist thought and the claims of critical theory*. London: Verso.

Dixon, R. (2011) *Rethinking school bullying: Towards an integrated model*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Downes, D. and Rock, P. (2007) *Understanding deviance: A guide to the sociology of crime and rule-breaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Duncan, N. (1999) *Sexual bullying*. London: Routledge.

Durkin, K. (1995) *Developmental social psychology: From infancy to old age*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Dzuka, J and Dalbert, C. (2007) 'Students' violence against teachers: Teachers' well-being and the belief in a just world' *European Psychologist*, 12, (4) pp.253-260.

Elam, D. (1992) *Romancing the postmodern*. London: Routledge.

Elliot, M. (2002) Long-term effects of bullying: Kidscape survey. *In* Elliot, M., ed. *Bullying*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Kent: Pearson education, pp.240-257.

Epp, P.J. (1997) Schools, complicity and sources of violence. *In* Epp, R.J. and Watkinson, A.M. eds. *How schools hurt children*. London: Falmer Press, pp.1-23.

Epp, P.J. and Watkinson, A.M. (1997) Preface, *In* Epp, R.J. and Watkinson, A.M. eds. *How schools hurt children*. London: Falmer Press, pp.xi-xx.

Eslea, M. Stepanova, E. and Cameron-Young, B. (2002) 'Aggressive classroom management: Do teachers bully pupils?' Presented at the *British Psychological Society Annual Conference*, 13-16<sup>th</sup> March Blackpool [online]. Available from <http://www.uclan.ac.uk/old/facs/sceince/psychol/bully/files/montreal/pdf> [Accessed 29<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008].

Flyvbjerg, B. (2004) Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *In* Seale, C. Gobo, G. Gubrium J. and Silverman, D. eds. *Qualitative research practice*. London: Sage, pp.420-434.

Fontana, A. and Frey, J. (2000) The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. *In* Denzin N. K, and Lincoln Y. S. eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edn. New York: Sage, pp.645-672.

Foucault, M. (1972) The discourse on language appendix *In* *The archaeology of knowledge* New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1973) *The birth of the clinic: an archaeology of medical perception*. London: Tavistock.

Foucault, M. (1974) *The archaeology of knowledge* London: Tavistock.

Foucault, M. (1979) *Discipline and punish*. London: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1980) *Michel Foucault: Power knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings*. *In* ed. C. Gordon. Hertfordshire: Harvester.

Foucault, M. (1982) The subject and power in Dreyfus, H. and Rainbow, P. eds. *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*. Brighton: Harvester Press.

- Fox, C.L. and Boulton, M.J. (2005) 'The social skills problems of bullying: Self, peer and teachers' perceptions' *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, (75), 2 pp.313-328.
- Frey, K.S. (2005) 'Gathering and communicating information about school bullying: Overcoming secrets and lies' *Health Education*, 105, (6) pp.409-413.
- Gadamer, H-G (1979) *Truth and method*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. New York: Continuum
- Garratt, D. and Hodkinson, P. (1998) 'Can there be criteria for selecting research? A hermeneutical analysis of an inescapable dilemma' *Qualitative Inquiry*, 4, (4) pp.515-539.
- Goffman, E. (1959) *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday Anchor.
- Goffman, E. (1963) *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. London: Penguin
- Green, S. (2001) In Lurie, S.J. and Zylke, J. W. eds. 'Systemic vs individualistic approaches to bullying' *Journal of American Medical Association*, 286, (2) pp.787-788.
- Hamilton, C. (2002) Bullying: A guide to the law. In Elliot, M., ed. *Bullying*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Kent: Pearson education, pp.213-232.
- Hammersley, M. (1990) *Reading ethnographic research: A critical guide*. London: Longmans.
- Hammersley, M. (1992) *What's wrong with ethnography? Methodological explorations*. London: Routledge.
- Hammersely, M. (1995) *The politics of social research*. London: Sage.
- Hammersely, M. (1996) 'Post mortem or post modern? Some reflections on British sociology of education' *British Sociology of Educational Studies*, 44, (4) pp.395-407.
- Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (2007) *Ethnography: Principles in practice*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London: Routledge.
- Hargreaves, D. (1967) *Social relations in secondary school*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Hayden, C. (2003) 'Responding to exclusion from school in England' *Journal of Educational Administration*, 41, (6) pp.626-639.
- Hayward, K. (2004) *City limits: Crime, consumer culture and the urban experience*. London: Routledge.

- Hazler, R. J., Miller, D.L., Carney, J.V. and Green, S. (2001) 'Adult recognition of bullying situations' *Educational Research*, 43, (2) pp.133-142.
- Hepburn, A. (1997) 'Teachers and secondary school bullying: A postmodern discourse analysis' *Discourse and Society*, 9, pp.639-665.
- Hodkinson, P. and Bloomer, M. (2001) 'Dropping out of further education: Complex causes and simplistic policy assumptions' *Research Papers in Education*, 16, (2) pp.117-140.
- Hook, D. (2001) 'Discourse, knowledge, materiality, history: Foucault and discourse analysis' *Theory and Psychology*, 11, (4) pp.521-547.
- Hughes, T. (1857) *Tom Brown's schooldays*. London: Macmillan.
- Impett, A.E., Sorsoli, L., Schooler, D., Henson, J.M. and Tolman, D.L. (2008) 'Girls' relationship authenticity and self-esteem across adolescence' *Developmental Psychology*, 44, (3) pp.722-733.
- John, P. (1996) Damaged goods: An interpretation of excluded pupils' perceptions of schooling. In Blyth, E. and Milner, J. eds. *Exclusion from school: Interprofessional issues for policy and practice*. London: Routledge, pp.159-184.
- Kitchen, R. (2000) 'The researched opinions on research: Disabled people and disability research' *Disability and Society*, 15, (1) pp.25-47.
- Kitzinger, C. (2004) Feminist approaches. In Seale, C. Gobo, G. Gubrium J. and Silverman, D. eds. *Qualitative research practice*. London: Sage, pp.125-140.
- Knipe D., Reynolds, M. and Milner, S. (2007) 'Exclusion in schools in Northern Ireland: The pupils' voice' *Research Papers in Education*, 22, (4) pp.407-424.
- Kupchik, A. (2009) 'Things are tough all over: Race, class and school discipline' *Punishment and Society*, 11, (3) pp.291-317.
- Lahelma, E. (2004) 'Tolerance and understanding? Students and teachers reflect on differences in school' *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 10, (1) pp.3-19.
- Lather, P. (1989) 'Postmodernism and the politics of the enlightenment' *Educational Foundations*, 3, (3) pp.7-28.
- Lather, P. (1993) 'Fertile obsession: Validity after poststructuralism' *The Sociological Quarterly*, 34 pp.673-693.

- Leary, M.R. (1990) 'Responses to social exclusion: social anxiety, jealousy, loneliness, depression and low self-esteem' *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 9, (2) pp.221-229.
- Lee, C. (2006) 'Exploring teachers' definitions of bullying' *Educational and Behavioural Difficulties*, 11, (1) pp.61-75.
- Lloyd, G. and Stead, J. (2001) 'The boys and girls not calling me names and the teachers to believe me: Name-calling and the experience of travellers in school' *Children and Society*, 15, (5) pp.361-374.
- Loach, B. and Bloor, C. (1995) 'Dropping the bully to find the racist' *Multicultural Teaching*, 13, (2) pp.18-20.
- Lundy, L. (2007) 'Voice is not enough: Conceptualising article 12 of the united nations convention on the rights of the child' *British Educational Research Journal*, 33, (6) pp.927-942.
- Lynch, K. and Lodge, A. (2002) *Equality and power in schools: Redistribution, recognition and representation*. London: Routledge.
- Lyotard, J.F. (1984) *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Lyotard, J.F. (1992) *The postmodern explained to children: Correspondence 1982-1984*. London: Turnaround.
- Ma, X. (2002) 'Bullying in middle school: Individual and school characteristics of victims and offenders' *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 13, (1) pp.63-89.
- Mac an Ghail, M. (1994) *The making of men*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Maplas, S. (2001) Introduction. In Maplas, S. eds. *Postmodern debates*. Hampshire: Palgrave, pp. 1-11.
- Marvasti, A. (2004) *Qualitative research in sociology*. London: Sage.
- Mason, J. (1996) *Qualitative researching*. London: Sage.
- Meyer, E. J. (2008) 'A feminist reframing of bullying and harassment: Transforming schools through critical pedagogy' *Mc Ghill Journal of Education*, 43, (1) pp.33-48.
- Milgram, S. (1963) 'Behavioural study of obedience' *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67, (4) pp.371-378.
- Mishna, F. (2003) 'Learning disabilities and bullying: Double jeopardy' *Journal of Learning Disability*, 36, (4) pp.336-347.

Mishna, F. (2004) 'A qualitative study of bullying from multiple perspectives' *Children and Schools*, 26, (4) pp.234-247.

Monks, C.P., Smith, P.K., Naylor, P., Barter, C., Ireland, J.L., and Coyne, I. (2009) 'Bullying in different contexts: Commonalities, differences and the role of theory' *Aggressive and Violent Behaviour*, 14, (2) pp.146-156.

Mooney, A., Creeser, R. and Blatchford, P. (1991) 'Children's views on teasing and fighting in junior schools' *Educational Research*, 33, (2) pp.103-112.

Morita, Y. (1996) 'Bullying as a contemporary behaviour problem in the context of increasing societal privatisation in Japan' *Prospects*, 26, (2) pp.311-329.

Munn, P. (1999) The darker side of pupil culture: Discipline and bullying in schools. In Prosser, J. ed. *School culture*. London: Paul Chapman, pp.111-121.

Munn, P. and Lloyd, G. (2005) 'Exclusion and excluded pupils' *British Educational Research Journal*, 31, (2) pp.205-221.

Myers, C.A. (2006) Schoolbags at dawn. In Heidensohn, F. eds. *Gender and justice: New concepts and approaches*. Devon: Willan, pp.60-75.

Nansel, T., Simons-Morton, B., Scheidt, P. and Overpeck, D. (2001) In Lurie, S.J. and Zylke, J. W. eds. 'Systemic vs individualistic approaches to bullying' *Journal of American Medical Association*, 286, (2) pp.787-788.

Naylor, P., Cowie, H., Cossin, F., Bettencourt, R.D. and Lemme, F. (2006) 'Teachers' and pupils' definitions of bullying' *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76, (3) pp.553-576.

Newberry, A. and Duncan, R.D. (2001) 'Roles of boredom and life goals in juvenile delinquency' *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 31 (3), pp.527-541.

Nunkoosing, K. (2001) MSc. applied psychology of learning disability Lecture Notes, *Social construction of learning disability*, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2001.

Nunkoosing, K. (2005) 'The problems with interviews' *Qualitative Health Research* 15, (5) pp.698-706.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (1989) *United nations convention on the rights of the child* [online] Available from <<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>> [Accessed 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2011].

Ofsted (2003) *Bullying: Effective action in secondary schools*. HMI.465 (Ofsted Report). London: Stationery Office.

Ofsted (2008) *Children on bullying: A report by the children's director for England*. HMI. 070193 (Morgan Report). London: Stationery Office.

O'Kane, C. (2000) The development of participatory techniques: facilitating children's views about decisions which affect them. In Christensen, P. and James, A. eds. *Research with children: perspectives and practices*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.136-159.

Olweus, D. (1993) *Bullying at schools: What we know and what we can do*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Osler, A. (2006) 'Excluded girls' inter-personal institutional and structural violence in schooling' *Gender and Education*, 18, (6) pp.571-589.

Owens, L., Shute, R. and Slee, P. (2000) 'Guess what I just heard! Indirect aggression among teenage girls in Australia' *Aggressive Behaviour*, 26, (1) pp.67-83.

Randall, P. (1996) *A community approach to bullying*. Stoke-on Trent: Trentham.

Rapley, T. (2004) Interviews. In Seale, C. ed. *Researching society and culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Sage, pp.15-33.

Reay, D. (2001) 'Spice girls, nice girls, girlies and tomboys: Gender discourses, girls' culture and femininity in the primary classroom.' In Skelton C. and Francis, B. eds. *A feminist critique of education, 15 years of gender education*. London: Routledge, pp.55-69.

Reay, D. and Wiliam, D. (1999) 'I'll be a nothing: Structure, agency and the construction of identity through assessment' *British Educational Research*, 25, (3) pp.343-354.

Reissman, C. (1993) *Narrative analysis*. London: Sage.

Rigby, K. (1997) *Bullying in schools: And what to do about it*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Oxford: Blackwell.

Roland, E. and Galloway, D. (2002) 'Classroom influences of bullying' *Educational Research*, 44, (3) pp.299-312.

Roxburgh, N. (2008) 'Difficult to define bullying' *TESS*, April 18<sup>th</sup> [online] Available from <<http://www.tes.co.uk/asp?storycode=2605971>> [Accessed 29<sup>th</sup> July 2009].

Rubin, H.J. and Rubin, I.S. (1995) *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. London: Sage.

Sacks (1984) On doing being ordinary. In Atkinson, J.M. and Heritage, J. eds. *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.513-529.

Sacks, H. (1992) *Lectures on conversations, volumes 1 and 2* Jefferson G. ed. Blackwell: Oxford.

Salmivalli C. (1999) 'Participant role approach to school bullying: Implications for interventions' *Journal of Adolescence*, 22, (4) pp. 453-459.

Salmivalli, C. (2010) 'Bullying and the peer group: A review' *Aggression and Violent Behaviour* 15, (2) pp.112-120.

Salmivalli, C., Lappalainen, M. & Lagerspetz, K.M.J. (1996) 'How do the victims respond to bullying?' *Aggressive Behaviour*, 22, (2) pp.99-109.

Sassure, F. de (1974) *Course in general linguistics*. London: Fontana.

School Library Association (2008) '*Boys into books*' [poster]. Swindon: SLA.

Scott, J. (2000) Children as respondents: The challenge for quantitative methods. In Christensen, P. and James A. eds. *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp.98-119.

Seidman, I. (1998) *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College.

Siann, G., Callaghan, M., Lockhart, R., and Rawson, L. (1993) 'Bullying: teachers' views and school effects' *Educational Studies*, 19, (3) pp.307-321.

Silverman, D. (2005) *Doing qualitative research*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. London: Sage.

Silverman, D. (2006) *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk text and interaction*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. London: Sage.

Smith, P.K. (2000) *Bullying: Don't suffer in silence: An anti-bullying pack for school*. London: DFES.

Smith, P., Morita, Y., Junger-Tas, J., Olweus, D., Castalano, R. and Slee, P. (1999) *The nature of school bullying: A cross-national perspective*. Florence, KY: Routledge.

Smith, P.A. and Binney, L.L. (2005) 'The organisational trust of elementary schools and dimensions of student bullying' *Journal of Educational Management*, 19, (6) pp.469-485.

Smith, J.D., Ryan, W. and Cousins, J.B. (2007) 'Antibullying programs: A survey of evaluation activities in public schools' *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 33, (2) pp.120-134.

Solberg, A. (1996) The challenge in child research from doing to being *In* Brannen, J. and O'Brien, M. eds. *Children in families: Research and policy*. London: Falmer Press, pp. 53-65.

Sparkes, A.C. (1992) The paradigm debate: An extended review and a celebrated difference. *In* Sparkes, A.C. ed. *Research in physical education and sport: Exploring alternative visions*. London: Falmer Press, pp.9-60.

Sparkes, A.C. (1995) 'Writing people: Reflections on the dual crisis of representation and legitimation in qualitative inquiry' *QUEST*, 47, (2) pp.158-195.

Stainton-Rogers, W. (2002) What teachers can do to tackle bullying *In* Elliot, M., ed. *Bullying*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. Kent: Pearson Education, pp.207-212.

Stein, N. (2003) 'Bullying or sexual harassment? The missing discourse of rights in an era of zero tolerance' *Arizona Review*, 45, (3) pp.783-799.

Stoudt, B. G. (2009) 'The role of language and discourse in the investigation of privilege: Using participatory action research to discuss theory, develop methodology and interpret power' *Urban Review*, 41 pp. 7-28.

St.Pierre E.A. (2000) Poststructural feminism in education: An overview *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13, (5) pp.477-515.

Sullivan, K. Cleary, M. and Sullivan, G. (2004) *Bullying in secondary schools: What it looks like and how to manage it*. Trowbridge: Cromwell.

Sutton, J. (2001) 'Bullies thugs or thinkers?' *The Psychologist*, 14, (10) pp.530-534.

Sutton, J. and Keogh, E. (2000) 'Social competition in school: Relationships with bullying, machiavellianism and personality' *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70 pp.443-457.

Sweeting, H. and West, P. (2001) 'Being different, correlates with the experience of teasing and bullying at age 11' *Research Papers in Education*, 16, (3) pp.225-246.

- Tajfel, H. (1981) *Human groups and social categories: Studies in social psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, C. (1992) *Multiculturalism and the politics of recognition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Terasahjo, T. and Salmivalli, C. (2003) 'She is not actually bullied: The discourse of harassment in student groups' *Aggressive Behaviour*, 29, (2) pp.134-154.
- Terry, A.A. (1998) 'Teachers as targets of bullying by their pupils: A study to investigate incidents' *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 68 pp.255-268.
- Thompson, P. and Gunter, H. (2008) 'Researching bullying with students: A lens in everyday life in an innovative school' *International Journal of Education*, 12, (2) pp.185-200.
- Troyana, B. and Carrington, B. (1989) Whose side are we on? Ethical dilemmas in research on race and education. In Burgess, R.G. ed. *The ethics of educational research*. Lewes: Falmer, pp.205-223.
- Twemlow, S.W. and Fonagy, P. (2005) 'The prevalence of teachers who bully students in schools with differing levels of behavioural problems' *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 162, (12) pp. 2387-2389.
- Usher, R. and Edwards, R. (1994) *Postmodernism and education*. London: Routledge.
- Walford, G. (1985) A revolution in chains? In Walford, G. eds. *Private education: Tradition and diversity*. London: Continuum, pp.13-38.
- Walford, G. (1993) Girls' private schooling: Past and present. In Walford, G. eds. *Private education: Tradition and diversity*. London: Continuum, pp.77-100.
- Walton, G. (2004) 'Bullying and homophobia in Canadian schools: The politics of policies, programs, and educational leadership' *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education*, 1, (4) pp.23-36.
- Walton, G. (2005) 'Bullying widespread' *Journal of School Violence*, 4, (1) pp.91-118.
- Walton, G. (2008) 'Bullying at school: What we should know and ought to do' *Primary Leadership Today*, 13 pp.6-7.
- Whyte, W.F. (1980) Interviewing in field research. In Burgess, R.G. ed. *Field research: A sourcebook and field manual*. George Allen and Unwin: London, pp. 111-122.

