To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory and will this increase pupil motivation in the classroom?

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A Research & Development Project

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Abstract

This research study explored the impact of a teacher CPD intervention, based around attachment theory and relationships, on pupil motivation levels in the classroom. The study involved a small number of children from a cohort of Year 5 and two teachers in a mainstream school. The study aimed to find out:

- To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory?
- To what extent does knowledge of attachment theory improve teacher and pupil perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?
- To what extent is pupil motivation affected by perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?

A motivation questionnaire was completed by the Year 5 cohort and the teachers completed a questionnaire to elicit knowledge of attachment theory and their perception of pupil teacher relationships. Semi-structured group interviews were completed with the pupils and teachers separately to explore areas raised in the questionnaires. The teachers participated in two training sessions focusing on attachment theory and teacher pupil relationships. Over the following five weeks, non-participant observations were completed to observe changes in teacher practice. The same motivation questionnaires were then completed again by the Year 5 children and teachers to see the impact of the CPD intervention.

Preliminary findings imply that pupil motivation is affected by teacher pupil relationships. However, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the CPD intervention improved pupil motivation levels. The observations and questionnaires revealed that teacher knowledge of attachment theory improved alongside their ability to implement strategies in their practice to develop pupil teacher relationships.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In April 2020, I was fortunate enough to experience a training session delivered by my current Head Teacher on trauma and attachment. I was fascinated by the impact of early childhood trauma on the brain and how such experiences and risk factors can lead to significant emotional challenges and, in many cases, attachment disorders/difficulties. Her vision to create change in the education system by developing a therapeutic school, that puts childrens' mental health at the centre of practice, captured my attention and ignited a quest within me to learn more. The school champions behaviour as a language instead of something that requires sanctions, conformity, and shame. Subsequently, I emailed my CV and started working in her new trauma-informed school in September that year. Since working there, I have gained invaluable, first-hand experience of teaching children with attachment disorders and difficulties and have developed a secure understanding of their presenting behaviours and needs. I have witnessed how, with the correct strategies and support systems in place, these children can form secure attachments with school staff. They can begin to develop emotional literacy skills and, as a result, start to make progress academically and socially.

Staff at my current school have extensive CPD involving training on trauma-informed practice, restorative practice, mental health, and attachment styles. Building relationships is an underpinning ethos within our school and a crucial part of teaching and learning. I am now able to recognise that I did not fully understand the importance of these relationships in my previous teaching roles. We have a strong focus on relationships in

the classroom and staff understand the imperative role relationships have in reducing hypervigilance, increasing safety levels, and providing a secure place to learn. I have seen for myself that, due to past experiences, children with trauma and attachment difficulties do not trust adults and remain hypervigilant and fearful in the classroom. It is not surprising then that they find it challenging to engage in learning and reach their full potential.

Within the context of my personal journey to gain a deeper understanding of attachment disorders, my Part 2 assignment led to me to research motivation drivers in the classroom and Attachment Theory. I noticed that motivation theories highlight the importance of pupil-teacher relationships to improve motivation, but the impact of attachment difficulties on some pupils' ability to build relationships was not referenced or alluded to (Grace, 2021). This provoked me into researching how Attachment Theory can be used to support and strengthen relationships in the classroom and if this would subsequently improve motivation (ibid). My small research project enabled me to discover that, in fact, teachers lacked sufficient knowledge and awareness of Attachment Theory and how children with difficulties in this area would present in the classroom (ibid). The data also revealed a continuous return to the theme of pupil-teacher relationships whenever motivation was discussed (ibid). As small and ungeneralisable as my data was, it was clear to see that there is definite a gap in teacher training within this area and a need to join the concepts of motivation with Attachment Theory (ibid).

Based on the findings mentioned above, this research project aims at discovering whether, with training like my current school provides staff, teachers can develop better

relationships with their pupils and if this will lead to improved motivation in the classroom. Due to the high level of staff training in my current school and the very specialist, niche cohort of children, I have decided to conduct the research in a separate mainstream setting. This will enable me to obtain data that is reflective of a wider group of pupils and teachers. I am hopeful this research will be more generalisable and useful to wider teaching practice. The project also keeps in line with my current school's vision to share our knowledge and best practice with the community around us. My Head Teacher believes that mainstream schools can not only learn, but hugely benefit, from a therapeutic approach to education.

This research project also fits in the larger picture of research and academic thought, with attachment awareness and the importance of pupil-teacher relationships upon educational success gaining momentum over the last few years. Wentzel (2009) suggested that teachers need to provide emotional support in the classroom for children to develop trust and emotional closeness. Without this, it is argued that children cannot achieve socially or academically (ibid). This is echoed by Smyth (2007) who argued that strong pupil-teacher relationships enable children to participate more effectively in both the school setting and the classroom. Alongside improving motivation for children in general, effective pupil-teacher relationships also have the potential to reduce negative outcomes for those pupils who are less likely to succeed in education (Driscoll and Pianta, 2010). Secure relationships will also support those children with significant attachment difficulties/disorders to achieve (Pianta, 1992). For these reasons, there have been calls for attachment-awareness training to be available to schools (Wetz, 2009) and a stronger

focus on relationship building in schools to improve outcomes (Rose, McGuire, Gilbert and McInnes, 2018).

Alongside being relevant to academia, this research project sits well within the current focus on mental health and school attainment that is widely debated within educational policy and government agendas. A recent article from Public Health England (2021) describes positive mental health as crucial for children and young people to develop and thrive. It argues that good mental health leads to increased academic achievement, reduced behavioural problems, improved attainment, and happier children in general (ibid). It has been recognised that, for those with attachment difficulties, learning and managing in the classroom can be very challenging (National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (NICE), 2015). For this reason, The Department for Education (2018) called for schools to identify vulnerable groups of children, such as those with attachment and trauma disorders, and put in strategies to support their mental health. However, rather ironically, running alongside these positive mental health campaigns is the narrative on 'good behaviour' in schools. There are arguments that suggest children need to conform to this socially constructed concept in order to obtain academic success.

The aim of this study is to discover the impact of teaching training on attachment theory and relationships upon motivation in the classroom. The literature review will set out the historical context in which mental health debates and therapeutic practice sit, alongside outlining some of the main motivation theories. There will be an in-depth study of attachment theory and a detailed discussion of current practice on attachment awareness and training for schools. The paper will go on to detail the methodology used in the study

and finally, there will be data analysis and a discussion of the findings situated in current literature.