- Wilkman, A. (2006) 'Reliability, validity and true values in surveys' *Social Indicators Research*, 78 pp.85-110.
- Williams, K., Jamieson, F. and Hollingworth, S. (2008) 'He was a bit of a delicate thing: White middle-class boys, gender, school choice and parental anxiety' *Gender and Education*, 20, (4) pp.399-408.
- Williams, M. and Winsdale, J. (2008) 'Using undercover teams to re-story bullying relationships' *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 27, (1) pp.1-15.
- Willis, P. (1977) *Learning to labour: How working class kids get working class jobs* Westmead: Saxon House.
- Wilson, M. (1996) Asking Questions. *In: Sapsford, R. and Jupp, V. eds. Data collection and analysis.* London: Sage, pp.94-120.
- Woodhead, M. and Faulkner, D. (2000) Subjects objects or participants? Dilemmas of psychological research with children. *In Christensen, P. and James, A. eds. Research with children: Perspectives and practices.* Abingdon: Routledge, pp.9-35.
- Woods, S.W. and Wolke, D. (2003) 'Does the content of anti-bullying policies inform us about the prevalence of direct and relational bullying in primary schools' *Educational Psychology*, 23, (4) pp.381-401.
- Wright, K. (2008) 'Multiple and complex needs, researching the views of pupils with multiple and complex needs: Is it worth doing and whose interests are served by it?' *Support for Learning*, 1 pp.32-40.
- Yoneyama, S. (1999) *The Japanese school: Silence and resistance.* London: Routledge.
- Yoneyama, S. and Naito, A. (2003) 'Problems with the paradigm: The school as a factor in understanding bullying (with special reference to Japan)' *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 24, (3) pp.315-330.
- Yoneyama, S. (2008) *The era of bullying: Japan under neo-liberalism* [online] Available from <<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/directory/shoko.yoneryama>> [Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009].
- Zerubabel, E. (2006) *The elephant in the room: Silence and denial in everyday life.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## APPENDIX A: CHARACTERISTICS OF BULLYING

These characteristics of bullying involve different severities which range from 'grey' to experiences which are clearly bullying.

### Feelings associated with bullying

Feelings (as a result of an interaction and experience of maltreatment with an individual/group):

- Hurt
- Fear (for example, of violence or standing up to a bully)
- Humiliated
- Anxious
- Suicidal (feeling/attempts/actual)
- Rejected (isolated, pushed/left out)
- Picked on/out
- Inferior (not as good as others)

\*Feelings may persist after the interaction and maltreatment.

### Clearly bullying

- Aggressive acts (physical or psychological) which are: repeated, intentional and involve a clear imbalance of power, whereby the victim has less power than the bully (Olweus 1993).

### Verbal

- Name-calling: (When the names are negative, for example, 'big ears' are they ever acceptable and not bullying? Are they said in jest to 'brighten up' the day, for example, calling someone names about their clothes or hairstyle? However, name-calling can be associated with suicide and will be explored. If people are upset by name-calling then it is considered as bullying).
- Being persistently called negative names: For example 'fatty' by the same people or different people.
- Teasing: Teasing someone in a negative way that ridicules children, for example, about their physical appearance, sexuality and ability. What makes this particularly complex is that people may laugh when they are teased. However, if they feel upset and hurt it will be considered as bullying. There are different severities of 'teasing' which are explored. People can also be teased to the point where they feel suicidal this is considered as severe bullying.

### Physical

- Pushing: Is it accidental or intentional, for a laugh, to get attention?
- Kicking: Is it violence, accidental?
- Fighting/quarrelling: What experiences came before the fighting?
- Violence: Is it also psychological? Does it cause fear?
- Hitting an individual: Why would someone hit someone else? Possibly for defence but they are still imposing harm onto another individual.
- Beating an individual up.

## **Psychological**

- Humiliation
- Threats of physical violence
- Ridicule

## **Relational**

- Preferences towards particular groups: To what extent is this normal/healthy and is a matter of who people choose to be friends with? When is it ostracism?
- Bullied by friends: Are they squabbling or bullying each other?
- Being singled out/ostracised: Left out, feeling alone, pushed out of a group, 'no-one to play with', but what if an individual wants to be alone? Need to look at context. If upset at being and feeling alone with, for example, 'no friends' it is considered as ostracism.

## **Pupils bullying teachers**

- Insults
- Mockery
- Pushing

(The characteristics at the pupil-pupil level are also included in this list, for example, teasing).

## **Teachers bullying pupils**

- Being called stupid in front of the class
- Having their work shown as an example of what not to do.
- Ridicule/Public ridicule: Consider the context and in what way the individual felt ridiculed).
- Humiliation
- A teacher identified by a child/children who abuses their power more than others: Consider in what way this occurs.
- Feeling 'picked on for academic work': Is the teacher trying to encourage them, show them they could do better, or 'picking on' them? Explore the interaction.
- 'Unfair punishments': Do certain children feel unfairly targeted for punishments? Who are these children? Will children often perceive their punishments as unfair and why might this be the case?
- Shouting at children: Explore what happened, what was said, who was it targeted at; an individual or group? Did children find it distressing?

## **Systemic (Institutional/societal factors)**

- Oppression: Rejection of one's identity and sense of self, suppression of 'voice'
- Social factors effecting one's position in school: (Social class, gender and intellectual ability).
- Institutional factors effecting one's position on school, for example, streaming.
- Abuse: Bullying overlaps with abuse and is not be neatly separated from it.
- Racism: Treated favourably because of ethnic origin, called racist names.

- Sexism: Treated unfavourably because of gender, called names, for example, 'gay'.

## APPENDIX B: FIELD NOTES FROM NORTHFIELD SCHOOL

(Third observation of Northfield) 28/11/08

### *'Learning to Learn': In Classroom*

As soon as I enter the classroom I hear Andrew call Sophie 'screggy'. One of the boys is late, Miss Taylor tells him to 'hurry up and sit down'. As the children are writing about their school, I notice that several pupils are writing 'are school' instead of 'our school'. When I tell Bridgette I want to interview her after I have done my observations, although I will need a signed letter from her Mum, she sounds enthusiastic but says her Mum is rarely in but I can phone and speak to her sister.

Miss Taylor tells the children that their work will be assessed and will go to their parents and head of year, who decides whether they move up or down, so they are very important. I ask one of the boys what form he is in and he says 'Mr. Peacock's', another says 'Mr. Preece's' and one of the boys joins in and says 'it's not fair, I like Mr. Preece', however the boy says 'it's not really, it's Mr. Peacock', Miss Taylor then comes over and says to one of these boys 'why have you moved? Because you are naughty, so behave'.

One of the girls says about another girl 'she keeps farting'. I say 'maybe she has eaten a lot of beans' the girl said 'I never eat beans,' another girl suggests it could be sprouts but the girl says 'I've not eaten sprouts since December 25', another girl says 'why didn't you just say last year?'

One of the pupils says 'done'. Miss Taylor replies 'try and do a bit more'. Neil tells me he has finished, I ask if he wants me to check his spellings and he seems to appreciate this.

I notice that Bridgette has had her hair cut and tell her it looks nice, she said she had it cut because she went to *'Britain's got Talent'* last week, however, she told me this a few weeks ago and she had not had her hair cut. Louise asks Bridgette if she met Simon, Bridgette replies 'no, it was a different judge'. Miss Taylor says to Bridgette and Louise 'c'mon get on girls'.

Louise says to Bridgette 'you can recycle clothes,' Bridgette asks me if you can, I say 'yes you can,' Louise says 'ahh'. As Miss Taylor is talking Bridgette writes on her hands. Dionne has her hands on her face and Miss Taylor tells Dionne to move her hands from her face and 'get on'.

Bridgette and Louise are having disagreements about their plan and what will go where. Bridgette writes down on a piece of paper 'Louise should improve on saying stuff and not being gobby and stop being silly'. Miss Taylor doesn't appear to notice these disagreements occurring within the group work. Bridgette says 'I have a banging head-ache'.

A boy walks into class and says 'oh, oh', he then slides and skids into another class. Bridgette tells Miss Taylor she is poorly and Mary asks 'can I go with her?' Louise says (about Bridgette) 'she'll complain we've done it wrong now, she always does'. Louise tells the other girl to 'wait until Bridgette comes back'. Bridgette comes back, and Louise and Bridgette are arguing and seem upset that there is not space for a pond that they are making a model of. Miss Taylor comes over saying 'well you should have planned for it, it's your mistake'.

Bridgette suggests that they do it again, Louise says 'yes,' and Bridgette says 'you do it'. Emily says 'I've had enough' Louise says 'I have', I tell them it's not the end of the world. Emily says 'I will do it, I will do it'. I notice that Bridgette and Louise are angry with each other and so I say 'you two used to be friends and you've known each other for a long time'. Bridgette says 'not a long time though.' Bridgette tells Emily 'you're doing it wrong now'. I tell the children that we must work with what we've got. The children continue to argue, e.g. 'that's not a bench, that's a bridge', 'no it's not'. Bridgette asks me if I want a sweet, and she eats one, I tell her that I will save it until break but I eat it anyway.

As the children continue to argue I tell them that the purpose of these lessons are to work together. One of the pupils says 'Miss we've finished'. Bridgette says 'done it totally wrong'. Louise says 'so what' and then I hear someone say 'can't do it right', 'do it right on board'. Bridgette then tells us that she is upset because something has happened, and she hands me a slip where she has wrote, 'I have just started my period'. Miss Taylor says to the children that she needs everything neat and tidy and she wonders why it is so hard for them.

### *Break*

On my way to the toilet I notice four girls (year 9s) outside of the head of year's office. They say 'hello' to me and tell me that Miss Saul had made them stand outside for being late and so their punishment is to stand there for their break. They tell me that school is boring and the teachers are pathetic, and pathetic for making them stand outside at break. Miss Saul then comes out, she gives them a stern look and notices us laughing and chatting. I feel afraid that Miss Saul may think that I am undermining her authority for being pleasant to these children when she is punishing them. When I ask the children what they had thought about Castlegate school being burnt down they say that they are, 'gypos with no-where to go'. I say that 'they don't have a solid base now of what school to go to' and the girls laugh and one of them says to me 'you're one of us'. I feel uncomfortable and hope that they do not think that I am making fun of the children at Castlegate.

### *'Learning to Learn': School Hall*

(Children were joined by Mr. Stewart's class)

When the children are queuing up for their next lesson there is a lot of noise in the queue. Mr Stewart tries to establish some order and tells the

children to have their shirts buttoned up and their ties up. He tells them to look neat and tidy.

Children are making clay models of their designs. Mr. Stewart tells them that their designs need to look like their model, otherwise they will lose marks. He tells the children that they need to study in their groups. After a few minutes it gets quite noisy in the hall, some of the children start play fighting I hear someone say 'baboon.' I try to help someone make a swing but I struggle, Mr. Stewart laughs and says 'you're doing a good job'.

I see Marcus and John and they ask me to sit with them so they can show me what they are doing. When I ask them about the bullying last week, Marcus says, 'Miss Rodrigo thought it was me but I stuck up for him'. They inform me that the main bully was moved to another class.

Some of the boys are talking about being TP (teacher's pet), one of them says they had had five warnings, another says they hadn't had any yet. Nathan took some plasticine from Matthew and says 'it's mine' I say 'it's theirs' and Nathan punches his fist near Matthew's head. Marcus tells me he was initially friends with Leon, but Leon was always leaving him out, and so he became friends with John, who is new to the school. Whist I am talking to Marcus, John moulds a penis and starts to giggle. Andrew says 'smash it up' and that he will get more pleasure from it if he smashes it up. Andrew tells me that he has got ADHD and that he gets presents for it and a fiver if he is good. He says he stabs people and has hit his Dad. Andrew has some money in his hand and Bridgette knocks his money, she seems to be doing this to get attention from him and they both smile at each other.

We are nearing the end of lesson and Dionne appears to be upset, she says that they have 'done nowt', they have a roundabout but they have not done any work. Louise comes over and she sees me trying to help Dionne and she offers to help and make a swing for Dionne's group.

One of the boys says to a year eleven, 'are you are year eleven?' The boy politely says 'yeah', however, the year 7 says 'God I only asked'. I try to help Andrew with his swing but I am finding it difficult and the other children laugh slightly, and so do I. Mr. Stewart asks for quiet and tells the children that if they are not quiet he will give them detention.

#### *Lunch/Dinner Queue*

When I ask some of the children how their day has been and how school was, they say they get bored and so they 'play up'. A pupil knocks into me slightly in the queue and says 'sorry Miss'. I notice a lot of rubbish on the floor in the school grounds, especially outside. I then have a free period and sit in the staff room.

#### *Fire Drill*

The fire alarm starts to sound, and so I stand at the tennis courts with the rest of the teachers and pupils. Some of the girls (year nines) mockingly

ask me 'are you cold Miss?' several times. I am a little cold, but not freezing since I am wearing a long sleeved top. I feel a little awkward and embarrassed by this teasing. A girl says that her friend had a house fire last night, I said 'did she?' The girl then says to me, 'did you believe her, did you believe her', she laughs loudly and then keeps telling her friend that 'I believed her?' I start to feel that these year nines are teasing me and I wonder why, is it because I am appearing to be an 'outsider' by not being closely aligned with other teachers?

*Geography, Year 7, top set, Mr. Stewart's Class*

When I arrive at Mr. Stewart's lesson the children are already settled down, Mr. Stewart tells me they are doing a test. He advises the children not to rush and tells them they have got plenty of time and that when they finish they can doodle on the back page. I observe the notice-board behind Mr. Stewart's desk and there are notices of rules, rewards and sanctions. On Mr. Stewart's desk there are green behaviour slips to sign. There is a pyramid shaped hierarchy of how to control pupil's behaviour, for example, first warning, second. Some of the pupils are moving their legs and fidgeting but this test is carried out in silence. After the test Mr. Stewart gets the children to mark their own work while he tells them the answers one of the pupils says 'I didn't get this'. Mr. Stewart says 'it doesn't matter'. The children then start talking to one another, one boy refers to another as 'cereal', another tells a child 'shut your mouth', another pupil tells a boy to 'stop doodling'. A girl who is sneezing a few times asks Mr. Stewart for tissue, he does not reply, when she asks again he says he doesn't have any. I give her one of mine and a few minutes later she asks for another, and so I give her another tissue.

The children start to leave and the class is almost empty, but one girl stays behind and says that she can't find her pencil case. Mr. Stewart does not appear to respond to this, I notice it is on the floor, and so I tell her it is on the floor; there seems to be some awkwardness and tension. The school seems to be a cold environment and the girl seems surprised that I helped her find her pencil case.

## APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- Welcome children and introduced myself.
- Explain ethical issues, for example, confidentiality (not to discuss the personal info shared outside the interview) and right to withdraw.
- No right or wrong answer 'I want to know what you think and we are all entitled to our own opinion, and this is why I am here to discuss your opinion today, so let's listen and share with others are thoughts and feelings, we might be surprised by what we hear'.

Interview Questions	Notes and Follow-Up
<b>General Thoughts of School</b>	
<b><u>How has your day been today?</u></b>	<b><u>What was it like?</u></b>
<b><u>What do you think of school?</u></b>	What is school like? What does school make you think of?
<b><u>How does school make you feel?</u></b>	<b><u>How do you feel about yourself when you're at school? At home?</u></b> Prompts follow-up... a few words).
Why do we have school rules like uniform, detention, exclusion?	How important is it for you to follow school rules?
<b>Grading/Setting</b>	
How do you find the work you do?	Time?
<b><u>How do you feel about the set/s you are in?</u></b>	Are you happy with it, would you like to be moved up, down, something different?
<b>When you struggle with your work-how do the other pupils respond?</b>	Help?
<b>Do you think your best is good enough?</b>	
<b>Do you get treated fairly?</b>	(Explore fairness and unfairness)
<b>Discipline/Control</b>	
<b>What do you think of Castlegate school being burnt down?</b>	Woodlands-Arts, New Manor sports hall. Why would someone do this? Why are these fires caused by school pupils?
Have you ever felt angry with school?	
How do you think teachers control their class?	What do teachers need to do to get pupils to behave?
<b><u>If you had more control over what you did at school and learnt and you could have more choices, would that be a good thing or a</u></b>	<b><u>What would happen?</u></b>

<b><u>bad thing?</u></b>	
<b><u>Do you ever get bored at school?</u></b>	How often? How do you feel when you are bored? What types of things do you do when you are bored?
<b>Bullying</b>	
What name-calling have you heard at school?	Or what are the most frequent names that you hear people saying?
Why do people bully others?	
Have you ever experienced being bullied/victimised?	Engaged in bullying?
<b>Why is there bullying in schools?</b>	
<b>Can you imagine having a school without bullying?</b>	<b>Why?</b>

## APPENDIX D: PRU INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- No right or wrong answer.

Questions	Notes and Follow Up
<b>Influence of School</b>	
<b><u>*What do you think of school?</u></b>	
<b>*What has your experience of school been like?</b>	
<b>*Why do you think you are in a PRU?</b>	
*Do you think you should have been excluded?	
What do people think of this school?	When you say you go to this school?
*Does school help you to improve your behaviour?	Others?
<b><u>*What influence do you think being with all excluded pupils has on your behaviour?</u></b>	Is it positive, negative?
*Is school a warm environment?	
*Do you feel safe at school?	
<b>*Is your time at school worthwhile?</b>	
What do you think of the work you do in class?	
<b>Bullying</b>	
<b><u>Why do you think people bully others?</u></b>	
<b><u>*Is there bullying in this school?</u></b>	
Would ... you described be considered as bullying?	
<b>*What do teachers do when there is bullying?</b>	
<b><u>Have you ever been bullied?</u></b>	
<b>Relationships</b>	
<b>*What are you like?</b>	
Do you think people respect you?	
<b><u>Do you feel important in school?</u></b>	
What do you think people think of you?	
<b><u>Do you think people 'understand' you?</u></b>	
<b>Agency</b>	
<b>Do you feel you can control yourself?</b>	Do you feel you have to be controlled at school?
<b><u>*Can you turn things around for yourself?</u></b>	

<b>Value and Esteem</b>	
<b><u>Do you feel 'valued'?</u></b>	<b><u>Your work will be 'valued'?</u></b>
<b>What do you think people expect of you?</b>	Where do people expect you to be?
<b><u>*Do you feel clever at school?</u></b>	<b><u>Home? What do people do when you, for example, get the answer wrong?</u></b>
<b><u>*Do you feel as if you fit in/belong/are accepted in school?</u></b>	
<b>Discipline/Control</b>	
<b><u>*Why do people break things/hit things and people, kick doors?</u></b>	
<b><u>*Why do people burn schools down, for example, Castlegate?</u></b>	
How do teachers control their class?	
<b>Development through School</b>	
What do you think you will do when you leave school?	
What would you like to be doing 5/10 years from now?	<b>Where do you think you will be/end up?</b>
<b><u>*How do you feel when you look back on your years in school?</u></b>	<b><u>(Favourably/Unfavourably)</u></b>
<b><u>*Are you satisfied with your life/the way things are going for you right now?</u></b>	
Do you think they will have a chance in life?	

## APPENDIX E: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- No right or wrong answer.

<b>Thoughts on School</b>	
<b><u>*What do you think of school?</u></b>	Like/dislike about school?
<b><u>*How does school make you feel?</u></b>	<b><u>How do you feel about yourself in school?</u></b>
<b><u>How would I see people behaving if I walked around school?</u></b>	
<b>Voice</b>	
<b><u>*Do you feel important in school?</u></b>	Matter? Listened to? How do you feel about this? What influence do you think this has on you?
Do you feel you can speak openly at school?	Express your feelings?
<b>Grading/Setting</b>	
How do you think the group interviews went?	
<b><u>*How do you feel about the set you are in?</u></b>	Would you like to be in a different class/set/school?
<b>Ability/Esteem</b>	
<b><u>Is your best good enough?</u></b>	Do you finish your work on time?
<b><u>*Do you feel clever at school?</u></b>	
<b><u>*How do you feel when you get it wrong?</u></b>	How do people respond, e.g. when you put your hand up and you get the 'wrong' answer?
What will happen if you don't do well at school?	Explore what doing well is.
<b>Bullying</b>	
<b><u>*Why do people make fun of each other in school?</u></b>	
<b><u>Why do people bully others?</u></b>	
<b><u>Have you ever been bullied?</u></b>	
<b><u>*What is bullying?</u></b>	How does bullying/this make you feel?
<b><u>*What do teachers do when there is bullying?</u></b>	
<b><u>*Can people stop themselves from being bullied in school?</u></b>	How?
<b><u>*Is there anything you do about bullying</u></b>	What?
<b>Boredom</b>	
<b><u>*Do you get bored at school?</u></b>	
<b><u>*What do you do when you are</u></b>	What influence does boredom have

<b><u>bored?</u></b>	on your behaviour? Others?
What happens to your mind/brain/thinking thoughts when you are bored?	
<b>*How do you feel about yourself/your lessons when you are bored?</b>	
Is being bored at school different to being bored at home, why?	
<b>Discipline/Control</b>	
<b><u>*Why are their problems at school, for example, fighting pushing, shoving, breaking things?</u></b>	Could we have a school without having this? How could we do this? What affect does this have on you?
<b><u>Why do some pupils set school on fire, for example, Castlegate, New Manor, Woodlands?</u></b>	
<b><u>*What happens when you don't do what you are told?</u></b>	
<b><u>*What happens to pupils when they misbehave, for example, detention?</u></b>	Does this improve their behaviour? Help them to become better people?
<b><u>*How do you feel when you get detention, warnings, 'told off'?</u></b>	Others?
<b><u>*Have you ever been nominated/been pupil of the week, letter sent home?</u></b>	
<b>Development through School</b>	
<b><u>*Do you feel the people at school care for you?</u></b>	For example, when you hurt yourself?
Do you think people are kind to you?	
<b><u>*Would you like school to be more kind/caring?</u></b>	
Do people become more or less caring in Year ten and eleven or in-between?	
What have you learnt from your observation of school, of how you should behave and respond to people?	

## APPENDIX F: FOCUS GROUP (WOODLANDS SCHOOL)

*First Focus Group, Year 7s*

*Scott (middle set), Nelly (middle set), Martin (top set), Babra (top set), Tara (top set) and Robert (top set)*

I: So, oh can I start we're all nerv...well I'm nervous

S: I'm nervous

I: Scott's nervous, who else is nervous?

M: A bit

*(Small laughter)*

I: What are we nervous about then?

N: Whose gonna start first and that, when to talk

I: I know and this is the worst thing about doing a group interview, I mean how do you know when to talk, and when to

*(Small laughter)*

I: Let's 'erm, yeah, it is a hard one but we do have group discussions in class don't we?

M: Yeah

N: So do you like go around on the same question each of us?

B: Or can you just talk when you want?

I: I think you can just talk when you want; yeah that's what I hope to do

N: That's what we normally do in class

I: Yeah

N: But don't you need to ask us like what to say?

I: I'm gonna ask you

N: Like what

I: Yeah I need to ask you don't I? *(laughs)*

*(Laughter)*

M: Cos we'll probably come out with stuff like that's no use whatsoever

I: So how's, so what do you think of school?

R: Bit boring, bit alright

M: Yeah

N: A bit of both

I: A bit boring?

R: It's better than staying at home

N: It's not

M: Well like about a quarter of a third of schools that's say at time at school that's alright and about a fifth

T: Yeah, there's like your boring lessons, like boring days like Thursdays

B: Yeah

T: And then Fridays and then you've got like

N: Friday's are alright for *(unclear)*

T: Yeah

N: But then you've got the rest of lessons like History and Geography which

R: I quite like History

M: Tuesdays and Thursdays and Fridays I like

N: But then there's different days that you like  
 B: You've got History like  
 S: I only like Friday's cos it's weekend  
 B: It gets really boring  
 R: Yeah but like because it's  
 M: Yeah, yeah yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah  
 I: So, no, no you're alright talking, what I'm picking up  
 M: There could be  
 I: Is like  
 M: There could be, there could be like well give out with breaks though and like dinners only half an hour and breaks only fifteen minutes  
 I: You'd like longer breaks?  
 N: Yeah, that would be best  
 R: Yes Sir, Miss, longer breaks and about instead of having an hour for lessons, fifty minutes, then we could add all extra ten minutes with breaks Miss  
 I: Do you think, how, what do you think of having an hour for a lesson?  
 B: It's a bit too much  
 M: I think we should like break it up, I think we should like have half an hour and then have a rest five minutes or summat  
 I: This boredom that you say, I mean who does feel bored at school?  
 N: Depends what lesson  
 T: It depends what lesson  
 I: What about you Scott, do you feel bored at school sometimes?  
 M: Yeah cos I don't like French  
 N: I like French  
 I: It's French that you don't like?  
 M: Yeah  
 N: It depends if Mr. Booth shouts  
 I: Oh no, does it? What does he shout, does it bother you that he shouts?  
 N: If you do all your homework he never shouts  
 R: He doesn't with us  
 N: He does with us  
 M: He doesn't like me  
 N: When (*unclear*) he always  
 T: So it's like when you go on holidays you have loads of time off like and it comes to a point where you wanna see all your friends again like  
 M: Yeah, like in six weeks holidays you think, or I wish I could go back to school for like a day and then have another holiday or summat, cos like  
 N: Cos it's, you get bored  
 M: If you've been staying in for a few days and haven't seen your mates and that and then you gone from that, it gets a bit boring I think  
 I: It does, the holidays are a long time aren't they?  
 N: Yeah I mean it's really boring and you think, oh yeah we're having fun and then and then  
 M: You think yeah  
 N: It gets through holidays and then it's really really boring

M: You think, oh yes I want to go back to school, and then you go back to school you want to go back to the holidays but  
(Laughter) Yeah  
M: You like, you like (unclear)... more than school though  
I: But what do you miss about school in your holidays then?  
B: Friends  
I: Friends  
B: A few  
S: Cos I can't go calling for them cos of where I live now, cos it's a really bad area where I live now  
I: Oh is it?  
S: Cos there's a lot of people that take drugs and all that  
I: Where do you live?  
S: Lowerbank Avenue, it's said to be a really bad area  
M: Up near moss that's  
S: Because er, we've got an house next to us that hasn't been bought or anything, so council are still working on it and, and now erm the thingy, people keep breakin' into it and seeing if there's owt left in it  
I: Oh that's awful  
S: And smashin' windows and everything  
I: People don't always  
S: And it's doing my Mum's head in cos we're having to hammer everything back in place and everything because we live right next door cos were attached to it so we've got council banging on all windows and all that  
I: Yeah  
S: So my Mum can't really do anything  
N: I think it'd be better for you at school (*laughs*)  
M: It'd be better like if I lived closer to school and all cos I live like right at bottom of Shepton  
S: I used to live right down in Shepton  
M: But like there's good things and bad things about school, but mostly it's bad like, if there's was like a choice to be like, if we could pick us own lessons it'd be mint  
(*Laughter*)  
S: I'd be having football all day everyday  
T: P.E  
I: What do you think'd be good about choosing your own lessons?  
S: Because we'll know what's gonna come  
M: Like you'll know like what were gonna be later on in life, so your not say doing singing if you know your never gonna like want to be a singer and your not good at it  
S: I like music  
M: I know it's just like for example  
R: Like Miss it's like your GCSEs Miss you get to pick your own lessons  
M: Yeah  
R: Well you get to pick certain lessons  
M: When you're in Year 10 and 11

R: If you could, if you could choose your, well if you had to have your basic lessons like Maths, Science and English, and then you could choose rest of your lessons Miss it's like some

M: You don't, you don't have to in Year ten or eleven, you pick whatever lessons you want like but we've got to

S: I don't, I don't mind Science now with Miss

N: Er, last person we had last Friday, Roberts

S: Miss Roberts

N: Yeah, yeah, no that's Miss Mason

M: It's just they need to make like lessons in each one like a bit more exciting and

S: We, we have like er, we get to go up in lab every Science lesson though, which is more

T: It's like, every person's got like different learning styles and like they need to do something to make all the people

M: But it's be best like instead

T: *(Interrupted)* ...learning, working *(interrupted)*

B: To choose your own lessons it wouldn't be good because you wouldn't learn a few things that you need to learn so I wouldn't want it

M: Well it would cos if you want

B: Not if you're in Year 7, 8 and 9

M: Your gonna, it's up to you to pick it, it's up to it's up to you

I: Do you think what you learn, like the subject that you learn do you think it's valuable like History?

R: No, well I don't like

M: You don't really like

B: We don't really need to know everything that we learn

M: Yeah, it needs to be cos we're not really gonna have it later in life

N: Do you know in English, in juniors in English, we're doing the exactly same thing that we did in infants in juniors, that's really annoying

M: It's better

N: That's really annoying

M: It's better

N: It's the most annoying thing

M: In lessons it's better like, instead of writing stuff down like say in experiments in stuff like that instead of like writing it down, like do it and try it out and like say shapes and that, like actually get shapes and do stuff like that instead of just writing everything down

S: I didn't used to like R.E, but now we have SEAL its better because in R.E I was getting confused, cos I was just getting into R.E lessons and then Miss Peckham kept changing what were doing, so we went from like Christianity to Jewish

R: Yeah

S: Muslim and all that

R: Thing is, thing is, you've only got one lesson a week for half-term and then not half-term and then not half-term and then half-term

M: It's, it's hard

R: You've got to fit everything in more

I: I just wanna know, the thing is, like I said there is no right or wrong answer and it's wanting to know how, like you say how you feel, y'know

so, how does it make you feel that we, and what I'm getting from you all is that one of you is saying I like this and the other, oh I don't like that so we all have so many different opinions

M: Well it would be better, it would better to like have more of a break and dinner wouldn't it?

N: *(Laughs)*

T: Yeah

M: *(Nods)*

R: Yeah

T: But I don't think that's gonna happen

I: So you say, you don't think it's going to happen, so you don't think that?

M: Let us have like normal

R: No, cos we're kids Miss, so we want like fun and games all time Miss, but adults are like more into education so they think it's like impractical

M: So what they're thinking, they're like trying to pick stuff that they like, they're like trying to put it on us to like

S: I'd prefer if for dinners because £1.50 meals are always pie every week

*(Laughter)*

T: Pie every week

M: Every day of every week

I: Awh, it seems as if you, as children don't have that much choice?

R: No, me I have, I have a pack up that's why because I just have a pack up so that I can do what I want

S: And it'd be better if you like got to pick up your own food instead of they having to do it for you, cos then you know how much you want and

I: Do you think

S: They just like put your food

I: Do you think, y'know, I was thinking back to when I was your age, when I was eleven years old and I felt quite grown up but eleven and it's really strange and y'know this is only my opinion but a lot of the things that I was like when I was eleven, I still like now

M: I think, I don't like it like when you're playing like say like playground and people act like power rangers and like pretending like doing stuff like that and acting right childish

S: We need some proper things, you know like equipment

N: For playground

S: For playground, cos everyone keeps getting, cos, what about if you want to play football, cos I wanna play football so I'm having to use bottles

*(Laughter)*

M: Use a ball

T: Use bottles? *(laughs)*

M: That's ideally

R: I don't think so Miss, cos I just sit and talk to people

S: I don't, I had a load of mates and now they've gone off, trying to find others

I: Awwh

S: And I'm like stuck in middle of everyone  
I: That's not a very nice position to be in, how, how does that make you feel?  
S: A bit lonely because I don't know what to talk to about half of time  
M: Press pause cos that vibrate  
(*I checks tape*)  
I: Clear, go on, you know what it's not very easy to talk about how you feel, erm  
S: So, I never, I want to talk to people but I don't know what to talk about  
N: It's like your stuck for words and you don't know what to do  
R: I can't do owt, I just stand next to him  
S: Cos hardly anyone listens to me, so I have to like talk to myself at home. My Mum listens to me when she's got the time but my brother's just, my Mum's just found out that my brother's got autism so  
I: Oh  
S: So he needs more attention then any of us do so I do get talked to, but not as much as I used to, and my brothers, cos I'm all rest of my family  
M: Is he in this school?  
S: Er no, he's younger, he's only seven and erm all rest of my family are into rock and that and I'm the only one that likes football, but my brother likes it a tiny bit but he likes rock better so they're all talking about rock and I'm into my dance music so  
I: I think it must be hard feeling lonely, does anyone else feel lonely?  
R: (*Nods*)  
I: Do you feel lonely?  
R: Yeah, I'm different  
M: He is like, does different stuff to like normal people  
N: But like everybody  
I: Yeah go on  
N: Everybody likes you though  
R: Yeah Miss but only  
S: Cos you're funny  
R: But only  
M: Only other people  
R: People like me Miss, cos I act mental Miss all time and  
M: But that's cos he's  
M: People in our form like don't exactly like right like him so he can right sound funny like to all these other people, y'know like who act a bit more immaturer than others but it's just  
R: Miss, it's just certain people think there's something wrong with me Miss, because I'm like friends with everyone Miss and I just pass someone and go 'heup mate' like that but  
M: And tries like blending in with people like that are different from him. He isn't like bad or owt like that, he just tries like being anyone's mate, everyone's mate which and like that  
N: When somebody's like upset he goes like to cheer them up  
I: What about this feeling of being different? In what way do you feel different?

R: Well, like all the other boys are really good at sport but Scott isn't, well you probably are

*(Laughter)*

R: But erm, you just like, you like me, you like no good really, well you are good, y'know what I mean

S: Yeah, I know

R: You're like me, you don't really know the rules or owt. And like, I can't act or owt, I'm only good at acting like myself, erm I just, I'm a right nerd, I'm always TP, I'm always doing what teacher tells me, I'm always like

S: You're like me then trying to blend in with everyone else but they just push you away

M: He doesn't, he doesn't

R: It's like

M: He doesn't, he doesn't be bad for teachers he just like tries like say stuff like they ask something he'll like try and explain y'know give an explanation for them as like he's trying always trying like to be a bit silly so he's a bit of both

R: But it's like in French Miss

M: Explains stuff that doesn't need explaining a bit

R: Yeah. It's like in French I'm just a right dipstick because it's like I can already say stuff Miss and say if I get one thing wrong I get really embarrassed Miss cos it's like I've already been taught something in my old school so then when I get something wrong I get really embarrassed and people laugh because they think I already know it and stuff, so

S: My teacher was a bit er shocked this morning cos she swore

I: Oh

R: Was it Miss Moore?

S and N: Yeah

R: Miss Moore swears, Mr. Bradfield swears and all

T: What? I've never heard him swear

R: I heard him swear yesterday morning

I: Why are you so shocked about the teachers?

M: I know, I'd rather teachers swears like then just be like

N: You wouldn't have thought they would have swore in the school, you would have thought, yeah maybe they would swear at home

S: Cos they'll be telling you off for swearing and then they go swearing behind your back

R: I know

B: I know

T: They tell us off for swearing

I: It is a difficult thing

M: I reckon that's what teachers do, when they sit in the staff-room they all swear about us and like

S: And when I first started

M: Make fun of us and that

S: With Miss Moore she said she hardly drinks coffee and that, didn't she Nelly and that

M: Sat there with coffee stains and that

S: And she drinks coffee and tea like ten times a day every lesson

R: The reason you know that she's drinking coffee Miss, cos it's a coffee cup and it's see-through

M: *(laughs)*

R: It's a dark-brown see-through cup

S: Mine isn't, an E on her cup

T: She has an E on her cup

M: Oh, everyone's gonna have different cups, come on

*(Laughter)*

I: What, does anyone else feel lonely?

M: A tiny bit when I have to go all the way, y'know about a mile away. It's like I call for my mates and y'know say they're already out and then I go up for them and then I can't find them or anything like that and I have to go back home and I think, oh no

R: I feel sorry for you, cos you can't feel lonely

M: Cos where I live now is not, none of my mates live down there now, I used to live round allotments but now

R: Well none of my mates from my old school are here

M: And where I live, where I live now there's like there's a few kids but, y'know they're like older than me

I: Yeah

M: And all others, all others are like in Year eight, they're all butt-heads, scruffy so I'm always fighting with them so, so not exactly mates like

I: So

S: What happens to my Granddad, cos every time someone walks passed my Granddad he goes 'heup,' it's like he knows all his street cos he used to live in Scotland

M: We're talking back to about the school now, yeah

I: Well not, no we're alright, I'm just wondering like what erm Robert said about you, a lot of people like you, is that how you feel?

R: Miss

M: Not really likes, I know with some people, I'm y'know I like have a laugh with some people and there's like odd their person that takes it a different way but like most people we all have a laugh and that

S: It's hard to blend in with me cos all hard people are like together

I: Yeah

S: So I try blending in with them but

L: Who?

S: But they say that I'm proper soft

L: Who?

S: Y'know like Jack Conway and Billy and them, all the hard kids

M: I wouldn't exactly say that

S: All hard kids

M: I wouldn't exactly say they're hard

S: The bullies. So I try blending in with them

M: *(Laughs)*

T: *(laughs)* Martin like makes jokes and like their always funny, so like nearly all our form likes him

B: Yeah

R: Miss, I'm not, I'm not best mates with Martin, Miss, I'm scared of being punched in face by him Miss

*(Laughter)*

I: Are you, do you hit people sometimes Martin?

M: I'm most fighting but

I: So you fight?

S: I made a joke up other day

I: Did you?

S: Everyone started laughing at it

L: Come on then tell us it

S: My mother's that fat, she jumped into ocean and whales started singing 'we are fat'

M: You didn't make that up, that's been out a few year that

S: Has it?

M: That was a good one that I made, your Mum's that skinny she eats a grape and she thinks she's pregnant

*[small laughter]*

M: Do you get it?

I: *(Pause)*, yeah. So

M: Stuff like, different people, like do you know people like to big up stuff do y'know, like going about and that and like to be y'know have a laugh and stuff like that, and other people 'ill like doing it in a different way, like act right immature and stuff like that

I: I think 'erm, we're all so different

S: Yeah

M: Yeah

I: And some people do feel as if they don't fit in

M: And then with teachers when they put you with someone that you're totally different to, and they like make you work with 'em or like make you do stuff with 'em and you just don't get along and then that causes fights and then you get dun

S: I don't mind working with girls like but they like

M: Heup

*(Laughter-Babra, Tara and Martin)*

S: I mean I don't mind but they're always like 'I'm not working with you'

N: I don't want to work with Harry, and he's sat right next to me and he does my head in

R: Miss

I: Why don't you want to work with him?

N: Because he's a boy, and I hate him, and he's always being stupid and I can't get on with my work, and he makes all table laugh and then we always get dun

S: Nelly, I'm not taking the mick out of you but you've got your tie like that

M: Yeah

N: I know my ties undone

M: Yeah

R: Miss I don't like working with Peter Miss, he doesn't know about his gender group

T: *(Laughs)*

M: Billy Pollard, Billy Pollard

R: Yeah. Miss, I'm telling you Miss, I'm holding my fist down and he just writes on my hand Miss owt and I just go home, he just draws swiggles on my hand and I go home and I get told off my Mum because I've still got them on my hand

M: It'd be better

S: I hate it

M: It'd be better in like lessons and all, if like you wanna say something about lesson and like can have y'know put your hand up and like say what your point of view about it and like about how you'll y'know work it out and then

I: But do we listen to each others point of view respectfully?