1.2 School Context

My current school (and the inspiration for this research project) is an independent, trauma informed school that implements a therapeutic educational model. This year, the organisation has rapidly expanded and opened a second campus. There are 54 pupils on roll with 65 staff members. There are 6 members of a SLT and a strong pastoral department that includes a qualified social worker. The cohort of children consists of 53% post LAC and 31% LAC. There is a high percentage of children (92%) who are entitled to pupil premium, with 4% eligible for pupil premium plus. A high number of pupils have been excluded from mainstream provision and have subsequently missed a substantial proportion of their early education. All pupils have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and have experienced trauma in early childhood, with some children still living in trauma inducing situations. As a result, all children present with challenging behaviour, have complex mental health needs and the majority have been diagnosed with attachment disorders.

It was important that this research project widened its scope to a mainstream school to provide data that is more reflective of wider society and more relevant to the mainstream conversation. The school that this research was undertaken in is a large, two-form entry mainstream primary school. There are 387 children on roll, 2 looked after children and a high percentage of children who are eligible for pupil premium and free school meals. The

school has an average number of children with EHCPs and has a range of minority groups on roll.

The two schools are very different in the make-up of their pupil cohorts. Differences are also reflected in their behaviour policies and underpinning ethos. My current school's behaviour policy revolves around the theme of reflective practice, making both staff and pupils accountable for their behaviour (XXXX, 2021). The school culture seeks to create an environment built on mutual respect, where pupils are explicitly taught about their mental health and triggers. There is very little emphasis on enforcing rules and sanctions (ibid). The policy details the importance of forming and maintaining relationships and recognises the difficulties children with attachment disorders and other mental health conditions have in building these relationships (ibid). It is evident that empathy and nurture are underpinning concepts that are deeply embedded within school practice.

In contrast, the mainstream school's behaviour policy has a strong focus on enforcing school rules and for staff members to actively encourage positive behaviour (XXXX, 2019). The policy details the sanction and reward system in place and empathises the notion that poor behaviour will not be tolerated or 'be allowed to interfere with children's learning' (XXXX, 2019, page 2). Links between home and school are referred to frequently and the policy describes a school culture that seeks to create a safe and secure learning environment through good behaviour (ibid).

This narrative of 'good behaviour' very much fits in line with current government agendas and is reflective of a traditional educational model. Reading this policy through a

progressive lens left me wondering what is 'good' and 'poor' behaviour? How are these concepts decided on? And finally, what about those children whose needs prevent them from conforming to such polarising ideas? This is not a critique of the school but an interesting observation of the very clear differences in each school's views on behaviour management. The relevance of these differences will become clear in the data analysis section of this project.

2. Literature Review

Whilst reflecting on my own educational experience, it has become apparent that very little of my recollection involves long multiplication, subordinate clauses or in fact any of the content taught. My fond memories focus on the experiences and teachers I had, many of whom were instrumental to my success and to who I am hugely grateful for today. But sadly, within those happy thoughts, I can also remember teachers who I found dismissive, unapproachable, and even frightening. Within the subjects that these teachers taught, I can now identify a lack of motivation and remember finding their lessons uninteresting and challenging. The safety and security that those positive relationships with my teachers brought me has resonated with me and is something that I cannot ignore in my own practice. Through conversations with friends, it is evident that we can all relate to liking or disliking teachers at school, and everyone has valid experiences to offer to this conversation. This forefronts the importance of pupil-teacher relationships to motivation, and therefore success, within the education system.

2.1 Historical Context

It is important to recognise the long-standing debate between traditional and progressive models of education to establish how a relationship-based approach would be viewed and digested. These two models bring with them their own social constructs of behaviour and view the purpose of education very differently. Dewey (1938) identified the tensions between the two schools of thought and described traditional education as a framework that focuses on conformity and the transmission of information. Within a traditional approach he discussed pupils needing to be obedient and conditioned into docility as a opposed to the progressive approach that requires pupils to be expressive and explorative (ibid).

The Central Advisory Council for Education's (1967) Plowden Report came at an important point in education and reflected the emerging liberal view that education should foster creativity and move away from the constraints imposed by results and targets. The report called for schools to foster a child-centred approach and to view children as individuals (ibid). However, The Black Papers (1969, 1975, 1977) repeatedly attacked progressive teaching for lack of discipline and apparent student unrest, leading to the return of centrally controlled curriculum and a strong focus on results. The Black Papers and The Plowden Report ideologies seem unresolved and highlight the oppositional views of different education models and how they view the link between teaching and behaviour.

The tensions and divide between traditional and progressive education are evident throughout history and are still widely debated today. The Every Child Matters (HM Treasury, 2003) agenda saw the same calls for child-centred approaches to be

implemented in schools and the SEAL programme (DCSF, 2007) empathised a focus on emotional wellbeing to be taught in schools. But this therapeutic model of education that was emerging was heavily criticised for undermining the pursuit of knowledge in education and creating a dependency on therapy (Ecclestone & Hayes 2009).

In 2010, the coalition government focused on discipline in schools, giving Head Teachers' more authority and power. The repeated use of the phrase 'bad behaviour' (DfE, 2010:3) demonstrates the government's view that in order to improve attainment, pupils should be 'well behaved' and conforming. The 2012 report 'Improving Alternative Education' (DFE, 2012) placed a new emphasis on alternative provision rather than a focus on reintegration and differentiation in mainstream education. Subsequently, this created a separation between children and young people who can conform to mainstream behaviour codes and expectations and those who are labelled as 'unwilling' to conform (ibid). These views have recently been echoed in the 2017 Bennet report and the Secretary of State's response (DfE, 2017). Bailey and Ball (2016) argue that The Coalition, and successive Conservative governments, have led to a narrow focus on educational outcomes, character education, individual responsibility and punitive interventions for 'troubled families'.

It appears that the importance of teacher-pupil relationships is very much still missing from the political conversation. Therefore, it is argued that there is a need for an alternative approach within the education system that does not focus on behaviour and control but rather what strategies can be put in place to foster and improve engagement (Parker and Levinson, 2018).

2.2 Policies on Mental Health and Behaviour

Although it is evident that the debate between traditional views on behaviour and education and more progressive methods is yet to settle, it must be recognised that some progress has been made in relation to mental health in schools. As recently as last year, the government released additional funding to boost the number of mental health teams in schools, colleges, and universities from 59 to 300 by April 2023 (DfE, 2021).