M: Not really like, when she says like write, y'know start writing and do it and then like say someone puts their hand-up they'll say 'or I'll be back here in a minute' and when they do they're like Stacey, you don't like to express yourself right as much as you like want to

S: There's someone, y'know George in our class

M: Yeah

S: Erm, he's proper intelligent and all that but as soon as he

M: What form is he in?

S: Mine, 7T, Miss Moore's

M: *(Nods and smiles)*

S: And erm, and just because he's more brainy than I am, every time I put my hand up he sticks his up so teacher always goes for him or someone else

P: And he's always got the whiteboard and everything and he's the one who always gets picked for stuff and

S: And because I used to be stupid but now I'm not they still don't go for me anymore

M: And now, do y'know like say best y'know form of week and stuff like that in assembly

I: Mmm yeah

M: Like normally it'd be like y'know like the brainy, brainy group that they'd pick, y'know for best work and that but cos y'know like right low forms, y'know like people that need needs and stuff, they tend to pick them cos they're not right good and like the middles that do something finally good, they always get picked for it

I: And how does that make you feel?

M: A bit bad cos it's like we're doing, we're doing all this like being good and stuff like that

T: We're doing like really good work, and then like they're like lower sets who do good work but

B: But not as good as what we do

R: Because they're expected to do something bad Miss, well not bad but when they're expected to do something lower and they actually do something better than what they're supposed to do, everyone thinks that they're really good and stuff

M: But what they get higher than what they're meant to like to know whether too hard

N: And we, 7T and we've been really good and we, all we've got was highest attendance and what was it, most improved attendance?

S: And we haven't got any other medals apart from that, even though we've been proper good

I: Awwh

S: No, not other teacher, there's just a couple of people that are proper naughty like

N: When they say, they vote for us, they'll vote for us but there's not many people vote for us now

S: There's only our teacher I think that votes for us, and that's like one teacher out of like 60 odd

M: I wouldn't say 60, I'd say a couple of hundred or something at school

N: We have two

M: At this school, oh yeah, there will only be about ten, twenty at most like teacher that like work with you on your lessons per week cos it's all same, it's like every, y'know week, it's like same planner, you're doing same lessons so you know on a certain day you'll have same and then it just gets boring

S: I think that we should swap P.E for last lesson cos we get proper dirty and then they expect you to do all your other lessons

R: I know Miss

S: We're not even allowed to use showers

R: We've always got to get changed and everything Miss and then us next teachers always shouting at us because we always have to stay in P.E for ages Miss, but if we had it at last Miss, we'd be able to go home in our P.E uniform Miss

S: Like we do our football after school, which I've got tonight, but everyone calls me proper like rubbish and that because

I: Awwh

S: They've got a lot of skill but it's not about skill but it's not about skill, it's about how you play it

M: Yeah it's like you've got to have skill though like, it's not about how brainy you are or owt like that you've just got to be really good at it

S: And they might be playing football longer than I have

L: I know but

R: It's like I'm really new to sport, I don't watch no sport or anything, and it's like people are always giving me tips and I don't have a clue what they're on about and I just like feel really like left out and I'm always in the beginners group Miss

I: Awwh, not a nice feeling of being left out is it?

T: Some people are good and then other people

I: Does any one else feel this way, have these feelings? (*pause*). I know you two have mentioned it

M: Like not many of the lessons, it's just like in Art and stuff like that and that's the only thing that I'm really like bad at, and then I can't do it and then they give me stuff and I'm like what? Can't do all that and then I look at the side of me and someone what's just done exactly same what they're meant to and it looks mint and then I'm, I'm proper rubbish drawing

S: Do you know how Martin was on about choosing your lessons, it will be better if you got to choose your lessons and what you wanted to do about it, for like History you could do like Horrid Henry or something

N: Horrid Henry

S: Henry the eight

[Laughter]

M: I know cos

S: I watch that every day

M: I know like but it's not stuff like that, you need something that will be like challenging you so and if everyone picked different lessons like in P.E someone might pick football, cricket and then their gonna have about three people playing like doing it and then it's not gonna work

S: I don't

M: They won't have enough teachers so

S: I don't, I only know a tiny bit about tennis, I know a bit about tennis, I know a bit about badminton, I know a lot about football

M: That's the thing though in schools they don't, they don't like say they don't have you doing rugby because they know that, they try and get you to know how to play rugby and then you can become quite good at it at school, they don't do it to see how good you are they do it to get you to know how to

S: Yeah

M: Play it and stuff

T: It's like in year seven base as well, it's like you're stuck in like that classroom and all day unless you get taken out and it's like, well why don't we start moving around now because like that's like why we come to like high school

S: There's like only P.E, sometimes Science and like Technology and that that we get to move classrooms and that's it

N: And then say you've got an older brother or cousin that's here, you don't get to see them, cos you've always got to come back here to the base

S: And I didn't first day that we came cos we got a thing that we had to go around all the school by ourselves on us first day so we were like and I got lost

R: Yeah Miss, I didn't, I didn't come to the open evenings or owt Miss cos I didn't expect to come here, and I just didn't know that form I was meant to be in or owt and I just had to like follow rest of people

M: So with school, like with teachers it like torments kids and it's like a bit bad. They'll be sitting there say cudding biscuits or drinking their cup of tea on desk and that and they'll be sat there y'know on computer and then they'll just leave you something to do and then they'll just be sat there

N: Eating and that's not fair because we're not allowed to eat in they're classroom and their allowed to sit there eating

M: And drink cups of teas

N: Drinking and eating

S: My teacher, my teacher

N: Miss Moore she was all this, she was eating biscuits, she

S: No she was only eating er

R: Miss Davis right she comes in right and she's got this disgusting yoghurt coming out through and it's y'know those oranges ones Miss that have got see-through things, and they've got oranges in 'em and

she was just eating that Miss while we were all practising Music Miss, and it just got on my nerves Miss cos my belly was rumbling and everything and she's just eating

I: *(laughs)* Awwh.

N: I do like Miss Perry cos I go to the choir and that, Miss Perry just sits there eating sweets because she loves them, she loves them, if anybody's got any sweets she'll go 'can I have some please?' and she was gonna eat them

M: Well, you normally do eat sweets *(laughs)*

I: Well there seems to be some unfairness that you see in school where you say like, you said about swearing, that the teachers swear and you're not allowed, the teachers eat but your not allowed?

M: Well I aren't really bothered, cos if teacher has a sweet I find it like quite funny than boring, teachers being like y'know asking as if like we're right kids and stuff and like you've got to like watch your words and stuff like at teachers

I: Has anyone heard about the fire at Castlegate?

M: Yeah, yeah

R: My sister is at Castlegate

I: Is she?

M: That or

R: But she's got to go to Knight's school Miss and she's sleeping at her mate's school

S: That school that burnt down

I: Yeah

S: My Dad used to go there

T: Like Knights, go for half a day and Castlegate have the other half

N: That was bad because

S: My Dad used to go there, his Mum and Dad lives there, my Nana and Grandpa

M: It'd say be good like if like say y'know each half of the class or from each group to have say one person extra in lesson that walks round, asks anyone right how they're doing at this and if they're coping, and then you'll be able to like tell 'em how you're doing and then they'll be able to work with you

I: Mmm

S: In class yesterday

L: I don't know

S: Erm I cut inside the top of my thumb and I went to Miss and said it was bleeding and I cut it, and she said 'well what do you want me to do about it?' and told me to go away and sit down

N: It's like they don't care if you hurt yourself really, if you say you've just cut your finger and it's hurting but it's only tiny they go 'oh it's only tiny and you're not going to die' and ask you just

M: I know but there's nothing that you really can do if it's like right tiny can you

N: Yeah but they don't exactly care, they don't tell you to put your finger under the tap or anything

M: I know but you can't

N: My mate had one, two, three cuts on her fingers and they were hurting, she told Miss and she went 'go away and go away'

M: I know like but you can't if it's not like

N: Or perhaps maybe we should send you home

M: If it's not like hard, what can they do, cos a plaster won't do nowt if it's right little so it's not going to stop it hurting anyway, in anyway will it?

I: Going back to Castlegate like what happened like there, I mean what do you think of it what happened? I mean the, most of the school, three quarters of the school got burnt down and some people think it was a pupil so

R: Yeah Miss

M: Yeah

R: Miss, I think we should like, if we've got a relative at Castlegate, you should like be able to bring 'em in Miss cos she's like, she's not simple Miss but she's not, she's still working at level sevens Miss, but she's, it's like some of stuff that we're learning now Miss she'll be learning in year eleven so I think we should like be able to bring 'em in Miss and let 'em help us work and stuff, well just be able to bring 'em in

I: Yeah

M: Can't just let 'em in school when they haven't got them on record and it's like, they'll have to be

R: Yeah but

M: Cos they don't know what they're like or owt like that they'll have to bring papers and which school obviously it burnt down, which it'd be hard to do and then if owt happened to them, this school don't know say how bad they was, if they're good or not so

R: Y'know Inspire Project, we were bringing in a relative, it's a bit like that really

M: It's not cos they're, they're older and Woodlands, well like school won't be responsible for them, cos they're like old enough to be responsible for themselves but if we bring other people in it's gonna be bad innit if owt happens to them schools gonna get dun for it.

S: My Granddad doesn't care who he messes about with, cos as soon, cos when I used to be in juniors, when he used to pick me up like, when I came home and er my mates came out and they started, started er, joking about him and all that

I: Oh

S: It was just really funny

I: But why, but why do we think that they burnt down Castlegate, why do we think it got burnt down?

S: Because they might have been bored. Just same lessons

M: They're in like school and like how school like treats, they might say y'know cos some like good people, y'know like that are good in lessons and that and stuff like that, they can like wind people up and then they're fighting, they always believe the good and innocent people

T: Maybe it's cos like they're annoyed because like they might want to get their own back because they don't think that they, like some of teachers or pupils or teachers treat them fair so

I: Is it like that, is Woodlands, Woodlands has had two fires one what's Drama?

M: Drama  
I: What's the other?  
S: All the school  
M: It wasn't all the school  
S: It was the Maths department  
I: And Newville High?  
R: Miss though they said that they were going to go on to different schools Miss, but my Mum said that they won't go to our school Miss, cos it's already been burnt down and it was just like an incident but she said that they would have gone on to St. Benedict's, cos it's the only one that hasn't been burnt down  
I: So you think it's people that  
M: But they're Catholics there though, Robert  
R: But  
M: But they're Catholics at St. Benedict's so obviously  
R: They'll be praying to ... (*Unclear*), won't they  
M: But Catholics, they won't let people that aren't Catholics  
R: But half of people at St. Benedict's anyway aren't Catholics  
M: They are they are Catholics  
R: I've got like loads of mates  
S: You have to go to work, er church like twice a week  
M: But you still have to pray  
T: You just have to have extra R.E lessons  
M: You still have to pray though, even if you're not Catholic in school  
S: Cos William Benson went there and he  
M: Who?  
S: William Benson and erm  
N: He's somebody, he used to be in our old school  
S: And he went there and I went to his house and I asked him 'how are you doing?' and he said 'it's boring'  
I: This boring thing, I hear this so many times, how does it make you feel when you are bored? I mean, it's something that we think  
M: We just think, we don't want to be here and like just think, oh this is so bad, I'd just rather be anywhere else and  
S: When it's boring loads of people mess about and throw things across the classroom cos it's boring  
I: What about you Nelly, what do you do when you're bored?  
N: Go along with the others really  
I: And do what?  
N: Mess about, cos there's nowt else to do  
I: And how, how does it make you feel, how, what effect does it have on how you feel inside about yourself, how does it make you feel, boredom?  
R: Erm Miss, it's like when I get angry I'll remember it for all day Miss and I won't want to work but it's like boredom Miss, it's like I just really don't want to learn Miss, it just sticks in my head  
N: You don't want to listen, you don't want to listen  
S: I hate it cos you just like, I agree with splitting lessons for lunch but I hate it on the lesson because  
R: Miss you get like

S: Because the lesson before lunch, you're like, oh, I hope its dinner soon and cos we don't even have a clock in us room in classroom so you're like, what time is it?

N: We're either late for dinner, erm either early for dinner

M: Which is good though innit

S: Like one of, English teacher did on Monday, she sent us early for one of lessons, ICT so we had to stand there for like ten minutes

M: Yeah, we got dun for messing about

R: And Miss Baker, she won't let us out of class until she hears the bell so, if everyone's talking or summat, she won't let us out until she hears it (Pause)

T: I go to like a club and er all my mates are there and they all go to different schools, and like I'm the only one who goes to Woodlands from my club and like Woodland's had like a bad reputation from the past and it's like, they all, always like give me details and start talking like about school and that and say, they all say, oh 'you go to Woodlands, what a bad place to go' and it's like, well it's not cos it's like an up and coming school, and it's getting better and better everyday

S: Y'know my cousin, because he goes to Newville, he always starts arguing with me

M: Because Woodlands is best

N: Best, my best little cousin as well and he goes to Newville and I thought he was the best cousin ever, cos he's got a twin erm, identical twins

M: What's he called?

N: Patrick, Patrick (*surname unclear*) and they all play bardgey with me that Newville is better than Woodlands

M: It is not, Newville killed Woodlands at footy though, five nil, Year six though

I: So this idea about whose the best in the school, whose the best in the class, whose the best in the form, which is the best school

R: Miss, it's like me and Martin Miss, we we're arguing about whose best at Maths Miss and we're probably same anyway Miss and we're always trying to be better than each other Miss

N: There's no point

M: But we don't even, I don't even try beating him at French, that's just not a thing that I'm willing to try to do that

S: I hate French

I: It's a lot of pressure isn't it?

N: Yeah

I: Trying to be better than so and so and trying to

S: Some teachers are proper gobby though, like Miss Jackson and Miss Ferguson

R: Miss Ferguson Miss, you just say 'Miss I can't draw Miss I don't know how to do it'

M: She'll just go 'do it, it's ok, just do that for us'

R: There's no such thing as you can't draw, you just draw and twiddle. Miss it's like Jason, he just draws and twiddles Miss and it just turns into a picture, but me Miss I just draw a swiggle Miss, it comes out stupid

I: Can you ever imagine a school where we're not, we're not under this kind of pressure that we've spoke about

S: No

I: No?

M: I could imagine one school out of all world of being a good school like where your up and doing stuff and where you are learning things that your gonna be leaning cos

R: Miss, best school ever would be like a massive school with like one class for every pupil, where you could just do what you want in that class  
Miss

S: I'll bring my X-box and my

M: Have you got PS3 internet and all

S: I don't think

M: I have me its mint on mine

I: What about this that you have between, between each other of whose the best, what have you got, whose got the most, I mean how does this seem, this seems what I can gather, how does this make us feel?

R: I think people do it for pride Miss, it's like you feel really good Miss when you know that you're the best or summat

I: But do you, do you, when you're the best. Has anyone ever felt that they're the best?

N: No

B: No

S: I'm not being rude or anything

M: Kind of, I've kind of a bit like but I'm not trying to be big-headed or owt

I: No, no, be honest

M: I'm just like trying to be

I: And how does it make you feel when you, how does it make you feel when you're up there, and you've won something or you're the best, how do you feel?

M: It feels right good, and then you're feeling, oh I can't let this go and I've got to like keep trying and like y'know, keep going and keep going

S: I'm not being rude or owt but Miss Jackson, I know why she's proper snappy cos she's quite old now, but she can still remember my Mum and my Mums now 30

*(Laughter)*

N: She can, she can, my Mum can remember Miss Jackson and she's 31

R: My Mum, my Mum and Dad can remember Miss Jackson and my Mum and Dad's 36 and 33

N: Thing is Miss Jackson

S: How old's your Dad?

R: 36

S: My Dad's 31

N: Not being rude but she is kind of old

S: Yeah

M: It'd be better right if

S: We had some new teachers

S: Different teachers

R: Miss Baxter's well old, she thinks she knows how to work a smart-board Miss. (*Laughter*) 'I've been working here longer than you, I know how to work smart-board', she didn't have a clue of how to use it

T: Her eyes light up

M: When we have new teachers like, they're all good with you, they let you like y'know do more and like say you do something, they like give you a few warnings first, and then your like right good for them y'know cos they're new and you end up becoming friends and that and being alright with new teachers. But it's like when you're coming into school and teachers have already been there for a while their like right snappy as if to say 'or I've worked with loads of kids before nenenenene'

S: It's like we've been ordered by police

R: They do, cos they think they know everything cos they think they've been here longer

N: But some Misses do say, 'I've worked, erm new' which means they've been nice

S: People take the mick out of me for watching like Eastenders and all that

M: Well, that's their life really

S: I watch all them soap operas y'know like Neighbours, Home and Away, Emmerdale

M: Not them like

S: Coronation Street

I: When people

M: Eight out of Ten Cats

I: When people take the mick out of us, has any one ever felt, as anyone here not experienced being picked out?

S: I get called monkey face just cos I can do that (*stretches mouth*) (*laughter*)

R: Everyone can do

M: Especially if you pull your mouth like that

N: When he laughs, when he laughs everyone takes the mick out of him

S: Cos my nose does that (*flares nostrils*) (*Laughter*)

I: I haven't noticed that

N: But it's funny, it's funny, people take the mick out of him

M: Laugh, laugh

N: You need to make him laugh

S: It's only when I'm really proper laughing

I: What, I mean the thing is, I don't know if you've ever spoken to any adults about school and if you're interested, but they might say the affect that being teased and having experienced name-calling but it's like, sometimes you might offend someone

M: The teachers, they treat us as if were their slaves, they say 'will you hand out books please?' and everyone will like do it straight away and like

N: And they call me TP if I hand them out and I'm not

M: I know and either way, if they ask you to, if they ask you to you haven't got a choice because if you don't, then you'll get dun for that

S: Cos you're like running round classroom after her and she's like sat on computer like that

*(Laughter)*

R: If I'm older and I become a teacher right I'm gonna tell everyone to do loads of work and everything Miss and I'm just gonna go on computer

N: Me and my mates went to Viewpond and Miss said they were really nice and could sort out everything and we went to see, and they were like in a meeting, we went in and they were like in a mood with us, like what are you doing in here, like why are you in here? And they said to us 'we're in a meeting right now could you go away'

R: Who was that?

N: One of teachers in Viewpond it's she's in a meeting

S: I like, I like erm, I like new teachers that you get that you've never had before cos they like let you off with stuff

N: That's what I said, that's what I said, that's what I said

S: I shout out

N: Who did we have at the end of primary?

S: Mr. Keaton

N: Mr. Keaton, he's kind of new, everybody calls me a TP just because I like him. I like reading and he's a reading teacher and he helps you read and stuff but I really really really like reading and everybody calls me a TP just cos I like to go

S: I know Miss

R: Everybody calls me a TP cos I like Miss Croft but it's just like she's really ace Miss

M: I know she's good, yeah I like Miss Croft

S: I'm not really taking the mick out of Miss Williams but she seems to go ssss, ssss at end of every sentence

R: Yeah Miss Williams, she sounds like a snake Miss, you can always hear her

*(Laughter)*

I: What about what you think, what do you think about what people are saying

B: Well, I like, Miss Williams is alright but I think she's alright but she sort of treats you like a child

M: Which is good I think

S: I don't, she's moody

N: She lets you have fun

M: But when she's in a mood like, when she's in a mood, she's like a normal teacher but when she's in a mood your not used to her being how she is, like that's only thing with her that

R: I think it's my favourite subject, she lets us have a laugh and then she'll talk to us right nice and she goes 'right that's it, come on, lets have some work off you, we've had a laugh' and then we'll get on with us work, and she'll let us have a laugh while were working

S: What Miss Jackson?