The Equality Act (2010) created an important change in the way in which mental health is viewed and responded to. This Act recognised that some mental health conditions meet the definition of a disability (ibid), meaning that these conditions were protected under disability laws. The Healthy Child Programme implemented by the Department for Health in 2009 employed a wide range of services to support children's mental health and focused on early identification of risk and need. This programme aimed to support parents and families from pregnancy to age five and began to raise awareness of the impact of poverty, domestic violence, parents with mental health issues, stress, abuse and trauma on the healthy development of a child (Department for Health, 2009).

Now that some mental health conditions meet the definition of disability, the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015) highlighted the need for schools to provide staff training to enable them to best support children with mental health conditions. An important feature of this report is the understanding that mental health conditions can underpin behavioural challenges (ibid). The 2017 Green Paper: *Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision,* provided extra funding for new Mental Health Support

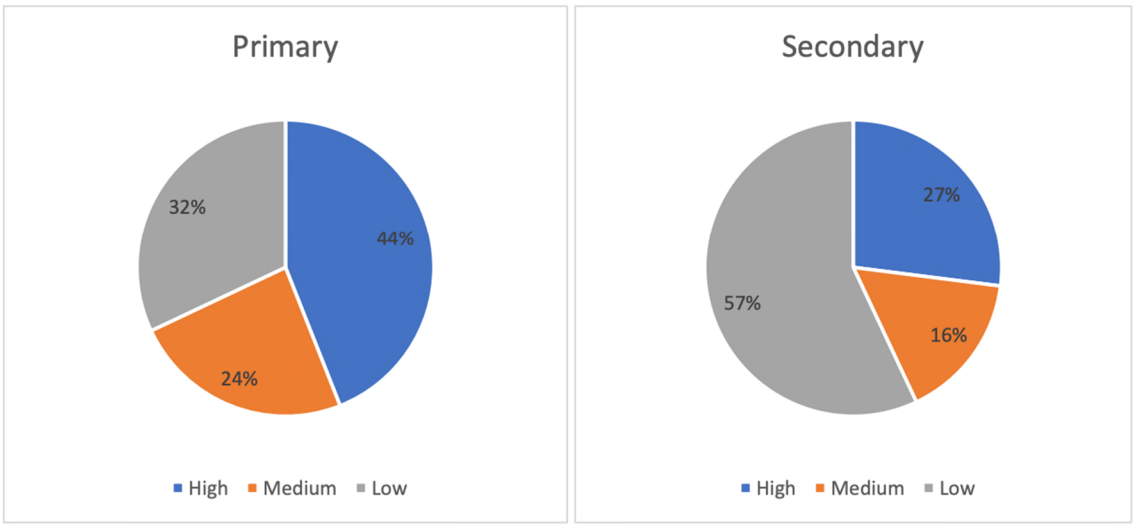
Teams in schools. Importantly, the paper called for all schools and colleges to have a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health (ibid).

The DfE's 2018 report *Mental Health and Behaviour in School,* highlighted that some behavioural issues may be the result of poor mental health and other vulnerabilities. Schools need to adapt their behaviour policies to recognise that not all pupils should be treated the same if their disability makes it harder to comply with the policy (ibid). It was stated that schools should be making use of assessments such as the Boxall Profile and Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires to identify mental health needs early on. An important point to note for the context of this research is that this 2018 report also recognised attachment disorders and trauma disorders as being classified as a mental health problem or disorder (ibid). Something that appears to be slow on the uptake for the majority of mainstream schools, including the one used for this research.

Against the backdrop of government reports lobbying for change in the perception of mental health and the subsequent request for behaviour policies to reflect this, it is important to address the associated figures. The DfE (2018) *Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision in Schools* report showed that only 4% of primary schools and 2% of secondary schools have published mental health policies. Unsurprisingly, 96% secondary schools and 100% of primary schools have published behaviour policies (ibid). For a visual

representation of the progress still to make in creating behaviour policies that genuinely promote mental health and wellbeing, please see the pie charts below (ibid).

Figure 4: Pie charts to show overall extent behaviour policies promoted mental health and wellbeing



The DfE (2021) Press Release: *Behaviour Experts to Support Schools with Poor Discipline* provides a stark contrast to the reports described above. This press release revolves around the socially constructed discourse of 'good behaviour' being imperative to success. The apparent lack of discipline in schools that the press release describes requests the need for behaviour experts working in some of the most challenging settings to support teachers and leaders. The narrative is summarised through quotes such as "'orderly and disciplined classrooms are best" and "Good behaviour is really important in enabling all children to learn and be happy at school" (ibid). This press release is clearly contradictory to recent reports that champion mental health education and champion the need for behaviour policies to support children rather than sanction them.

After addressing the historical and political context around mental health, behaviour policies and models of education, it is important to move on to explore various theories of motivation. This will provide context for the starting point of this research project and outline the importance of pupil-teacher relationships to pupil motivation in the classroom.

2.3 Motivation Theories

Motivation is defined by Ryan and Deci (2000) as underlying reasons for behaviour and the reasons why pupils may engage in different activities. It is important for educators to understand motivation and the effect on pupils in the classroom to be able to motivate them effectively. When a teacher knows why a pupil does something, they are able to be more adaptable in the classroom to cater for their needs. Understanding motivation and it's vital importance to academic achievement enables teachers to adapt pedagogy to increase motivation and with that, success (Pintrich, 2003).

To develop a more in-depth understanding of the multi-faceted concept of motivation, two theories of motivation (Attribution Theory and Goal Theory) are outlined below. These two theories have been chosen to provide an example of the contrasting ideas and thinking within the field of motivation. Weiner (1974) describes Attribution Theory as using assessment as a tool to measure confidence, self-esteem, effort, and motivation by focusing on individual success and failure. Teachers play a fundamental role in determining a child's educational experience and identity. Which seems to be ignored within this theory by placing such heavy empathises on academic attainment and achievement as core motivating factors. Similarly, Goal Theory centres around attainment

and achievement through championing goals as main motivation drivers (Locke and Latham, 1990). Within Goal Theory, teacher feedback is highlighted as an important tool when establishing goals. However, there is a lack of acknowledgment for the role pupil-teacher relationships play in how a child responds to feedback or goal setting and how this could be detrimental for those who may struggle to form secure attachments with adults. Both theories are relevant to this study as they provide examples of how children with attachment difficulties may be missed from the conversation.

Self-Determination Theory will be discussed in detail due to the significant references made to pupil-teacher relationships. Relatedness as a concept underpins Self-Determination Theory and highlights the integral nature pupil-teacher relationships play in motivation drivers (Deci and Ryan, 2000). This links to research question three that seeks to establish the impact of perceptions of pupil-teacher relationships on motivation levels. Something that Deci and Ryan's (2000) theory argues can be fostered through relationship building activities and strategies. Exploring this theory in such detail provided me with the opportunity to reflect on practice in my current school, that seeks to embed relationship building at the core of school-wide practice. I realised that our model ultimately aims to develop self-determination in each pupil through its focus on relationships, something I found as a strong motivator to my research project.

Attribution theory

Attribution Theory focuses on effort, task difficulty, achievement, ability and luck as key factors for academic success (Weiner, 1974). Weiner (1974) describes these as attributions of success and failure. Pupil experiences of success and failure in school are

stated to both control and impact performance and effort levels (Kelley, 1972). Those pupils who experience success in school are more likely to be motivated and engaged when compared to those who have experiences failure (Weiner, 1980). High achievers are motivated to try tasks due to attributing their past success to their effort and ability (ibid). In comparison, low achieves who are filled with self-doubt and low self-esteem and are therefore less likely to approach tasks (ibid). Weiner (1980) describes these attributions as stable causes (effort) or unstable causes (ability). Attribution Theory describes how pupils can be appropriately motivated by teachers based on the attributions they make. This theory heavily revolves around the socially constructed notion of high and low achievers and fails to acknowledge multiple other factors at play such as: home life, socio-economic status, SEND and, most importantly in the context of this study, pupil-teacher relationships.

Assessment is one way that pupils can attribute the causes of their success or failure. Ecclestone and Pryor (2002) discuss the detrimental impact of assessments on learning identities and dispositions of pupils, supporting the narrative that assessment can lead to low motivation and low self-esteem. These ideas are echoed by Filer and Pollard (2000) who highlight the profound impact of assessment outcomes on the construction of a child's identity. Clearly assessment plays a role in self-esteem and engagement levels, therefore experiences of success and failure from assessment should not be left out of the conversation. It is widely acknowledged that assessment is a fundamental tool to measure success within both the education system and the job market world-wide. It therefore seems impossible to move away from the use of assessment in school, regardless of the literature supporting the need to. In my opinion, a better option would

be for schools to begin developing pupil resilience by improving mental health provision through empathetic pupil-teacher relationships. Children will then be more adequately prepared to manage the impact of success and failure on their mental health in the future.

The discussion now moves to Goal Theory, that develops and expands Weiner's (1974) notions of failure and success.

Goal Theory

Goal Theory is based on the biological need to survive based on goal-orientated actions that satisfy survival needs (Locke and Latham, 1990). It is argued that people can either raise or lower goals based on what they choose to think, set goals, reflect and their emotional experiences of success and failure (ibid).

Goal Theory focuses on the intrinsic motivation provided by setting goals and notes the relationship between goal difficulty, level of performance and effort. Locke and Latham (1990) discuss performance feedback, goal specificity, ability, commitment, and goal difficulty as the conditions that impact upon success. In comparison to having no goals, having a specific, high goal leads to higher performance (ibid). If educators are aware of goal Theory, they will be able to set goals that are purposeful and provide relevant and meaningful feedback. Babad (1993) argues that feedback is only purposeful when it is delivered by teachers who are valued by pupils. If a teacher has not developed a secure relationship with their pupils, they might not be as responsive to their feedback. The goals they have set might not be relevant if the teacher lacks adequate knowledge of the pupil.

The crucial role of pupil-teacher relationships needs to be recognised within this conversation.

Goal Theory classifies goals into either a performance approach, mastery approach, mastery avoidance or performance avoidance (Locke and Latham, 2002). The performance approach is based on wanting to outperform others and the mastery approach is based on personal competence and learning (Barron and Harackiewicz, 2001). In contrast, performance avoidance centres on avoiding looking stupid compared to others and mastery avoidance centres on avoiding misunderstanding (ibid). To motivate pupils towards self-improvement, teachers should actively encourage and promote a mastery approach. This theory left me exploring how a mastery approach may be developed and implemented within a school setting. Arguments from Barron and Harackiewicz (2001) suggest that a school should do this through improving self-confidence and risk-taking behaviours. Unsurprisingly, one key way of improving these areas is through allowing the children to feel safe through their relationships with teachers at school (Field and Hoffman, 2012). The discussion now investigates the impact of pupil-teacher relationships upon motivation.

2.4 Relationships and Motivation

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation needs to be discussed in more detail for us to gain an understanding of the role of relationships. Intrinsic motivation is described as the "inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges" (Ryan and Deci, 2000: 70). People have a natural tendency to exploring and learning and are motivation by this inherent satisfaction (ibid). This is demonstrated when many people complete tasks in isolation but

motivation is still observed (ibid). By comparison, extrinsic motivation is created through a reward or outcome for task completion (ibid). Connell and Wellborn (1991) argued that there is higher engagement and performance levels when a task is self-directed and so intrinsic motivation is higher. When a person feels that the outcome is of personal importance and the goal is valued, there is higher levels of enjoyment, effort, and engagement. Ryan and Deci (2000) describe this as identified regulation.

It is important to gain an understanding of these two constructs of motivation, so we understand how to motivate individuals. Schools often see both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in action. School systems that reward and punish seek to tap into extrinsic motivation and lessons that are exciting and engaging seek to facilitate intrinsic motivation. Despite its simplistic appearance, motivation is a complex topic with many variables.

With an understanding of intrinsic motivation being something that can be fostered through appropriate challenge and feedback, it is important to address underlying theme of pupil-teacher relationships. Self-Determination Theory will be now discussed in further detail. This motivation theory forefronts relationships and is crucial to this research project.

Self-Determination Theory

Deci and Ryan's (1985) Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) suggests that environmental and social factors can either encourage or undermine intrinsic motivation. CET champions the drivers of intrinsic motivation as autonomy, challenge, and positive feedback (ibid). It

is not surprising that control, pressure, and negative feedback are factors that are detrimental to intrinsic motivation (ibid). Relatedness is the final integral factor that influences intrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (2000) argue that secure relationships both support and encourage intrinsic motivation.

Self Determination Theory (SDT) suggests that intrinsic motivation can flourish in environments where secure relationships are created and maintained (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Basic psychological needs: competence, belonging and relatedness, are described by SDT as essential to wellbeing and motivation. Self-determination can support academic success (Field and Hoffman, 2012). Similarly, Houchins' (1998) research revealed that pupils with higher self-determination results also had higher grades and were academically more successful. Self-determination is therefore important for academic success driven by motivation.