R: Miss, I think that's what makes us er bored in next lessons Miss cos when we have a really good time with Miss Jackson and then we just have really boring lessons for next

T: It's like that with Drama, it's like you have like a really good lesson and then you like don't want it to end cos like you've got Geography next and its like, do we have to

L: UhUhh

S: I like

B: School it'd be good, school would be like alright and good and have it like say all week through and that and y'know say, have it from eight o'clock until say five. Cos if I enjoy it then it's gonna be good then, so we don't learn as much as we normally did but we'd be going more time so it'd be fun and like out of way more aren't you and

T: We had a netball match last night and we got like loads of grief off of Northfield High School, and it got that bad that like our teacher had to go to their teacher to tell them that they'd been giving us loads of grief

M: Oh, it's bad that

T: And Year seven team, they were whispering, pointing and saying stuff, that, she was saying stuff, like Babra like they even went up to her and called her a pepper pot

M: Pepper pot

B: I didn't get it but they said it cos I'm small

M: And like peppers like black for her hair and stuff, look like a pepper pot, well that's what they're trying to say

T: Year nines came with us as well and like these three year nine girls ganged up on one of our year nine girls and it got that bad that she actually started crying

I: Really

M: She's what

B: She nearly broke her thumb

M: Fighting

T: Well apparently she moved, and they moved with her, so she didn't want to move again so she walked through them and these three year nine girls from Northfield pulled her back and started having a go at her

M: Who with?

B: Alice

T: D y'know that little girl, Cathy, her brother, what was her name, Cathy Turner was it?

B: Oh yeah

T: Her brother, I don't know what his name is

M: Elsie Pickering, right fast and she's got like black hair

T: It's like really brown

S: Y'know my brother that I was on about that's got autism

I: Yeah

S: Everyone picks on him because he's got like really big ears

M: Who is he?

P: Do they call him Dumbo?

M: What's his name?

S: Joe

M: Palmer

S: Hanks

M: Never heard of him

I: But what do

S: And so we tried to have his ears pinned back but er there's one doctor that knows all about stuff about him so we went to her and she said it might be possible to get it done but we don't know how much it will cost, if it will cost a lot

I: The affect of being called names and teased, it can be quite profound can't it?

S: I get

R: Miss I think that's why I act like I do, so I don't really have a good time at home Miss, I've got a brother, he bullies me, but I don't really have a good time at school either, I just like try and be really cheerful Miss, and smile it off, and it just doesn't work Miss

M: Robert, well, that's what like you try to do, you like try to be y'know right good and like act right funny and like to wrong people and stuff, like you should act like one way, y'know how they like and then to others act how they like

S: People call me racist names, cos I've got like a darker colour skin

R: My brothers darker than you

M: I'm darker

I: I knew a girl who was getting called racist names

S: Yeah

I: And I was surprised when I looked at her, yeah she had dark hair and olivey skin tone but she was a lot paler than me. It seems as if we can notice the mildest things in people

S: It's not about the outside though, it's about the inside

M: Well yeah

S: It's about the inside

R: Miss it's like my Dad, Miss, he's really like really tall, but he doesn't really care about me anyway but Miss it's like he doesn't really

N: *(Quite laughter)*

I: Awwh

S: It isn't fair

R: But when he gets me a Christmas present Miss erm my sisters will be like taking the mick out of me cos it's just like a small toy car or something, but as Scott's just said, it's not about, it's not what you get, it's the thought that counts

M: Yeah, yeah

R: But he doesn't give me a present anymore, he just gets me a tenner *(Tape changes over)*

S: Like playing with cars, on the floor and all that

I: D y'know what, I remember being about eleven years and it's a strange age, and I used to like doing things that I did when I was younger and thinking, oh am I too old? I wished I would have enjoyed them more, y'know, childish things

R: Miss I've still got a teddy Miss, that I got as a Christmas present Miss, it's had one of its ears ripped off Miss and I've still got

M: That's how people get bullied and stuff like that, well at school they might get the mick took out of them when like it's simple, like say act right y'know immature and childish, and like say play with cars and stuff like that causes bullies straight away

S: I've got a little like cuddly thing but it's er a hot water bottle cover as a panda, so I call it 'comfortable panda' and erm, I've had it since I was born and it's still in perfect shape

I: What about, Nelly, do you feel as if you fit in?

N: Not really

I: Why not?

N: Cos I've got a really horrible nickname and I really don't like it

M: Scary Mary

N: It's my uncle, it's my uncle that started it

M: What is it?

N: I can't tell you

L: Tell me, we won't, we won't call you it in here

N: No no, I'm not saying

I: No, what about outside?

N: No, cos my table all figured it out and they all call me it and keep on saying it, I'll tell Miss on her own but not

S: Is it?

I: But you don't

S: I know

N: It's something to do with wearing glasses and I don't like wearing them

S: Oh, yeah

R: It's something about your glasses isn't it?

S: I know what it is

M: Specky four eyes

N: No actually I don't mind that, I really don't mind that

S: Yeah cos then you've got four eyes so you're better

I: You know what, I think you look really nice in your glasses

N: I don't like them

R: Miss I think it suits her

S: It's not what I was thinking about

M: I reckon Robert would be alright in glasses

N: (*Laughs*)

S: I was thinking about 'moody Nelly'

N: Don't, I'm not moody, everyone says I am but I'm not

S: Yeah, because every time I was on her table I was messing about with Jason so she said 'pack it in you'

N: I didn't say that

S: And then when I move, she starts laughing, messing about

N: But it doesn't mean I'm moody, it just means I want to get on with my work and

I: What about you, do you feel as if you fit in?

B: Sometimes, cos like erm, with me being small

T: I'd love to be smaller

S: My Mum gets mick took out of her cos she's into goth and she's a tomboy, everyone takes mick out of her

N: Everybody, I don't mind your Mum, I think she's ace

S: I know

N: I think his Mums ace

S: Cos she's like got a, she's got a green jacket and everyone says to her 'did you buy that jacket?' It's got two wings and everyone says 'did you buy that?' And she knitted it, sewed it

I: What about you Tara, do you feel as if you fit in?

T: Erm

M: It'd have to be a big puzzle cos she's tall

T: Yeah, cos I'm like biggest of them

R: Yeah Miss, it's hard to be someone tall

T: It's like, I feel, I don't feel normal sometimes and also like you're surrounded by like chavs

I: What do you mean chavs?

M: People that wear Mackenzie like me and other people

S: Like people who wear really baggy trousers and all that

M: No, baggy trousers, baggy trousers is like moshers, that's like stuff like that with big baggy jeans and stuff. Chavs just wear trackies and stuff like that

S: I'm not, I'm just myself

T: But, it's like there's a group of us that are not anything, it's like were into normal things

S: You're just yourself

M: Like individual

R: Miss I don't care how I look Miss, Miss I haven't brushed my hair in like weeks (*Laughter*), I just get up Miss, get dressed, I don't care how I look and come to school as I am

S: So do I. Apart from when I take my hat off on a morning, cos I've got one of them with big bobble things on top, so I'll take it off and my hairs like, like I've just

N: That thing that you always wear

S: Yeah, that hat

I: Do we think then, I don't know if I've asked this question before but do we think that we can have school without these feelings?

S: Yeah, no

I: Do you think that there could be a school where

S: No, not really

I: Why not?

M: You

S: Cos it'll have to be in your head

M: I reckon, no, it wouldn't though cos it's like people, it's just like saying do you reckon that there's a place that's got a 500 football team, it's possible but it'd be like rare to have it

R: Miss it just depends on whose in school Miss, cos it could be people from school that you don't really get along with

N: Mr. Woodhall (*unclear*)...

R: Mr. Woodhall's scary

S: I know

P: He can remember my Mum when she was here, it's just weird, he doesn't talk to you that much and

S: I think he's shy, I think he's shy of children

M: He's not shy, cos he's got that much power. Y'know my mates they all went up and said 'alright' he goes 'come up to my office and I'll tell

you if I'm alright'. So he y'know walked upstairs and they all y'know run off so I goes to my mates y'know, not this ones, I goes to him, oh, thingy just say to Mr. Fraser 'alright', he goes 'alright then', he goes 'Sir, are you alright ' and Sir y'know was shouting at kids and I walked up there and looked back and they were stood there for about ten minutes

P: If he's talking he'll say

M: 'Morning' and then get lost

R: Yeah

M: And then he's off, he doesn't talk to us

R: It's like your in the hall and you're just eating, he walks up to you and he goes 'so how are you getting on alright today then?' And you just go 'yeah, I'm alright' and he goes 'are you finding your way around alright?' And I go 'yeah, I'm fine' and he just like gives you an interview on how you think school is and it's just like 'I'm trying to eat, can I please eat?' And he just walks up to you and talks and it's just like

S: Especially, cos teachers like pull you up for a talk and your trying to get like your dinner, and you've only got like half an hour and you're like, c'mon, shut up

*(Laughter)*

S: Shut up and let me eat

N: But teachers talk about things like home, Mr. Fraser and a few other people who stay in here for a while they talk about school and that just annoys me even more because you've had enough of school, it's your break and you just want to get on with your dinner and you want to sit and talk to your mates about stuff

M: (Next focus group arrive and wait at the door) We have to go now

I: Oh, yeah, oh what an ending so right we'll end it there

## APPENDIX G: PRU, GRANT

(Year 11)

I: What do you think of school?

G: It's shit

I: What's shit about it?

G: Everything, boring

I: Boring, how do you feel when you're bored?

G: Bored, won't do you anything, what do you, other people feel like when they're bored?

I: I don't, bored, boredom's a strange word everybody, not everybody, but lots of people say they're bored at school, and I'm just wondering how it, what it means to be bored, how can you explain boredom to someone what it feels like to someone who hasn't been to school for 30 years, I mean what do you do when you're bored?

G: Fuck all

I: Do you ever misbehave when you're bored?

G: Well I might do

I: What kind of things do you do?

G: I don't know

I: Are you good at school?

G: Yeah, I'm alright (raises voice slightly and laughs)

I: What, how did you get here?

G: Got erm kicked out of school

I: What school did you go to?

G: Knights

I: Knights, what did you do to get kicked out?

G: Got accused of drug-dealing at school

I: Right, I mean

G: Got accused

I: So it wasn't true

G: No

I: Oh, so you're kind of wrongly accused

G: Yeah

I: This is why you're here?

G: Yeah, they had no proof of it, they had no evidence of it they had nothing of it, but it was their word over mine and teachers always win don't they so

I: What about prior to that, what was your behaviour like?

G: It wasn't good at school but like, when I talk to my mates and that they said I wasn't really bad in school it's just I don't like people shouting at me and stuff, I just don't like 'em, why shout when you can talk to me?

I: What do you do when people shout at you?

G: Kick off

I: What do you do when you kick off?

G: Go leet

I: What kind of things, tell me what Grant might do?

G: I don't know, start swearing and chucking stuff and

I: So you say teachers always win what do you mean?

G: You can't win against a teacher, you can't. They've always got to be right about everything, everything you say, you can't even go up to 'em and say, if you're getting into trouble and you say something to 'em, if they've got something in their head then that's that you've done it, you're not gonna change their mind, and if you do try changing their mind then they start going leet and then I go leet to try and make my point but you can't

I: What about you, do you feel you can win?

G: No, nobody can win; no student can win against a teacher. None of 'em

I: So do you feel like you've lost, like you're losing?

G: No well, no, no. It's alright is school, I had fights. I had this teacher called Miss Donnell, and I was right good mates, and people used to say I was teacher's pet but she was just always nice to me and that, she never shouted at me or owt, but I used to go in to see her at dinner and that instead of going out with all lads I'd go to see her, it was good

I: Oh right, so you got on well then?

G: Mm, I still keep in touch with her now, I talk to her and that, she's had a kid so, she said she wasn't gonna have a kid until I left and as soon as I left she got pregnant

I: What do you mean, she wasn't gonna have a kid until you left?

G: Because she, if I had a year left and if she'd have had a kid while I was there she wouldn't have seen me for that period of time

I: Oh, she must have been really quite attached

G: She asked me to go to her wedding but school wouldn't let me go

I: Was she quite young?

G: No, she was about 20, 20 odd. I didn't fancy her or anything, she wasn't good looking or anything, no, never like that, she was just I don't know, I was just good mates with her, our Debbie was good mates with her and all

I: Oh, that's nice to know. So what, do you think you should have been excluded?

G: No

I: What, so how do you feel now being with all excluded kids cos really you're not mixing with kids who aren't excluded are you when you're at school?

G: (Unclear). It's shit, you're not really in a school environment here

I: Well what environment is it?

G: Not a school environment (I: Isn't it). You're sat in a room with two kids (I: laughs), that's what it's like; it's like going to spaca school. All my mates go 'or yeah Grant goes to window licker school'

I: What do you think of that, how does that make you feel?

G: I don't know, I'm not bothered about it, they can say what they want. If I want to go to college and that, I'll get back into mainstream, with other people

I: It's interesting cos what's happened to you, you're kind of not in mainstream, it's almost like you've been excluded from mainstream schooling haven't you?

G: Yeah

I: But you see yourself as quite an ordinary person?

G: I wouldn't see myself as anything else would I  
I: Well you're not. I mean do you think it could happen to anybody what happened to you?  
G: Bad luck, that's what it is  
I: And then what, what happens. Has it improved your behaviour being here, as it improved your life chances and your life?  
G: No  
I: What's it done for you?  
G: Can't get GCSEs and that can I, can't do all my GCSEs when I was in Knights, I would have at least had a go at 'em and I might have got some but in here you can't get owt. You're just in a school, you just learn shit, you don't even learn owt  
I: Why don't you learn anything?  
G: You don't. Since I've been in here I've learnt naff all and I've been here for over a year now and I've learnt nowt. I could go into Knights and go to Knights for a week and I'd learn more in a week than I would in here in a year  
I: What about concentrating, are you OK concentrating here?  
G: Yeah, it's the shit work. Proper boring, I'm doing stuff that I did in year nine and year eight, not doing stuff that's gonna make me learn anything, you just don't learn anything  
I: So life's been a bit of a cruel blow to you hasn't it?  
G: Alright  
I: Here, I mean not in ever situation but I mean this has been a bit of a  
G: Yeah  
I: And how does that make you feel?  
G: That I can't get, can't do stuff that I wanted to do when I left school. But when I got kicked out of school for Knights some other two lads were here. Them two lads who got accused of it, they should have been excluded but they didn't it was just me  
I: You're joking, why was it you then, why did they pick you out?  
G: I don't know  
I: But what is it about these two boys that made them stay?  
G: I don't know, just same as me. I used to hang about with 'em both  
I: God  
G: Best mates with one and that and other 'un (unclear). And I can't like, I want to go to prom and that and I can't go there no more, and I'm just fucking sat here and it's shit and I don't, if it was my choice I wouldn't come here, it's just cos my Mam wants me to come so I just come  
I: I mean you could, sorry go on  
G: You learn more at home than what I could learn here  
I: So do you feel, do you see yourself as clever?  
G: No, not really but, you can't, I don't know, no not really, no I don't know. I weren't in all high sets at Knights like but  
I: But do you feel as if you could have done more then?  
G: Yeah, if I'd have been at Knights I could have got Cs in my GCSEs but I can't do GCSEs now  
I: So you have now like lost that chance, like you've almost had you're Cs taken away from you?

G: Yeah  
I: Because you've been wrongly accused, and there's nothing you can do about it?  
G: No  
I: God, that would make me feel so angry  
G: It does for a bit and then they said 'or yeah you can do like this statement thing where you can come back in and do like say something to try and get back into school', (I: yeah), but I was just too annoyed to go back into school cos I was just. I just thought they kicked me out so what's point me going back to try and say 'no you're right, you're right, like I did this and I did that', so that's what they wanted cos they wanted me to go back and tell 'em that they were right  
I: But why didn't you swallow your pride for what you could have had?  
G: Cos I'm not like that. I can still go to college though and do it (I: yeah), it's still a year of my life gone, I'd have to go to college, do a year to get all my GCSEs and then that year I could have been doing something else. Cos when I leave school all my mates 'ill be (unclear) and I could be (unclear)  
I: So it seems perhaps as if it's perhaps held your development back?  
G: Probably but life goes on doesn't it so  
I: Yeah it does  
G: I'm not bothered  
I: It does, so erm, do you think school's a warm environment?  
G: Not this school, boring  
I: What's this school?  
G: It's like erm, it's not even a school I wouldn't even class it as a school  
I: What is it?  
G: I don't know, it's just somewhere you go when you get kicked out of school just to say to government that you're going somewhere. You don't come here to learn  
I: So erm, God I didn't realise (pause). But what about when you leave school what will you do?  
G: I wanna be a lorry mechanic, but you need four GCSEs for that so I don't think I can do that and  
I: Don't you think you could go back to school and do your GCSEs, or haven't you got any plans to do that?  
G: I wanna go, when I leave here I wanna be working in September so  
I: I see  
G: I don't know what I want to do or I might go to college for a year and study something  
I: Sometimes you know when pupils are like misbehaving in corridors, and I don't know what you might call it 'kicking off' and that and there's fighting and that I mean it happens sometimes here doesn't it?  
G: Yeah  
I: I mean sometimes it happens quite a lot doesn't it?  
G: Yeah  
I: How do you feel about being in that environment?  
G: I'm not bothered, do what they want to do  
I: What about bullying, why do people bully people?  
G: To make themselves feel more secure

I: Do you think what happened to you, this experience what happened to you and getting you here, do you think that was a form of bullying, what happened with the teachers and everything?

G: Bullying me?

I: Yea that you got bullied?

G: Probably not. I never got bullied in school nobody bullied me I was, people who I hung about with were most popularist in school, even in year nine and year ten, now year eleven, everybody knows us, I've never been bullied in my life. I've seen bullying I don't know when. I don't like bullying, if someone bullies someone round here and I think it's wrong I'll tell 'em

I: But what happened what happened to you then, what is that?

G: It's teachers picking on me, I'm sure Mrs Smith didn't like me anyway, she was head of my year, she hated me. Everything I did it's always got to be always 'Grant, Grant 'ill have done this, Grant 'ill have done that' (I: laughs), it was always that, no matter what. Even if I was in lesson and I got onto something 'or Grant 'ill have done that', Mrs Clayton she used to come into my lesson and go 'has Grant been kicking off yet?' I used to kick off a bit, but I don't know when you're at school you want to have a laugh, you're only there once

I: What did you kick off for, for a laugh?

G: No, because people, teachers used to kick off at me, so I didn't right mind if they're gonna kick off at me and start shouting at me, I should be able to shout at them, but it doesn't work like that does it, know what I mean; they always win. Just because I'm a pupil that doesn't mean that I have to be treat with less respect, then I should have to give them respect but they're giving me no respect, it doesn't work like that in my eyes anyway. If they're not gonna give me respect, I'm not gonna give them respect. Like a few teachers used to come upto me and like Mr. Howarth, he used to talk to me when he'd talk to me I'd talk to him and say 'yeah I'll do that for you', and that and he'd go and tell me to say 'sorry' to teachers and I'd go back up and say 'sorry' but if someone kicked off at me, I'd kick off. Even in this school, if someone kicks off at me, starts shouting at me, I'd shout at them, start talking to me I'll talk to them, that's how it works, just like if someone hit me, I'd hit them

I: But if you hit them then you'd get in trouble, you could get in trouble by police couldn't you?

G: So, self-defence

I: But what happened to you showed that 'you can't win'?

G: What do you mean?

I: Well like you got wrongly accused but you couldn't back yourself up could you?

G: What can I back myself up about, what can I say?

I: Well what I'm saying is, when you got accused of dealing drugs right, you didn't do it but nobody listened to, so in police if you hit somebody, so if someone hit you and then you hit them back and then you claim self-defence, how do you know that police and that legal system will be your saving grace?

G: Because they can't get you dun for that can you. If someone comes upto you and hits you with a bat you've got to defend yourself. You're

not just gonna stand there. If someone did hit me anyway I'd get dun for it me, I'm not bothered I'd say 'yeah I did bang him'. You wouldn't get caught anyway if you pounced on 'em

I: But you've kind of been caught for something haven't you, a crime you didn't commit

G: Mm

I: So who's to say you won't get caught again?

G: For a crime I didn't commit?

I: Yeah

G: We'll have to see won't we

I: I mean how do you play it, how do you play the system, do you think you're playing it right?

G: I don't know, do I

I: I mean don't you think you could try and like even though you think it's not fair do you think you could like, I mean do you think if you were in that situation again say with the drugs where you might have grovelled a bit to the school. Do you think you could ever do that just to get to just to stay in (G: Yeah), do you think you could ever do that approach?

G: I probably would have, I probably would have gone to that meeting but at the time I was just too annoyed so I didn't

I: And who knows what would have happened then, sometimes when you're targeted?

G: I'd have probably got back into school but I didn't think of it like that. I'd rather be in Knights now than I would be here in a million years I'd rather be at Knights than be here. It's shocking this school, absolutely shocking

I: What's it like, tell me what's shocking?

G: I don't know, it just is shocking, you come here and all you do is, I don't know you don't even do owt, that's why I always come in late me cos I can't be bothered with it, I just come in late now do these two lessons, then get something to eat, then go play snooker, something like that

I: Do you have friends here?

G: Yeah, they're alright

I: Who are you friends with then?

G: All of 'em

I: Do you think, what do you think will happen to most of people when they leave here?

G: Not right much. Not right much at all. A few of 'em might go in army

I: Rest?

G: Dole probably. That's what government don't see, all government's bothered about is shit, too many good-doers, they're all faggots, they don't think about people they just think about themselves, money-making then credit-crunch kicks in and all shit happens, it's just fucked up world innit (I: yeah). Broken Britain (I: laughs), that's what it is

I: Do you think you've been a victim of this situation?

G: Yeah

I: Do you think you can turn things around, do you think you can stop being that?

G: Stop being what a victim?

I: Yeah, of the system?  
G: No, just go and get a job and go along with life  
I: So what are you like as a person?  
G: I don't know  
I: Like what kind of person are you, what do people say about you?  
G: I don't know, if they say anything about me, they say it to me  
I: I mean like your character, what's your character like?  
G: Alright, I'm happy, yeah I am happy, most of time anyway. When I go out with my mates I am anyway  
I: And when you're here are you happy here?  
G: Yeah, I'm alright, shit and stuff I don't know like, I don't know like when I'm stressed at home or something I go out with mates and all stress 'ill just go cos I'm out with mates, you can have a laugh with 'em (I: yeah), it's alright that and go home, go to bed and come here, do same again  
I: Do you feel important?  
G: What do you mean important?  
I: Do you feel important in school like you matter?  
G: Er  
I: Do you matter?  
G: Erer, what do you mean matter like?  
I: Do you feel as if your views and your perspective is important in this school?  
G: No, nobody's are I don't think, nobody's 'ill say nowt, nobody's bothered because everybody knows that this school's a bag of wank, that's why nobody comes. Like Cooky 'd rather go out with his mates and that then come here, if it was a laugh then if he was gonna do something about it then I'd think he'd come me, he just won't come, he'd rather go and get wrecked cos he's gonna learn more when he gets pissed then he is when he works, he is. He'll probably get more knowledge from a fuckin McDonald's happy meal or something  
I: Erm, can you turn things around for yourself?  
G: Yeah, it's your life no-one else's  
I: Do you feel as if you fit in here?  
G: Yeah, nobody 'ill mess with me  
I: Why do people break things, hit things and kick doors, Castlegate got burnt down recently didn't it, why do people do it, I mean that's they quarters of Castlegate got burnt down didn't it (R: I know) and then they went to Knights?  
G: They couldn't burn Knights down though, it's made of stone  
I: Is it? Cos that used to be an all boy's school didn't it Knights?  
G: No, I don't think it was, I think it was an all girl's school  
I: Or was it?  
G: No I don't know, yeah, yeah I don't know, my Mam used to go  
I: Yeah but I think it was 100's, 100 years ago or something, it's a long time ago  
G: Or, but yeah Castlegate got burnt down but I don't know, somebody who's really pissed off or something. They're stupid Castlegate they made a school out of plastic, plastic and wood

I: What, the building, that's what it was made of?  
G: Yeah, plastic and wood and maybe a metal frame and that was it, that's all that was there, frame. Couldn't burn Knights down though, pure brick, all of it brick, well most of it anyway  
I: Why would somebody want to burn Castlegate down?  
G: Castlegate's a shit school (unclear), but Knights, I don't know, I could have gone to Castlegate but then I went to Knights cos all my mates went to Knights but Knights is a bit, it's strict (I: is it?). There's security cameras everywhere, everywhere there is, there's them things that y'know people can speak out of (I: yeah), there's all that. Teachers are strict, you can't do anything, you get like three comments and you get a detention and then it just leads up and leads up and leads up, I just think they try getting you kicked out me. Like in this school if you do something bad, if you swear here it's not as bad, but if you swear in Knights, you straight get a comment or you might get sent out or you might get sent home but if they'd just say 'oh well will you try not swearing please', then you might shut-up  
I: What about, what effect does it have on you like detention and being in isolation?  
G: Can't do isolation me, never done it, never can, I've always walked out of it, I can't just sit there and look at a black-board, cos you have boards don't you like boards going up, you always sit there, in rows and sit and this board and then you don't do shit, sit there for six hours, what's point  
I: Six hours, like that, (R: Yeah), I can't believe they're allowed to do this  
G: All day you sit there  
I: What effect does that have on you?  
G: Me, I get migraines me (I: God I bet you do). Big migraines  
I: Do you think it might ruin your sight?  
G: Aye, I walk out me, I can't hack it  
I: So what influence does it have on your mind, how do you feel when you're sat there like that?  
G: I know, and you've got a piece of paper and  
I: What do you do, so you walk out, does it make you feel angry?  
G: Yeah I think everybody does, everybody just goes to sleep and shit and there's some what are sat at front and they just draw, can't be bothered looking at wall, it's like you're in prison  
I: I mean I think like, this is a cool room isn't it (R: Mm), and I'm sat here doing my stuff by myself in this little room and I think, oh God, I've got to get out (laughs)  
G: Normally a board 'd be here and a board 'd be here and you'd be sat in a thing like that  
I: So you're just encapsulated?  
G: Yeah, and then they'd be another here, and another here  
I: So just like a meter  
G: Yeah, about that long (I: God) and you've got to sit there  
I: That 'd drive me crazy, do you think  
G: That's just after three detentions, you go in Iso

I: What do you think it does to people, being sat like that for six hours, for people who go there a lot, what do you think, what effect does it have on people I mean what would it?

G: They don't want to go in it but you can't help it sometimes

I: If you were sat like that for a long time for days and days and days, what do you think 'd happen to you?

G: I don't know, ask some people that have been there for days and days and days. You can go in for a whole week in Iso

I: Like that!

G: Sit there for a whole week in Iso. I can't hack it me at all, I'd rather get excluded me

I: So you chose this sort of?

G: What do you mean chose it?

I: Did you choose to come here rather than be put in isolation; you didn't have a choice, did you?

G: Chose to come here, oh no I mean to get exc, I got permoed, I mean excluded where you get like excluded for just a day or something (I: Or yeah, we used to call that suspended, yeah excluded). But yeah I can't do iso me at all

I: I couldn't, do you think it would do you any good though, do you think it makes people behave better?

G: No

I: What does it make people behave?

G: Well it might do, like some people might go in and will go, or I don't want to go in there again and I never want to do that again, but then some people who are bad like can't help it, they just do it. But there's this lad right called Carl Young and he's got ADHD and in year seven, he should have got permoed in year seven but cos he's got ADHD they said 'well we'll have to keep him in cos he's got ADHD'. Just because he's got ADHD, you can't use a medical term to keep someone in school and I got kicked out, and he was, he must have got about eight comments of lesson, he, you've never seen owt bad like him. He used to lock teachers in room and that. Put all chairs up and make triangles with chairs and he was leet, he used to rob teachers and stuff

I: Do you think places like this improve people's behaviour?

G: No, I don't think there should be places like this

I: Y'know having spoke to you all, well I've been doing these interviews for a few days, I don't think there should

G: I think they should either send you to a different school (I: yeah), because when you go to a different school you don't know anybody do you (I: No, or yeah). And then when like you go in you're like I don't know anybody here and you sit down and y'know you don't know anybody but then when you start meeting people, that's when you start acting about, it's cos you don't anybody and you're sat there but I don't know. If I'd have been kicked out and got sent to a different school it still gives you that chance doesn't it

I: Yeah. So do you feel as if you've had that chance?

G: No, cos I've been here. If I'd have been sent to Castlegate or something then at least I've got another chance, but then they always say 'we'll give you a chance, you've done this'

I: So do you think it's had a negative impact on your life this what's happened to you (G: I don't know) I mean do you think it's had a good impact, do you think it's improved you, what's happened to you?

G: No, it just made me, I don't know, it's just shit. But I'm just trying to get into college, but if I'd have been in mainstream there wouldn't be problems to get me into college, but now they're trying to get me into college they should have just been able to go like that really for a place, but cos you've been kicked out for something they can't just. Like when people get put in prison for stuff and they've been wrongly accused but just because the law said that they did it, the law's right aren't they? You can't go over that can you, like that in school, school's the law, you can't go against that, like if coppers, if a copper comes upto you he's always right, you can't say your point, he's always right, no matter what you say, he's got something to say back to you and that's what it's like in school. There was this thing on news other day where it were saying 'or yeah, coppers are gonna talk about, listen to you', but you have to say all your rights and all this kind of crap, they won't, I know they won't, they talk shit, government and coppers, no. We brought government in and now they're controlling us, it's all wrong

I: Do you think you can do anything about it?

G: No, you can't do owt to government, nothing. What we're all saying now in this school, it'll get sent to someone, it won't even reach government, it won't

I: What you mean this here?

G: Yeah, all this what you're doing I don't think it'll reach government

I: What do you think will happen?

G: Erer. It'll get sent to someone who's more involved with government and then they'll look at it and throw it aside (I: Laughs). That's what they do and then something 'ill come along like oil in, or yeah, we'll put that on that, that's got money in it that,

I: (Laughs). It is wrong

G: I'm not bothered anyway, can't do anything about it so, it's alright cos soon they'll just be a fucking world war, that's what I want to happen

I: Why do you want a world war?

G: So all planet just goes BOOM!

I: Would that make you feel better?

G: I'd feel much better, I'd be blown into smithereens wouldn't I, it'd sort out my life, I don't know just too many good-doers and it shouldn't be like that

I: Yeah, at others people's expense

G: Yeah, they say 'or we'll change this and we'll change that', they don't change shit. They'll argue in that room for about days and days and days and that and at the end of it, nowt comes out, that's why I don't think we'll declare war on Iraq, too much money's coming out of that oil, it's all about money, money making. They're just buying all that coal and shit from fucking all other countries but we've got most coal in world but Margaret Thatcher shut 'em, shut 'em down

I: Or yeah I never thought of that and that put a lot of people out of work

G: Margaret Thatcher, what she didn't get now, when all coal runs out in other countries we've got loads of it here, it's gonna cost billions to open 'em back all up

I: D' yer think that's what 'ill happen

G: They'll have to open 'em

I: Why?

G: Cos all coal 'ill run out in other countries, we've got most coal

I: Really

G: In world, it's supposed to be

I: How did you know that?

G: My Dad told me, he used to work down pit

I: Did he? My Dad did. So did he, he was probably a bit too young for miners strike was he?

G: No

I: Wasn't he?

G: He said when he was running in potato fields he could hear his mates skulls cracking when horses hit 'em with, when police hit 'em with bats

I: Really

G: Yeah, he lost er his best mate in miner's strike, he got his head crushed. Cos all they had was potatoes against 'em. He said you could tell what, cos they brought army in police uniform (I: Yeah), my Dad said you could tell that they was army cos of how they were walking and marching

I: What does your Dad do now then?

G: He's a lock driller

I: Is he? So what do you want to be doing say five years time?

G: Working

I: Do you think you will be?

G: Yeah

I: I do. How do you feel when you look back on your years in school?

G: I can't remember much of 'em

I: And ones you can, how do you feel about them?

G: Alright, had some good laughs and stuff. I don't

I: Are you satisfied with your life with how things have turned out?

G: Can't be unsatisfied can I (I: No), it's way life goes

I: Yeah, we've all got to carry on haven't we

G: Yeah, you win some you lose some

I: Have you had more losses or more wins?

G: More lo, I don't know, a bit of both

I: What could have happened, what could school have done to have changed things for you, to have made Grant stay at school?

G: What could they have done, said 'well we didn't find owt on you, charge is dropped', that's what they'd have done in court

I: Did they get police involved?

G: No, like if it'd have gone, if it had been in court (I: yeah), and I'd have gone upto judge and I'd have stood there being accused (I: yeah) and school 'd have been accusing, first thing judge 'd have said was 'where's evidence?'

I: Yeah

G: We had none  
I: Cos like this is what I'm trying to do now, this is why I've got to record you even though I'll change your name and everything cos I've got to prove that me and you had that conversation  
G: Mm, and then they say we've got no proof, case closed or they'll say well come back to me in 30 days with some proof and then they'll come back to me in 30 days and they'll have no proof so it'll just get closed and I'm free  
I: So how did it happen, were there people dealing but it wasn't you?  
G: Yeah, this lad brought six ounce in  
I: Six ounce of what?  
G: Weed. Just robbed a shed and he brought in it  
I: Is that a lot, six ounce?  
G: (Opens arms). That much  
I: It sounds like a lot of people could smoke six ounce  
G: Yeah (laughs), a lot of people could smoke six ounce. Erm, he brought it in, he was passing it about y'know what I mean (I: yeah), fucking drugs about and that. I got some, John got some, when John got some he goes to me 'or Grant mate will you save this for me,' and I goe, 'or yeah I'll save it for you'. Put it in my bag, walked up, got in Maths, got kicked out of Maths and it stunck cos it was wet (I: yeah) and it proper proper stunck and er we went into other room, tied all chairs and tables together with string and I went back in and Miss Smith pulled me up and started going leet with me and that and I thought fuck it. I put it down my pants and then did all that and we did drugs in school and all that kind of crap  
I: But you were just saving it?  
G: Yeah  
I: And how much of drugs were there?  
G: About 30 quids worth, 40 quid  
I: So in a way they did have evidence?  
G: Why?  
I: Well cos you had drugs on you  
G: But where was evidence?  
I: In drugs that you had on you, didn't you say you had some?  
G: No but where was the, they, I  
I: Didn't they find the drugs?  
G: No, they didn't find em, they just said we had 'em. Said 'we saw you on CCTV', 'show me CCTV', 'or it's been deleted', whatever mate. Someone in school grassed on us  
I: I see  
G: But they didn't find it on us so they shouldn't have been able to  
I: No  
G: No innit. I got home, I got home and still had it on me and they checked me, checked all my pockets out, didn't do a strip search like but  
I: So you were tying desks together, why were you doing that?  
G: Cos like I say, on table over there, teacher's table there's just this ball of string on the end, so I just picked it up, started tying chairs together

I: Why did you want to do that?

G: Cos I had some string (I: laughs). It's boring in a room on your own

I: Why were you in a room by yourself?

G: Cos I got kicked out and they told me to go in next room so I thought, or fuck 'em, I'll start tying tables together see what they've got to say about this one. (I: I see). So they came in I was pulling chair, it makes room dunnit

I: (Laughs). Oh, I don't know, well we can end it there then, is there anything else you want to say?

G: No

I: It's been really interesting

## APPENDIX H: PRIVATE SCHOOL, LAURA

(Year 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> highest set)

I: So what do you think of school Laura?

L I like it sometimes but sometimes y'know you don't want to go or if you've got a test or something it's horrible

I: What's so horrible about tests?

L Well I'm not good at tests, I panic and stuff, cos I think that I'm gonna like fail or if I'm gonna move down sets or something

I: And what is it, the thought of that that makes you panic, what is it the thought of failing that you don't like?

L: Well it's like you've failed something and then if you fail something then you might fail something else and then like you might like fail everything so

I: I see so (is that plugged in) erm, you said you panic and things and you fear, you say you fear being moved down, why would that be a fear for you being moved down?

L: Well it's like if I moved down I might not stay at this school cos erm I might have to move schools if I move down cos it's a lot of money and if I'm not trying my best and everything then what's the point of my parents putting me into a private school

I: So, and what do you think of, what do you think of their

L: Well I think that, y'know they are spending a lot of money on me going to a private school but if I am, I've got to try my best and work to my full potential and stuff

I: Yeah, do you work hard then?

L: I try but it's sometimes hard though, I try my best in everything but

I: Do you think your best is good enough?

L: Not always

I: Why isn't it sometimes not good enough then?

L: Cos sometimes the teachers don't know your best and they say you can do better when you can't

I: Yeah, that's not a nice feeling

L: No

I: Why do you try to do your best with your work?

L: Erm, well it's like I want to get good grades and I want to like have a good school career so erm I dunno (laughs)

I: So what is it that you want?

L: I want good grades and stuff, I don't want to be like really really brainy but I don't want to be like really really dumb, y'know I want to be in the middle

I: Why don't you wanna be really dumb?

L: Because you get called you names and stuff

I: What about being, why don't you want to be really brainy?

L: Cos then people call you names like they'll call you a boff or something and a nerd

I: How would you feel if you were in set b2, what would happen if you got in set b2, how would you feel?