It is important to now understand how self-determination can be fostered. Deci and Ryan's (2000) research on SDT explained that people perform tasks for the primary reason of either being directed or modelled by a person of whom they feel attached to. Field, Hoffman, Sawilowsky, and St. Peter (1996) discovered that positive relationships were viewed as the main tool to support self-determination. Field and Hoffman (2012) also argue that positive relationships are fundamental to self-determination. The power teachers have to develop these relationships cannot be ignored. School contexts that focus on relationships have been proven to foster greater internal motivation compared to those that do not (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

It seems we have now returned once more to the importance of relatedness and relationships to self-determination and motivation. The way a pupil feels valued and their relationship with their teachers are to both motivation and academic success.

As my school's behaviour policy aptly recognises attachment disorders as prohibiting factors to forming relationships, it is important to study Attachment Theory. This way we can begin to understand the impact attachment can have on a person's ability to develop positive relationships.

2.5 Attachment Theory

It is widely acknowledged that for pupils to achieve socially and academically, they need to feel trust, safety and emotional closeness (Wentzel, 2009). It is important that teachers are emotionally supportive of the whole class (ibid) to enable pupils to relate to teachers, enjoy school, and reduce their anxieties. One's ability to build and develop these secure, positive relationships (that encourage their success in school) is heavily reliant on a person's attachment style. And so, Attachment Theory needs to be recognised within the discussion of motivation in the classroom.

Bowlby and Ainsworth developed Attachment Theory. Attachment is described by Bowlby (1991) as a lasting psychological connection between human beings and something that is characterised by behavioural and motivation patterns (ibid). In contrast to behavioural theories, Bowlby described the need to develop secure attachments as innate and evolutionary (Draper and Beisky, 1990). Attachment Theory centres upon the notion of a primary caregiver's responsiveness to an infant's needs. When these needs are

consistently met and primary caregivers are available, infants will be able to form secure attachments (Bowlby, 1991). When these secure attachments have been formed, it is argued that a child is then more likely to successfully explore the world in the future (Watson, 2018).

Ainsworth expanded on Bowlby's revelations, to uncover the impact of attachment on behaviour. Ainsworth (1978) researched the responses of an infant who was left alone and then reunited with their mother. Using the responses of each infant, Ainsworth was then able to categorise three major styles of attachment: secure, ambivalent insecure and avoidant-insecure (ibid). A fourth style was added later by Main and Solomon (1986) named disorganised-insecure attachment. Children who are securely attached are confident that their caregivers can meet their needs and are therefore able to develop and maintain meaningful relationships (Ainsworth, !978). Those with an insecure-avoidant attachment style do not seek support when distressed and actively avoid attachment to a caregiver (ibid). An insecure-ambivalent attachment style presents as a clingy and dependent child who will reject affection from their caregiver when it is given (ibid). Main and Solomon (1986) describe the disorganised-insecure attachment style as inconsistent and disorientated behaviours. This is as a direct result of being subjected to fearful behaviours from their caregivers (ibid).

A child's attachment to their primary caregiver has a powerful influence over their ability to learn, their self-esteem and how they develop relationships (Watson, 2018). Bowlby (1979) discovered that intrinsic motivation was more evident when an infant has a secure attachment to their caregiver. Without a secure attachment, children can become

aggressive and depressed, leading to the development of an insecure attachment (ibid). Insecurely attached children find it difficult to trust teachers and therefore find learning challenging (ibid). Research shows that children with insecure attachment disorders are often diagnosed with conditions such as oppositional defiance disorder, conduct disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder (Young et al, 2019). The impact of such disorders can hugely impact on a child's ability to concentrate and maintain normalised behaviour in the classroom. Research widely accepts huge positives that come from having a secure attachment. These children are more readily able to take risks and challenges, have improved social competence, achieve greater academic success, and can regulate their own emotions (Bergin and Bergin, 2009). Having a secure attachment evidently works hand in hand with academic success and yet it seems that the current education system is missing a vital piece of the puzzle. More needs to be done to raise awareness of both attachment theory and the importance of relationships through teacher training in order to improve outcomes for all.

Attachment Theory has been criticised by feminists and sociologists for targeting mothers and ignoring the impact of socio-economic factors on attainment and child development (Duschinsky, R., Greco, M., and Solomon, J, 2015). However, Attachment Theory is one of the most well-evidenced and most established theoretical frameworks in developmental and clinical psychology (Sroufe, A., and Siegel, D, 2011). The benefits of using and understanding attachment in children should not be ignored.

Children in my current setting have experienced extensive trauma, resulting in the majority having an attachment disorder. They present with a significant distrust of adults,

highly challenging behaviour and an obvious lack of motivation to learn. As they have spent longer in our school, experiencing a Trauma Informed approach embedded in a relational model, their behaviours have decreased and more pupils are beginning to access learning. All the children have developed at least one meaningful relationship with an adult. Although the school has a nice cohort, it is important to address the wider reaching context. Bergin and Bergin (2009) site that approximately one third of children have an insecure attachment with at least one care giver. In Scotland, 98% of children have experienced some form of traumatic event (O'Connor, M., and Russell, A., 2004). This data demonstrates a stressing need for teacher training on attachment theory and the need for the focus in schools to revolve around building safe and secure relationships. Two of my research questions have been developed based on the literature surrounding attachment:

To what extent do teachers have a secure understanding of pupil attachment styles?

To what extent do pupil attachment styles impact upon motivation in the classroom?

2.6 Attachment Aware Schools Programme

Tensions between traditional and progressive education are still apparent through government policies concerning mental health and behaviour. There is a need for an alternative approach that does not focus on behaviour and control but rather what strategies can be put in place to foster and improve engagement (Parker and Levinson, 2018). Evidence in the Mental Health Green Paper (DoH/DfE 2017) concluded that small scale emotional and social learning programmes are limited. But whole school, flexible

approaches, supported by whole staff training are more likely to be successful in supporting mental health needs (ibid).

The concept of attachment awareness has developed momentum over the last 5 years and there is growing literature relating to schools. Attachment-aware schools have developed a whole school approach which does not stigmatise individual groups but provides strategies for individual needs to be met (Parker and Levinson, 2018). The Attachment-Aware Schools programme came from three main sources and is based upon the emotion-coaching model created by John Gottman in the USA. Originally, it was developed as a parenting tool, but the work of Bath Spa University in the classroom context has been endorsed by Gottman himself (Gottman, 2012). Early Years consultants in the B&NES local authority were expressing concerns regarding the number of reception-aged children who were being referred for behaviour difficulties, when the main problem was an attachment need (Geddes, 2006). Bath Spa University have since developed their own attachment-awareness/emotion-coaching programmes that are delivered and thought about as 'tools in the toolkit' running alongside wider school behaviour strategies (Parker and Levison, 2018).

The Attachment-aware schools (AAS) programme champions classroom relationships. It argues that connections between learning and experience, and a genuine enjoyment of learning, seem more conducive to improving engagement and motivation than punitive behaviour and control mechanisms (Rose, McGuire, Gilbery and McInnes, 2018). The AAS project aimed to develop a replicable training programme to promote the importance of attachment and attunement. The project will also explore the effectiveness of

attachment-based interventions, improve the behaviour and well-being of pupils, and create evidence for improved outcomes from the AAS model (ibid). Research and evidence are drawn from two pilot studies that took place over one year in two different local authorities in the UK. This included 200 participants from 40 schools with teachers, school support staff and pupils ranging from age 5-16 years old (ibid). Results demonstrated improvements in maths, reading and writing attainment among the pupils with teachers reporting a positive impact on pupil behaviour and decreases in sanctions such as exclusions (ibid). The repeated Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997) demonstrated a significant decrease in difficulties. Teachers described being better skilled to support challenging pupil behaviour and increased ability to manage pupil interactions during behavioural incidents (Rose, McGuire, Gilbery and McInnes, 2018).

The below diagram provides a useful explanation of the AAS framework and how this can be implemented in schools.

Figure 1. The Attachment Aware Schools (AAS) Framework.

The figure originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright. The figure was sourced at Rose, J., McGuire-Snieckus, R., Gilbert, L., and McInnes, K. (2018). Attachment Aware Schools: the impact of a targeted and collaborative intervention. International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development. 37:2.

(Rose, McGuire, Gilbery and McInnes, 2018).

Attachment-based interventions have been critiqued for over-interpretation of attachments and the avoidance of acknowledgement of the impact of societal issues such as social identity and community engagement (Parker and Levinson, 2018). It has also been argued that the AAS programme normalises attachment disorders (ibid). Bomber and Huges (2013) criticised the Bath Spa attachment-awareness strategies due to the view that they were inappropriate for children suffering severe trauma and the approach was too universal. Other critics argue that a therapeutic style of education can be disempowering by creating a strong focus on detrimental aspects rather than being enabling, nurturing and empowering (Ecclestone and Brunila, 2015). However, the benefits of nurture and secure pupil-teacher relationships are regularly cited. Therefore, a whole school approach, that incorporates training on attachment theory, should only be championed in every school to support the most vulnerable children in society.

With Emotion Coaching being an integral part of the AAS programme, it is important to study this in more detail to understand the CPD training and intervention that was delivered. It will also provide the opportunity to gain an understanding of the practical strategies the teachers were given as tools to support and develop relationships with the children in their classes.

2.7 Emotion Coaching

Emotion Coaching was originally used and discussed as a parenting tool to support parents navigate children's emotional behaviours. Gottman and Declaire (1997) described three ways in which adults respond to children that they deem as inappropriate. Firstly, dismissing the child's emotions through distraction, mocking, or disengaging with them

(ibid). When adults dismiss children's emotions, they are teaching them that their feelings are wrong or inappropriate and in turn this contributes to a child lacking the ability to self-regulate (ibid). Disapproving of a child's emotions comes second, where an adult seeks to control or discipline a child for having an emotional response without empathy (ibid). Finally, the Laissez-Faire approach is where an adult accepts all responses but offers no guidance or problem-solving advice to support the child to regulate (ibid). These adults show empathy but do not set limits on behaviour, meaning that the child does not understand their emotions or how to manage them (Westby, 2020).

Adults who adopt an emotion coaching philosophy view children's bad moods or emotional behaviours as an opportunity to connect, teach and empathise (ibid). Taking the time to understand things from the child's perspective and allowing them to feel heard, respected and understood. Emotion Coaching emphasises the importance of the reasons that underlie the behaviours rather than focuses on the consequence (Digby et al, 2017). Research shows that emotion-coached children are more emotionally stable, more popular among peers, are more resilient, achieve more academically and have fewer behavioural issues (Duncombe et all, 2016). For these reasons, it seems an obvious tool to use in the classroom.

The move towards educational setting Emotion Coaching research began in 2011. With The Melksham Resiliency Project 0-19 years being the first UK education setting focused Emotion Coaching research project (Rose, McGuire-Snieckus and Gilbert, 2015). Results demonstrated improved behavioural regulation and academic outcomes (ibid).

After this, The Attachment Aware Schools programme adapted elements of Emotion Coaching as part of their integrated approach programme. Other researchers have completed work in Emotion Coaching initiatives to prove the effectiveness of Emotion Coaching in an education setting. Both the AAS and other specialist Emotion Coaching interventions were shown to reduce disruptive behaviour, improve attendance and increase academic attainment (Gilbert, 2017).

Emotion Coaching training for school staff has a positive impact on the staff too, increasing their neuroscientific knowledge of mental health and emotional regulation (Digby et al, 2017). Teacher have increased confidence to support the children and the children are able to develop resilience and emotional literacy (ibid).

Gottman and Declaire (1997) created a practical five-step Emotion Coaching approach to be used in schools:

1. Be aware of your own and a child's emotions
2. Recognise emotional expression as a way to teach and become intimate
3. Listen and validate a child's feelings
4. Label emotions in words that children can understand
5. Support a child to problem solve or deal with an issue

This approach views emotional incidents as teaching opportunities rather than disciplinaries and enables the child to develop an understanding of how to express their emotions and what their emotions feel like (ibid). The step-by-step model has been praised for providing staff with a structured tool and a script to use to manage situations (Digby et al, 2017). This improves staff confidence in using the steps and improves

empathy and patience (ibid). For these reasons, this five-step model was used within my teacher CPD training session as a practical tool for teachers to begin to embed emotional validation within their everyday practice. The step-by-step approach made the training less daunting and easier to implement. It is hoped that when the children feel heard and valued, they will be able to develop that crucial relationship with their teacher in a more positive and meaningful way.

Dweck (2007) argued that for some children, who may still be suffering within their home lives, forced attention to emotional regulation and introspection can increase a sense of helplessness and be very overwhelming to process. This argument follows similar criticism of Attachment Aware Schools Programmes that argues these approaches create an oversimplification of significant mental health conditions (Smith, Cameron and Reimer, 2017). However, numerous studies have been completed across a range of areas and local authorities with very positive outcomes (Digby et al, 2017 and Rose, McGuire-Snieckus and Gilbert, 2015). Therefore, schools and practitioners need to be mindful of individual pupils who may be experiencing trauma in their homelives whilst using Emotion Coaching strategies.