L: I'd feel like really mad with myself for being like, that I tried my best but I got a punishment for it

I: But y'know we can try in all different courses of life can't we  
L: Yeah  
I: But this is, but obviously school is about trying your best with school work isn't it?  
L: Yeah  
I: How important is that to you?  
L: It's well, I suppose it's more important as like you get older cos y'know you've got your GCSEs and stuff but I suppose it is quite important  
I: Do you ever get sick of trying?  
L: Yeah, I just feel like I wanna give up and stuff cos I can't be bothered sometimes  
(Pause)  
I: What stops you doing that?  
L: Erm well it's like sometimes when you don't really understand what the teacher's saying or when like they've said it over and over again and they won't say it to you anymore cos like, oh you must get it, so you're not sure but y'know you just  
I: Do you feel clever at school?  
L: No  
I: How do you feel in yourself?  
L: Well I suppose, my Mum says I'm quite clever but it's like I've got loads of friends who are really clever and they're like 'oh I get it, don't you get that?' and stuff like that  
I: But how important is it, do you think, how important is it in school to be clever?  
L: Very  
I: How important, why is it very important?  
L: Erm, I think it's very important because well you wanna like get a good job when you're older  
I: And what's a good job?  
L: Like being a lawyer or y'know being somewhere high up  
I: And what's good, what's good about that?  
L: Cos you get a lot of money  
I: So is it the money, is that what it is?  
L: Yeah  
I: Do you think you would enjoy being a lawyer or a really  
L: Yeah, I'd like to be high up in a company but I wouldn't like being a lawyer?  
I: So how important is it to you personally to do well at school?  
L: Very important because like well I want to get grades, when you get good grades you're like proud of yourself and you want to get in a good university so you can get a good job and stuff  
I: So when you get a grade that's not very good how do you feel about yourself?  
L: I feel really mad with myself, I feel like I don't try my best and stuff  
I: And how long does this feeling last?  
L: I dunno, I mean you're just like really mad and stuff but then, then you get your next report card and you've better and it makes you feel a lot better

I: But this, this like, the way you are it's all being determined by what someone thinks of you isn't it?  
L: Yeah  
I: Or how someone perceives you?  
L: Yeah, yeah  
I: Outwardly, not and I suppose it doesn't affect how you feel inside doesn't it but. Do you think your best is good enough though?  
L: I hope it is, I'm not sure  
I: Would you ever just like to just please yourself though?  
L: Yeah but sometimes pleasing yourself isn't pleasing others  
I: But what if it's not?  
L: I dunno  
I: What, what matters to you most, pleasing others or pleasing yourself or are they both equally important?  
L: I think they're both equally important  
I: What is it about pleasing others that's so important?  
L: Well it's like when you're like, when they're proud of you as well or y'know you need new friends or y'know it just gives you a good feeling when you please someone else  
I: And what feeling do you get when you please yourself?  
L: Like happy and excited, or you're like proud of yourself  
I: Has there ever been a time in your life when I don't know perhaps, maybe when you were you young or something, where you pleased yourself but you didn't please other people?  
L: Yeah  
I: When was that, can you think of anything?  
L: It was at junior school  
I: What happened?  
L: Well I was only pleasing myself and I got bullied  
I: Why what happened?  
L: Erm well everybody thought I was like really weird and like really childish and stuff  
I: Because of what, the way you behaved?  
L: Yeah and stuff, but I don't think I did and then I was doing quite well in school and they called me 'teacher's pet' and stuff and I wasn't, they would like sit watching us in the class there was only six of us in the whole year so, and all my friends had left, all my best friends had left so I didn't really have any friends left  
I: So pleasing yourself can lead to being bullied?  
L: Yeah  
I: If you don't please others  
L: Yeah  
I: It's hard, isn't it? Like cos you're uniform you have to wear skirts don't you?  
L: Yeah  
I: How do you feel about that?  
L: Well I'd rather wear skirts than trousers  
I: Why?  
L: Cos I don't, well I like jeans and stuff but trousers make you look like boys (laughter), I don't like that

I: Would you like, would you like to have a choice between trousers and skirts or are you not really bothered?

L: I'm not really bothered I mean yeah, it would be good to have a choice because some other girls want to wear trousers and stuff but I think I'd just stick to skirts

I: Yeah, what about when it's cold and things? Cos in P.E you have to wear P.E skirts

L: Yeah

I: Don't you?

L: Yeah, you can wear your tracksuit bottoms though

I: But what about for netball, do you have to wear a skirt?

L: Yeah, if it's a match you do

I: And how do you feel about wearing a skirt and it's really cold?

L: Like (unclear), well you sometimes get really warm but then you sometimes don't and it's, you just deal with it

I: Do you think you should have to deal with it?

L: No, but I think you should have a choice to wear trackie bottoms sometimes at a match

I: Why do you think you haven't got a choice?

L: Cos it's, it's like uniform and they want you to look smart and look the part and look like you're really good

I: So it's kind of about, it links to how people look?

L: Yeah

I: (Laughs), than how you feel?

L: Yeah

I: And we're supposed to be teaching you how to be

L: Yeah

I: I don't know, have you petitioned or anything about it, kind of how you feel?

L: I haven't, but I know that some year eights have like got a petition up to try and wear trousers instead of skirts

I: Do you think anything will happen?

L: No

I: It seems, I'm sure it happened last year

L: Are you?

I: When I was here that people put up a petition

L: They've put one up this year but I don't think anything will happen cos I think that they want girls to look like, y'know girls to look smart and boys to look smart and not y'know wear trousers cos they're not girly or, I don't know

I: I mean you mentioned being girly, do you feel girly?

L: Yeah, I'm girly

I: Are you?

L: I like pink and stuff

I: I like pink, my shoes and watch as well (laughs)

L: I don't have any

I: Erm, so when you mentioned being bullied, I mean how did that feel when you said you got bullied?

L: Horrible, you just feel like you're not well you're not included in anything or you're not part of anything, and y'know you're not in any like friendship group, you're just by yourself all the time

I: What about being on your own, is that not nice to be on your own then, or is it more being excluded from the group?

L: Well I, have like a lot of friends in the year above cos I had a friend, cos Jenny who lives in my street now and erm so I used to like hang out with so I'm not sure what it's like to be proper alone

I: Yeah

L: I always had something, cos she was like my best friend and like she like still is one of my best friends and there's like only six months between so we're not really

I: Oh I see what you mean

L: Apart

I: Do you think, do you think there's bullying in school now, do you think people get bullied?

L: Yeah, I've head about someone in our year, about someone

I: Oh what's that about?

L Well apparently Steven's been bullying Edward (I: Oh), and Edward's got, he's got like a hearing aid so

I: That's

L: But I don't have bullying so I don't really know

I: Do you think that there's anything you can do about bullying?

L: Well you can stop them, I think but I suppose when you're not like in that group then you don't y'know

I: What about teachers, what can they do about bullying?

L: Sometimes they make it worse cos y'know they don't know all the full details and stuff, but I suppose sometimes when they know about it and the other person who's bullying know that they know about it then they'll stop it cos of the teacher

I: What about when you got bullied that time, did the teachers help?

L: Well not, I was getting miserable and crying and then my Mum just decided to tell them but also my Mum worked in the school so

I: Oh that's good

L: So she knew what was going on

I: It's a lot to deal with isn't it?

L: (Laughs). Yeah

I: Erm, do you feel important in school?

L: Yeah, I'm on school council so

I: Oh are you?

L: Yeah

I: Because when I did my interviews, my first interviews they came with some biscuits and everything

L: (Laughs)

I: And they were saying, oh they're for the school council. Do you ever get bored in school, in lessons?

L: Yeah, a lot sometimes

I: What do you do when you're bored?

L: Daydream (laughs), doodle, I don't know, something like that

I: How does it make you feel when you're bored?  
L: You just feel like time's not passing, y'know cos sometimes you've just kind of got the same things, non stop and you just don't really know what to do or something  
I: Yeah, how do you feel about being in A2, are you happy about being in that class?  
L: Yeah, I'm really happy  
I: Is that the class where you'd like to be?  
L: Yeah  
I: If you could move where would you move to?  
L: B1, cos that's like, well I suppose it's not the same but it kind of is the same cos it's in the middle  
I: Yeah, I see erm, why do you think we have problems at school like people fighting, pushing, shoving, breaking things?  
L: Well everybody's different and some people are just like really angry and stuff and they, y'know they erm, sometimes they don't have any friends or like they might have got bullied, and they're taking it out on other people or something, they might be having problems at home so they're taking it on other people and stuff so  
I: What happens to people, people who do this when they misbehave, what do teachers do?  
L: Sometimes teachers don't notice erm but I know one person who's like really angry all the time in our year and he's got suspended a few times  
I: Right, do you think that will help him?  
L: Yeah  
I: If he's suspended do you think it will help him behave better?  
L: Yeah  
I: How, in what way?  
L: Well he's like got a lot better now but I think it's, erm, I think it's cos, that he knows if he does anything he's gonna get in trouble and he might get expelled so I don't think he wants to be expelled  
I: No, do you think it'll help him become less angry?  
L: Yeah (pause), maybe cos he sometimes gets angry, like, oh I don't really know him  
I: You say maybe, I mean do you think that like detentions and exclusions, do you think it does improve people's behaviour?  
L: Yeah but sometimes if like everybody gets, people get a detention everyday then they're used to it and it doesn't, it's like 'or I've got a detention and I'm used to it' but y'know what's the point  
I: Yeah, I know what you mean. Erm so how do you feel when you get say told off by teachers and things?  
L: Er, well you feel like, or gosh I shouldn't do that again or OK I won't do it, cos everybody looks at you sometimes  
I: Yeah  
L: Cos like today erm I couldn't, me and my friend couldn't stop giggling, and then we got told off for it and then we, everybody started looking at us, or yeah, they're giggling, naughty naughty, and then like y'know doing it in a nice way (I: yeah) so but if it's something like that then it's nothing much if you get in massive trouble, I haven't got in massive

trouble but, here, I don't think I have at my last school but then if I did I'd feel like really mad with myself, and like, ooh gosh I really shouldn't do that again, or what if my parents find out or what if I get a detention or suspended or something like that

I: What kind of person are you, what are you like as a person?

L: Erm, I don't know cos I mean now I've got like loads of friends and they, y'know I've got my best friend who will always have my back and I will always have hers

I: Oh, who's that?

L: Erm Sarah, she's quite, she's got blonde hair

I: Oh I think I've seen, is she?

L: No, she got into reading a group

I: Yeah, yeah

L: So she's like my best friend and I've got quite a lot of friends here but, what's the question again (laughs)?

I: No, no I was just asking what you're like, you're personality?

L: Erm, I know that I'm really girly and everything but I don't really like being alone

I: Don't you?

L: No, well I mean, I don't mind at home cos I've got a little brother who's really annoying, sometimes I just want a bit of peace but at school I don't like being alone

I: Why don't you want to be alone in school?

L: Cos it's like when you don't have anyone to talk to or you might not have anything to do and stuff

I: Are you ever alone at school?

L: Sometimes, yeah but not usually

I: Do you mean alone, like not having anyone to talk to and not having anyone there or do you mean, what do you mean?

L I mean like not having anyone to talk to

I: Oh

L Cos I've never been alone like that cos there's always where I've been well there's usually always been people in the room but if like I walk into my form room, and no-one's there, or I'm just my books away so then I'll go with my friends

I: Mm, you're in school a long time aren't you, half past eight until four?

L Yeah

I: And then some people do sport

L: Yeah, I do sport

I: Oh what sport do you do?

L: Hockey, netball, rounders, tennis

I: So you don't have that much time to yourself really do you?

L: No

I: Are you happy with that?

L: Yeah, sometimes it's a bit much like on a night cos you've got sports on y'know at lunchtimes and sports after school and they're, I like it and I y'know want to be in like the teams and stuff so

I: Yeah, I suppose, is it like a sacrifice you make to be in the team?

L: Yeah, and it's fun being in teams and like going out to matches and stuff so it's like, well sometimes on a lunchtime it's not that bad, it's like y'know it's your lunchtime and stuff

I: When you were younger though, before and you said where you were more where you decided to please yourself when you were younger and you said you got bullied for it, kind of what were you like then as a person, what?

L: Erm well, I think that I was like always really happy before I got bullied, (I: yeah) and then like since I was pleasing myself then I was y'know fine but then when other people didn't like it I was a bit, like I was ashamed and things (sneezes) bless you, sorry. I was like, oh, don't they like me or something, don't they want y'know to be around me or something

I: Did you say you were shaking or ashamed?

L: Ashamed

I: Ashamed. It's difficult isn't it and actually. It seems as if with boys, I know y'know they're under a lot of pressure aren't they as well and things

L: Yeah

I: But there seems to be a lot of pressure on girls to kind of like please people?

L: Yeah, there's not as, I don't know if there's as much on boys as girls

I: And it's so hard trying to please, y'know it's kind of, that's kind of one of the areas I'm addressing, trying to please people and working so hard

L: Yeah

I: And also the pressure that's involved, that seems to be there with girls?

L: Yeah, it's like sometimes the girls bully them and say 'oh I don't like their hair, I don't like them anymore' so that's sometimes, there's some girls that or there's like 'oh have you seen that?' on a non-uniform day it's like 'oh, have you seen what they're wearing', it's horrible

I: Yeah

L: Or something like that but it's like stupid, boys don't really care about that and girls kind of do sometimes

I: I mean what if you, what if you, what if you thought to yourself, your best is good enough?

L: Erm well I think I wouldn't be under as much pressure with my academic stuff

I: But why can't you think that, why can't you do that?

L: Cos er, erm I don't know, it's like sometimes when you have done your best and you think that you haven't even though you have and

I: But if you, what makes you think, you think you've done your best but then you feel that you haven't, what is it that makes you feel that you haven't, is it other people?

L: Yeah, like they go 'you're not clever, or you're really dumb', or something and 'you're too clever', then you get called names but sometimes if you're like, if you've done your best and like if you don't tell anyone what you've got then your pleased with yourself, but then if like you do tell people and you got like a full, really good mark then they might start calling you names or well if you got lower then sometimes

people don't because they think, oh are you alright, y'know you've done really well but sometimes like if you get like 99 or 98 or something then people are like 'oh gosh they're like really clever they shouldn't be in this year' or they're like y'know 'what's the point in them coming to school if they're that clever'

I: It's like you can't win isn't it?

L: Yeah

I: But do you think you could just change your mind and just decide to please yourself, I mean work, but maybe, do you think you could take some pressure from yourself or do you think that would be a bad thing?

L: I think

I: Do you think maybe then you could achieve, like strike a balance?

L: I think I could like erm I mean usually I always try and do my best and sometimes like when you don't, y'know you don't get it or if you're too nervous to ask a teacher or something, I think it would be easier just to pull yourself with other people and then I'd be worried, and I'd get bullied again or all my friends would y'know, ditch me or something

I: And why would your friends maybe ditch you?

L: Because I'd change, I might change in my personality as well

I: And what would you change into?

L: Like 'oh I've done this', how well I've done like really boast or something if you like pleased yourself so you might brag about it

I: How would you feel about yourself inside if you decided to please yourself?

L: Erm, I think that I'd feel, well I'm not sure cos well, at the moment I'm really, really happy and erm pleasing myself is sometimes as well as pleasing others but I think if I was pleasing myself fully and I wasn't pleasing others then I'd feel a bit y'know (I: Mm), a bit not good

I: But if you do something you, if you do the things you want to do

L: Yeah

I: Rather than the things that are expected of you, why don't you do that?

L: Well (pause), some of the things that I want to do erm or, it's like, they're not, my friends might think, why do you want to do that?

I: Tell me something that you want to do?

L: Erm, er

I: Just anything

L: I wanted to, it's like I dunno

I: What is it?

L: Like right I play quite a lot of instruments y'know, I play four instruments and I wanted to start something else, but I don't play in school, I have a teacher outside of school, and I wanted to start like what was it, the cello

I: Oh right

L: I really want to do it but it's like my friends 'ill say 'or, you're turning into a music geek,' or something like that, you have second thoughts with it

I: And do you really want to do that?

L: Well I don't desperately but I'd like to do it

I: Maybe you should try it

L: Yeah

I: But with this decision, how would you feel if you didn't try it, how would you feel in yourself if you didn't try it?

L: If you didn't try it, I don't know whether I'd like it or not or, what would I do if I did like, or shall I play it, or shall I tell my friends y'know. It's like also if you like this boy, but like if they're not in your group or something and they're like really nerdish, or your friends don't like them then y'know you won't go out with them cos you friends don't like them

I: Yes, that's what it was like when I was at school (laughter), things never change, oh that's awful isn't it

L: Yeah

I: Because you're living your life, just well just other people are like limiting your choices

L: Yeah, I suppose it's different when you grow up

I: Mm

L: Isn't it?

I: It can be more subtle when you grow up (laughs). It's like I went to a wedding and I didn't get, I went to see one of my friends and I didn't get much sleep before so I was really tired for the day of the wedding and I stayed at the wedding all day, it was for y'know it was from twelve o'clock, 'till one o'clock after midnight, and I hadn't had any sleep and I like a lot of sleep, and the wedding it was nice but I felt pressured to stay until one (I: yeah), and actually I would have liked to have gone home at perhaps a bit earlier, at eight o'clock I was thinking of going home because I was so tired, but I went home at about eleven o'clock, but I felt pressured by friends to stay until the end, otherwise people would say 'oh she's boring'

L: Like you've got a better place to be

I: Yeah, but to me I did have a better place, bed (laughter) cos I was so tired but y'know I do like talking, I like to have fun, but I think the pressure doesn't go away, sometimes it is just more subtle, do you know what I mean. So, I don't know, so sometimes you've got to try and deal with it, not accept it, but try and find ways to move with it because it might not stop, y'know. But you play, like you said about the games and that you play, like you do a lot of sport and things and sometimes you say it's a bit much?

L: Mmm

I: I can imagine that would be quite a lot?

L: Yeah

I: You do really well to actually be in school all this time and do after school activities as well

L: Yeah, I mean sometimes, if you can't do and you tell the teacher then you might get in trouble but if you can't do it, you can't do it, cos it's like yesterday we didn't go to tennis at lunch and then we found out that no-one else went to tennis at lunch and then we all got told off but it's boring y'know. She, even Miss said to me and Harriet, who was in classes with me, that there's no point in us coming cos it's just the beginners, cos we have lessons but I used to have lessons and she still has lessons for tennis at school and she said 'what's the point in you two coming if you can play tennis really well and it's just for beginners', so then we didn't bother going and she told us off

I: You get, so you're giving up your spare time to do sport?

L: Yeah

I: And then you get told off for not coming. But do you get sick of trying, of doing all these after school activities all the time, don't you ever just want to sit there and do very little?

L Well I don't mind after school but I hate lunch-time ones or sometimes you might feel, oh, I just want to go home and watch TV

I: So why don't you do it?

L Well I did last night (laughs), I didn't go to rounders

I: And how did you feel when you did that?

L I just thought, oh whatever, I'll go next week or something but it's like cos sometimes you've gone to the practices but they've picked you for matches and you think, oh have I done something I don't know about in the practice (I: yeah) and it's like, when I wasn't going to do rounders this year but then they put me in for a match and it's like, I've got to do it now and then she, and then like erm cos she said the other day, 'or are you gonna come to the practice?' Cos y'know you're in matches now aren't you, you're in a team', so that's like, I didn't really want to though, I mean I enjoy rounders matches and stuff but, and tennis matches, I just hate the practices

I: Yeah, but also you're giving up a lot of time aren't you, to them

L: On a night they finish at half past five and you've got to get home, do your homework and have your tea and stuff and y'know you want time to chill and sometimes you don't get time to chill

I: And do you think it's important your time to chill?

L: Yeah, cos you like get a rest and you can forget about stuff and sometimes you like need a rest

I: But you feel then, maybe you're not getting much of a rest?

L: Yeah, cos sometimes when you're doing it all you feel really tired and you think or I can't be bothered to do it, so you don't give it all, you don't give your best so then they think, oh you know she's not good anymore

I: So why don't you just not go when you don't, I know when you say they're matches but why don't (unclear) at these organised activities?

L: Well I was, cos I'm into, I do athletics and tennis and rounders and I wasn't gonna do athletics but then it's like they pick you for a match and then they expect you to go (I: yeah) and then you can't quit when you start it so

I: Would you like there to come a time when say, what's a mark, what mark would upset you a little bit if you got a mark in class which one would upset you?

L: D

I: What percentage, say if you got a D in, I don't know history or something, how would you feel?