Now that the literature surrounding motivation and attachment theory has been discussed in greater detail, it is necessary to move towards the research part of the project.

2.8 Research Questions

In the context of the literature discussed above, the following three research questions have been formulated:

1. To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory?
2. To what extent does knowledge of attachment theory improve teacher and pupil perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?
3. To what extent is pupil motivation affected by perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?

With these three research questions in mind, it is important now to look to the methodology. We can then understand how each of these questions will aim to be answered through a variety of research methods. The need to unpick ethical considerations and potential biases is also imperative to ground the research in fairness and transparency.

3 Methodology

3.1 Teacher CPD Intervention

The main aim of this research project was to deliver an intervention in school and measure the impact. With the lack of general teacher training and awareness of attachment styles being a common theme within the literature, the intervention chosen for this project was a teacher continuing professional development (CPD) training session. The application of attachment principles to teacher-pupil relationships has been proven to develop and improve teacher practice (Riley, 2009). It is recognised that positive pupil-teacher relationships can improve pupil participation and focus in school (Martin and Dowson,

2009) and largely impacts on school success. For this reason, a teacher CPD intervention was delivered that focused on what attachment theory is and the vital importance of teacher-pupil relationships. The intervention also outlined approaches that can support teachers to foster those crucial relationships in the classroom. It is hoped that with increased awareness, exposure, and training for teachers in the field of attachment theory, pupil motivation will increase due to improved relationships with their class teachers.

Staff at my current school have extensive trauma informed practice training and on-going training by the Educational Psychologist on attachment styles and the use of emotion coaching and empathetic commentary. It would be unrealistic to replicate this level of training in a short time frame and I felt it would be unjust to attempt to cut down or shorten such a specialist training programme. It was also important to be mindful of the mainstream school setting in comparison to my own very specialist setting. The constraints of mainstream timetabling and class sizes would make the relationship-based approach look different in each setting. Therefore, I designed a unique training session that incorporated elements of my own experience and training in addition to the literature around emotion coaching, the Attachment Aware School programme. Ideally, the training would have been on-going and over a longer period, but time restraints on the teacher's availability meant this was not possible. I felt it would be unfair, and unnecessary additional workload, to ask the teachers to complete the training in their own time and so I had to work with the time slots given to me by the Head Teacher (who had to facilitate class cover). It would have also been valuable if the teaching assistants were present for the training, but this was not possible due to cover implications and

staffing issues. On reflection, the training may have been too short and perhaps more sessions or in the classroom training may have been more beneficial.

During the CPD training sessions, I delivered two presentations (Appendix 1) that included theory, information and opportunities for role play and practical application of strategies. Teachers were free to ask questions, and, during the sessions, frequent discussions were generated based on the information delivered. It was clear to me that the teachers lacked training and awareness of attachment theory and attachment styles and were noticeably interested in the training sessions. Each teacher identified children who presented with similar behaviours and recognised how an approach that validated feelings rather than punishes them, would support children to feel more safe and secure.

3.2 Organisation of Project

Below outlines a brief overview of the project with associated timelines that may be useful in understanding the project as a whole:

Table 2

September – December 2021	Literature review, research questions and methodology established
November 2021	CUREC approval and discussions with school
December 2021	Confirmation of project timeline and dates with school
Tuesday 11th January 2022	Pupil and teacher questionnaires
Thursday 13th January 2022	Interviews with Y5 teachers and groups of Y5 pupils

Friday 21st January 2022	Y5 teacher training CPD intervention
Thursday 27th January 2022	Y5 teacher training CPD intervention
31st January - 14th March 2022	Teachers deliver the intervention and observations completed a few times a week
Thursday 17th March 2022	Repeat of questionnaires
March – April 2022	Data analysis
April – June 2022	Write up of project

3.3 Methods

This project is a small-scale practitioner study adopting a mixed research methods approach to obtain pupil and teacher perceptions of relationships and motivation. A mixed methods approach is described by Johnson (2007) as combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to gain corroboration and a deep, broad understanding of a topic. Using a mixed methods approach enables the researcher to analyse findings based on a combination of techniques that provide a rigorous and pre-determined system (ibid). This will illuminate our understanding of the reasons why certain phenomenon occur (ibid). This approach will also provide me with opportunity for triangulation and will allow me to gain views from different perspectives (Denscombe, 2003 and Cohen et al, 2018). This is crucial to answer my second and third research questions that seek to obtain pupil and teacher perceptions.

The niche cohort of children, alongside the significant amount of training staff have received within my current setting meant that this project was undertaken at a local mainstream primary school. A mainstream school will be more reflective of the wider

population and will enable my data to be more generalisable. I will also be able to gain an understanding of how attachment difficulties may present in a mainstream environment compared to a special needs school where presentation of needs may be more extreme. The data should provide comparisons between mainstream teacher training and understanding of attachment difficulties in comparison to a specialist setting where staff receive extensive training. As a member of SLT in my current school, completing the research in a separate school also aims to reduce bias as teachers in the alternative setting would not feel pressurised or intimidated by the researcher. Having never met the pupils or staff at the mainstream school also seeks to reduce bias, giving the participants the freedom to be open and honest.

3.3 Data Collection: Questionnaires

Questionnaires was the quantitative method used in the research project (Appendix 2). Quantitative methods seek broad understanding and provide incident rates of actions (Watkins and Gioia, 2015). Questionnaires have greater accuracy in measurement techniques as they allow for a larger scale study, are more efficient and provide the respondents a fair amount of time to answer and respond (Nieuwenhuijsen, 2015). Artino Jr (2014) describes the questionnaires as having an overarching goal of providing a set of questions that each respondent will respond to accurately and similarly. It is argued that questionnaires are a valuable tool used to gather data about concepts, ideas or opinion that can be difficult to quantify (ibid). Something that will be beneficial in obtaining opinions and ideas about the concept of motivation.

Questions need to be worded carefully and unambiguously to enable respondents to answer with secure understanding (White, Armstrong and Saracci, 2008). Therefore, I will carefully consider the language used in each question to avoid misinterpretation. The questionnaire should be easy to read and simple to follow to retain the respondents interest in completing the questionnaire in its entirety (ibid).

A survey scale can be used as some areas can be difficult to measure using a single question, for example motivation or confidence (Artino Jr, 2014). Survey scales are designed to assess the same theme through groups of similar questions (DeVillis, 2003). Thus, enabling the researcher to gain a multi-faceted response of the underlying construct. The literature will help to inform the development of the questions and scales.