L: Well I'd feel really mad with myself but in history I don't really have a great teacher

I: Oh

L: Well I do, but he's really annoying, so I'd think, oh well I've been trying my best, but he's horrible in lesson

I: Oh I see, but let's say if you got a D in a subject like I don't know English or something

L: Mmm

I: Which I know is imp, what if you felt like well I'll just, oh no it's disappointing but I'll try harder next time?

L: Yeah, I suppose that's what I do but then I'd feel like, oh no y'know, shall I tell my Mum, will she be disappointed?

I: But do you have to tell your Mum how you've done, if you've done badly?

L: No, no, but she'll see it anyway on my report card

I: And what, how would she feel?

L: Well I think that my Mum and Dad always know that I try my best so I don't they'll be disappointed in me, but they'd just be like, well you did your best and that's all we ask, which is what they usually say to me

I: Don't, do you think you're putting too much pressure on yourself?

L: Yeah I think so

I: Do you think you'd be happier if you didn't?

L: Yeah cos it's like in schools there's groups isn't there?

I: Yeah

L: Everybody's in a group and if you're like high up in a group then everybody expects stuff from you and then when they let you down and they're like, urgh

I: Do you mean your sets or your groups with sets?

L: Like groups within school

I: Yeah but y'know a really important person who matters is you and your needs and what you want, what you actually want, not what you think people should want. I mean you're not doing any harm to anyone to do something you really want to do or to not do something you really hate (laughs)

L: Yeah

I: Do you see what I mean?

L: Yeah, I suppose, well I don't actually do stuff that I hate but it's like something, if I don't want to do it or like I like it but I don't want to go to practice, I just don't want to do it but then I will. It's like, one of my friends asked me if I'd do chapel choir, which I don't really like singing and I wouldn't want to do it I'd say no, but if it's like, oh open morning 'can you come with me to open morning?' then I'll, I said yes to my friends, so then I'd have to get up on mornings and help her show round people and that's like setting up y'know people expect, if you ask her something then, oh yeah she'll do it for you, she'll do anything for you and then it's like y'know, oh I don't want to do it or

I: Do you think things would be different if you were a boy?

L: (Laughs), yeah probably

I: What do you think, how do you think it'd be different?

L: I probably wouldn't have to please others as much as myself, I mean sorry, I mean that the other way other I could probably please myself more than others

I: Why do you think there's so much pressure on girls?

L: Cos girls, sometimes girls are mean and y'know they say more about you than boys and y'know they talk about you, girls talk about each other and stuff

I: So what would you like to be when you get older?

L: I don't know, I mean I like, when I was little I wanted to be a weather girl, like on TV or something but then you have to be quite good at Science and Maths, I mean, I am actually quite good at maths but at the moment we're doing physics and I find it really boring and I've got quite a boring teacher and stuff but I don't know. I was talking to my Dad and he was like 'when I was little my job wasn't even invented' and stuff

I: Yeah, what job does your Dad do?

L: He's an IT tech, well he's not a technician but he's in IT

I: Yeah, that's true (laughs). Where would you like, I know we spoke about how you feel about like about pleasing other people and things erm, how would you like to be in ten years time, how would you like to feel in yourself about this?

L: Erm I want to feel really happy and y'know proud of myself and think, oh I've got a good job y'know, I can like support myself or maybe support my family and y'know and not have to worry about anything like if, cos also if you get a good when you're older then you're not gonna worry, well you might but you're not gonna have to worry as much about money, or y'know, getting food for the week or something

I: What if like say you did your driving test and you failed and things, how would you feel about that, say if you failed four times or something?

L: I'd do it again and again and again

I: Would you be upset by the failure?

L: Well, I don't think, the first time I wouldn't, but if I failed again and again then I would

I: And do you think that would get you anywhere being so upset?

L: No, cos y'know you're just crying in like your coffee or whatever

I: Would you like there to come a time where you just think, I'll just try again?

L: Yeah, it's like, yeah

I: Do you think that will happen for you, do you think you will get to a stage where, y'know?

L: Yeah, I would, I mean if it's something that I wasn't that bothered about then I wouldn't but it's like, if you failed an exam then I'd want to do it again

I: Yeah

L: Or something like that

I: Yeah

L: I'd want to try it again and pass it, but if I failed it again and again then I'd y'know be more determined to do it again and again until I passed

I: But what about, what about inside, that kind of, how you feel inside yourself, like say if I feel OK, and I'm say, say if I'm good at English and I do a test and I don't do, well say if I'm an A student but I get a C like but I still feel ok cos I think well it's only, it's only one test, it was only for an hour, it's only what one person thinks?

L: Erm, it is but erm I suppose that it's like, if it's a test and it's only what one person thinks but it's like

I: A grade but

L: Yeah, it's a grade and it's, it'll go on your report card and y'know, you want to have your best on that and I suppose that might be your best but

then you think, oh can I like do it again before, it's a proper grade or something

I: But how much do you matter more than, do you matter I mean just you as a person, you're flesh and bones and then your grades and how much do they define who you are?

L: I think that it's more important as you are a person than how clever you are or something or something

I: But the grades don't say how clever you are

L: No, they just say how you've done or like what your best is. It's like, if you've done like really well in something you're really proud of yourself but then if you, y'know you've done really bad or you're not, you're just like really disappointed but then you get over it

I: Then you get tested again

L: Yeah

I: And you go through the same experience

L: But then you could like revise more or try more and then you could be better

I: But you're playing someone else's game

L: Yeah (laughs)

I: Do you know what I mean?

L: Kind of I suppose

I: (Laughs) I mean you're always doing someone else's test; you're not doing things your way

L: Oh right. (Pause). I suppose though that, if like you had a person that always wanted to please others as y'know as well as yourself that that could be really, really hard but then if you're a person that wants to just please yourself then y'know you might not be pleasing others but pleasing yourself might be pleasing others

I: Yeah, like parents I suppose and things

L: Yeah

I: Do you feel happy inside?

L: Yeah (unclear). I mean I know I didn't used to but I am now

I: Do you feel as if you're important in school?

L: Yeah, cos if you're in school council then people ask you to say stuff or y'know, if you're on teams and you get pulled out for assembly and stuff, and sometimes you're a bit embarrassed like why did you have you say my name? Or something like that. For the school council I'm just like, I'm doing it with someone else, I'm doing it with my erm, I'm y'know the representative for my year, not the whole school and it's like in assemblies when you get called out er if you've done well in your match or something and it's like, oh yeah, the school knows that you've done well and like, oh y'know, you get a bit embarrassed so

I: Why is that embarrassing, everybody knowing?

L: Cos like, well your friends go 'oooh well done' (fake voice) and then you're like, 'yeah, yeah' and they go 'or, you're really good aren't you' and I go 'well I don't think I'm that good' and stuff

I: Yeah, it seems interesting though being on the school council

L: Sometimes it is but sometimes it's a bit boring, but like you get to know what people want and what you can't have. It's like everybody wants vending machines back, and we used to have them but then you

have to get a contract and stuff and then they're wanting to get rid of 'em cos of healthy eating, they had to wait two years cos of the contract so it's just thinking, shall we get rid of 'em cos it's gonna be another contract

I: Right, yeah, yeah I suppose you learn more about the rules and things don't you

L: Yeah

I: Well I think, thank you for your time, we can leave it there

## APPENDIX I: SNOWBALL INTERVIEW, PETER

(Parklane School, Year 10)

I: What do you think of school?

P: Erm it's alright but bullying is an issue

I: Right

P: But I get bullied

I: Right what happens?

P: Because of my voice and because of my weight

I: Why what is it, what do they say to you?

P: Just call me 'gay' and 'fat' and things like that

I: How does that make you feel?

P: Upset, my Mum's taken me off school quite a few times cos of it

I: And what have teachers done?

P: Nowt, I tell teachers and they say that they haven't got time and that for it but, so my Mum's kept me off school until they've done something about it

I: And what have they done about it?

P: They've like told them off and that but they haven't really done much about it

I: So you say about being called 'gay', why do you think they call you gay then?

P: Cos of my voice

I: We can't help how we speak can we

P: No

I: How do you feel when they say that?

P: Upset and really annoyed

I: That's awful so it must be getting to you

J: Mm

I: To be having time off school

P: Yeah, my Mum's been up to school loads of times and had interviews with head-teacher and principal assistant and that

I: And nothing's happened?

P: No not really

I: Why do you think they say this to you then?

P: I don't know, cos my Mum just tells me to ignore 'em and tell her when it's happened and she'll go up to school and have a word with 'em and that

I: Do you think you can ignore them?

P: No

I: Why can't you ignore them?

P: Cos it just gets to me that much, my Mum always says 'you need to toughen up and that, because if it gets to you then you just need to ignore 'em,' but I can't

I: Why do you think you can't ignore them?

P: I don't know, my Mum says I'm too soft-hearted

I: It's not nice that is it. It's quite a lot of bullying that, how long has this been going on?

P: Since I've been at school, it's happened in primary school and it's happened at big school

I: Gosh, so how do you feel about yourself as a person?  
P: I don't like myself as a person  
I: Why not?  
P: Because of what people say to me and I know that I'm different to other people and that but  
I: What makes you feel different?  
P: Cos of what they say to me and call me names, call me 'fat' and that  
(Pause)  
I: So you don't feel you fit in?  
P: No  
I: What about, do you find it hard, does it influence your school work?  
P: Yes sometimes. I've got like, we've got an LS who is like a school facility where you show teachers your pass and you can walk out of lessons and that, and I use that quite a lot  
I: For bullying?  
P: Yeah. And like cos they put me in LS for anger management and that because it's all got on top of me and I just blow and like slightest thing  
I: Gosh, that's really severe. So when you have children, how will you feel about putting them in school?  
P: I think it'll affect 'em, but if they were same as me I would stick up for 'em in school, but if they were alright then I'd feel alright about it  
I: Why do you think people call you these names?  
P: Cos of my voice and my weight and that  
I: Do you think if you had a different voice or a different weight then they wouldn't bully you?  
P: Yeah  
I: I think, my Mum sent me to doctors about my weight, and they said that it will change in future, but I'm like on weight watchers diet and that about my weight and I try to do my best about it  
I: But it's hard to lose weight though, well I find it hard  
P: Mm  
I: (Laugh) Sometimes the more I try and diet, the more I think about food. But your voice, they say your voice will change?  
J: Yeah  
I: Your voice just, you don't seem strange to me. It's such a cruel world isn't it. How do you think it's effecting you?  
P: It's effected my school work quite a bit cos I'm in like bottom sets because I've been off school that much because of bullying  
I: So, do you think you could be in some higher sets?  
P: Yeah it is calming down a bit now but I still do get bullied but it's getting better a bit  
I: How do you feel about being in bottom sets then?  
P: I do get a bit annoyed because my Mum says that I'm capable of a lot more, but she knows that it's cos of people that do bully me cos I'm not in lessons as much as I should be  
I: What is it like being in bottom set?  
P: It's a bit upsetting because people call you 'thick' as well  
I: Do you feel clever?  
P: No, not when I'm in bottom set  
I: Do you feel thick when they call you 'thick'?

P: Yeah  
I: So what, why do you think people bully other people?  
P: My Mum just says that they're sad and they haven't got nowt better to do with their life  
I: What do you think bullying is?  
P: When they like pick on you and call you names and hit you and that  
I: Have you ever been hit?  
P: Yeah  
I: What happened?  
P: People like call me names and about my size and that and I started saying stuff back to them and they didn't like it so they hit me  
I: Do you think teachers can do something about this bullying?  
P: I think they can but they just don't  
I: Why don't they?  
P: I don't know but they don't  
I: What do you think that they could do about it?  
P: Cos my Mum's been at school loads of times, cos I've been in isolation cos they've said something to me and I've said something back, but I was in wrong and they weren't, so my Mum came up to school cos she hasn't been happy at all, and erm they've like punished me but not them  
I: So you've got punished for being bullied?  
P: Yeah, that's why I don't want to go to school  
I: So did that make you, that must have made you feel worse, how did that make you feel?  
P: I've been excluded quite a few times, because I've walked out of isolation and that because it wasn't my fault, so I felt that I shouldn't have been punished  
I: But why do you think the teachers can do about the bullying?  
P: They can put them in isolation and not me for me sticking up for myself  
I: So, can people stop themselves from being bullied?  
P: They can't but they can stick up for themselves  
I: But what happens when people stick up for themselves?  
P: Like when people say stuff to 'em start saying stuff to 'em back and they won't like it and it just gets worse  
I: What gets worse?  
P: Like bullying  
I: Do you feel important in school?  
P: No  
I: How do you feel?  
P: Just that nobody wants anything to do with me and that  
I: How do people behave in school then?  
P: Some behave alright and some behave not good  
I: What's the not good?  
P: Like they swear at teachers and that and swear in lessons and start fighting and that  
I: Why do you think there are problems like, oh just one thing, what do you think bullying is?  
P: Picking on people, calling them names and that

I: Oh yeah, I've asked you that. Why do you think there are problems at school like fighting and pushing and shoving and people breaking things?

P: Because they don't like what people do and who they are and what they've got and what they haven't

I: So quite a few people set fires to school, why do you think people do that?

P: Cos they don't like school

I: Do you like school?

P: No

I: How do you feel about school?

P: I'd like school if there wasn't people that are awful and like bullies and that, but there is

I: So what happens to pupils when they misbehave?

P: They get put in isolation or excluded

I: Does this improve their behaviour?

P: No

I: What influence does it have on their behaviour?

P: It gets worse sometimes, if they get put in isolation they get worse than what they already are

I: Right. Do you feel people at school care about you?

P: No

I: Do you ever get bored in lessons?

P: Yeah

I: How does that feel?

P: I just get annoyed and then walk out

I: What about, do your friends stick up for you when you get bullied?

P: Yeah, Stephanie in other room sticks up for me, and Nicole

I: Does that help? Or

P: It does help but then they start getting like same as me

I: And how do you feel when you see them getting same as you because they stuck up for you?

P: Upset

I: What about when you leave school what would you like to do?

P: Work for, with animals or like RSPCA or something or computers

I: Are you good with computers then?

P: Yeah

I: What is it about being called 'gay' that's so upsetting?

P: Thinking that people don't care about you

I: So which, what names hurt the most?

P: 'Gay', and 'gay boy', and 'fatty', and 'big whale', stuff like that

I: And how often do you hear these names at your school?

P: All time

I: Everyday?

P: Yeah

I: Everyday! Everyday you go to school and you hear these names?

P: Yeah

I: And where are teachers when this is happening?

P: They're there, they just like send 'em out and stuff and then they just do it again

I: What about P.E, what?  
P: I don't do P.E, I'm in LS for P.E  
I: Why don't you do P.E?  
P: I'm just not good at it and that's where most of bullying happens  
I: Why, go on, talk about most of bullying  
P: Well cos they put me in LS for anger management and stress relief and that and erm they asked me what lessons I'd like to be taken out of, and I said P.E and Drama and that, and they took me out of P.E for a double lesson  
I: So what goes on in P.E and Drama, what?  
P: That's when all idiots are in like Craig Shelton and that  
I: What have you encountered in P.E that's so?  
P: Just like people calling me names and that  
I: But they're worse?  
P: (Nods)  
I: What do they do that's worse in P.E?  
P: Just like because when they're all together, all bullies it gets worse  
I: Oh, and there's more of them?  
P: Yeah  
I: In P.E and Drama  
P: Mm  
I: So how do you feel about yourself now?  
P: Not right good, I'm not like any of others  
I: Why do you feel so different?  
P: Because I've got a different voice and I'm different to every other person  
I: You look around you, I don't think you are. We've all got different voices  
P: Yeah  
I: You're not the only one who's got a soft voice are you. If you could change your voice would you then?  
P: Yeah  
I: Why?  
P: Cos I don't like it and everybody sees me as different and gay  
I: And you'd change your weight?  
P: (Nods). Why would you change your weight?  
P: I don't like being like different to everybody else  
I: So you must actually walk around and feel so different?  
P: Mm  
I: It makes you feel like some kind of freak, is that how feel?  
P: Yeah, I won't walk around without a coat or anything cos I don't want everybody, like people looking at me  
(Pause)  
I: So what is it about your voice why people find it so hard, just because it's a bit soft?  
M: Mm, yeah  
I: What kind of person are you, how do people describe you?  
P: Kind and affectionate  
I: But these people haven't seen this have they. So this anger management thing, where did this start?

P: Because a couple of years ago, cos it got all on top of me, I took an overdose, I took some tablets cos my Mum and Dad splitting up and bullying, and then I ended up in hospital, and then they put me in anger

I: Do you think you'd, do you think you'd do that again?

P: No, social services ended up involved

I: How do you feel about these bullies then?

P: I just don't like them

I: What would you like to happen to them?

P: To stop bullying me

I: Do you think they will?

P: No

I: So you think this is going to carry on?

P: Mm

I: Do you think it will get worse, better or same?

P: I don't know, worse probably, until I change and that and lose some weight

I: (Laughs), that's so cruel. But the thing is nobody's perfect, what if they find something else, do you think that could happen?

P: (Unclear)

I: So I want to like try and show people what it's like, you know about bullying what it's like and the experience of it so I'll be showing my work, trying to get it published and things, what would you like to tell people about it, say someone who hasn't been to school for 30 years, what would you like to say?

P: That bullying's stupid there isn't no point in it

I: What do you mean there isn't any point in it?

P: They should find something else to do instead of bullying people

I: Why do you think they do it?

P: Because they get a laugh out of it

I: Why do you think they want a laugh?

P: Cos they're bored

I: Do you get bored at school?

P: Yeah

I: You told me that, yeah. Do you think if people weren't as bored there might be less bullying?

P: Mm

I: So you're kind of like something for them to do?

P: Yeah

I: Well I think we'll leave it there, is there anything else you want to say?

P: No

## APPENDIX J: THEMATIC HEADINGS

### 1. Pupil-Pupil Bullying

**Bullying achieves power over others**-Bullies are popular.

**Persistence**-Long-standing nature of bullying-bullied for grassing.

**Forms and affects of bullying**-Bullied for physical appearance, fear, called names.

### 2. Daily Experiences within School

**Intellectual Ability/Streaming**

**Hostility between groups**-‘Swots’ get bullied, bullied for being perceived as ‘thick’.

**Good enough?** Can’t achieve expected standards.

**An education**-Good GCSEs.

**Teachers’ Role**

**Limited role**-Teachers can’t stop bullying.

**Teachers’ perceived abuse of power**-Teachers picking individuals out, blaming victims for bullying, teachers taking things out on children.

**Teachers taking control**- Strict teachers have more control over their class.

**Teacher’s helpful/pleasant**-Friendship with teacher.

**Establishing Order**

**‘Bad boys’**-Cool to do something wrong

**Punishment and effects**-Undeserved punishment, punishment and anger, detentions don’t change people. ‘Picked on’ by teachers.

**Disruption affects everyone**-Disruption slows down lesson.

**Inflexible rules and rules not followed**- Not following/listening to rules.

**Positive effects of disciplinary system**- Sensible rules, rules deter behaviour.

**Boredom**-Boredom makes children want to be disruptive, time drags, boredom and bullying.

**General feelings of school**-School is ‘alright.’

### 3. Autonomy

**Child’s Voice**

**Restricted voice**-No-one listens.

**Things could be different/better**-If people would have listened (regrets), should have more choices, for example, uniform.

**Agency/Choice**

**Restricted Choices**-Family problems, limited qualifications.

**Not taking responsibility**-Can’t control anger.

**Personal Control**-Proving people wrong by choosing to be good.