The questionnaire used in this research project made use of Likert scale questions from 'absolutely disagree' to 'absolutely agree'. This allowed the pupils and teachers greater flexibility in their answers compared to closed questions. The pupil questionnaire was taken from Federici and Skaalvik's (2014) motivation study that categorised the questions into different areas: emotional support, instrumental support, intrinsic motivation, anxiety, help seeking behaviour and effort. In my opinion, these areas supported the link between motivation and relationships based on emotional support, instrumental support and intrinsic motivation. 'Maths teacher' and 'maths subject' focused questions were changed to class teacher and general classroom subjects as my cohort were primary school students and teachers. This would make the questions more recognisable and relatable and enable me to obtain perceptions on all subject areas, not just maths. Likert Scales are easy to access and are adaptable, meaning they can measure different

constructs (McCoah et al, 2013). Although, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) argue that respondents tend to avoid using extremes, something that I need to be aware of when analysing the data.

3.3 Data Collection: Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews will be one of the qualitative research methods used (Appendix 3). Qualitative research views respondents as participants as opposed to subjects and enables the researcher to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions (Watkins and Gioia, 2015). These methods allow the researcher to gain an understanding of social situations and how meaning is given to social experience (Silverman, 2005). This style of research method is essential in enabling me to learn children's and adult's experience and understanding of motivation and relationships. Semi-structured interviews create flexibility through providing structure and some pre-determined questions but give the opportunity for ideas to be elaborated on (Wilson, 2009). The interviewee has freedom to provide reasoning for their answers and can give their opinion (Bryman, 2004). This method appropriately meets my research aim by enabling me to obtain opinions, perceptions, and reasoning. To ascertain a realistic picture of perceptions, questions will be open-ended questions without restrictions (Nieuwenhuijsen, 2015 and Bryman, 2012). However, to reduce bias in interpretation, open-ended questions need to be carefully coded.

To maximise responses in the time frame and create the opportunity for discussion, pupil semi-structured interviews will be carried out in two small groups of six (Denscombe,

2010). The small groups will reduce the power imbalance between me and the pupils (Farrimond, 2017).

The interviews will be structured using the funnel shape approach discussed by Kvale (2007) and Rabionet (2011). This approach starts wide and then narrows down into more detail to improve accuracy and authenticity (ibid). This structure will be useful to enable me the opportunity to gain a true picture of current knowledge of attachment theory before a link is made through questioning. This way, I can reduce the chance of interviewees changing their responses based on what they think I want to know.

I chose not to record the interviews and instead I took notes and transcribed them. It was important that they pupils and teachers felt at ease during the interviews, with the freedom to discuss and elaborate. I felt that the use of a recording device created a very formal tone; something I wanted to avoid. This method meant that the data was organised and orderly (Fielding and Thomas, 2008) and allowed me to be present and engaged throughout the interviews.

3.5 Data Collection: Observations

To ascertain the impact of my CPD intervention, I needed to observe real-time practice and real scenarios where teachers used emotion coaching to support the children rather than a punitive or dismissive response. I therefore spent alternate mornings and afternoons in school once a week, observing practice and classroom dynamics. My time in school was limited due to time restraints and so this could impact on the data, making it less generalisable.

Observations enable the researcher to study people in their natural environment and allows them to gain an understanding from their perspective (Baker, 2006). Spradley (1980) describes observations as an ethnographic method that describes a culture or a way of life from a native point of view. This type of viewpoint is essential for my project to gain an understanding how the children and teachers interact with one another and present in their typical classroom environment. It is an important tool for me to use to measure the impact of the CPD intervention by seeing first-hand the strategies and ideas suggested being put into practice. As Chatman (1992) stated, completing observations will provide me with an insider's view of their world and allow me to enter into their world (Emerson, 2001). Observations also provide important context to the data and allows the researcher to observe the atmosphere, gaining a sense of emotional and cultural understanding that cannot be felt through other methods (Wästerfors, 2018). The researcher is also able to generate sequences and show how events relate to each other or evolve over time (ibid).

It is important that the data from the observations is detailed but the researcher should avoid pages of endless description and focus on what stands out to them (Anderson, 2005). This way, data can be more meaningful and relevant to the aims of the study. The research should aim to note down the social interactions and body language between participants and any speech should be recorded as verbatim (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995).

There are different types of observations, each with their own set of advantages and disadvantages and ethical considerations. Gold (1958) coined the term complete observer, where the researcher plays a passive role and is simply there to listen and observe with no opportunity for asking questions or clarifying meaning. In contrast, participant observation allows the researcher to ask questions or become involved in short discussions (Handley, Bunn, Lynch and Goodman (2019). For this research, the observation method chosen is complete observer, enabling me to remain detached from the interactions between teachers and pupils (something that I am keen to observe and see play out independently of my intervention). I want to remove any risk of becoming over friendly or over-identifying information (Gold, 1958), to keep my data as reliable as possible.

Baker (2006) discusses observations as a complex method, requiring the researcher to take on several roles, use a variety of techniques and employ the use of all five sense at once. There can be a threat to the validity of the results due to researcher selectively interpreting information or selectively observe (ibid). However, to overcome this, the researcher must remain reflective and critical of their own practice. It is argued that when used in conjunction with other methods, observations provide valuable contextual data (Baker, 2006).

Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) are critical of observations due to the tensions caused by social structures and power imbalances. It is thought that a researcher cannot remain completely impartial and undoubtedly, power imbalances come into play (ibid). Although a researcher might try and be reflective and neutral, they will inevitably see the world

through their own social lens, something I need to be very aware of when interpreting the data.

Alongside the societal issues and power plays, the bias created by completing the observations myself cannot be ignored. The teachers may have felt pressured to 'show me' the strategies I recommended from the CPD intervention during my observations. The children may have been more cautious in presenting in their usual way due to someone watching them. Therefore, it needs to be recognised that my observations may not have been reflective of the entire school day or week for the pupils.

3.6 Data Analysis

The interpretivist paradigm will be implemented to allow for interpretation of opinions and views. The study requires knowledge of first-hand experience and in-depth knowledge of participant perceptions to answer my research questions and so this paradigm is the most appropriate fit.

Analysing qualitative data involves using a range of inquiry techniques to analyse textual data (Nobilt, 2020). A qualitative study can be inductive or deductive or a mixture of the two. Inductive studies are more exploratory, being driven by outcomes, in comparison to deductive studies that show how data can fit into an existing theoretical or conceptual framework (Rogers, 2003). During inductive studies, researchers focus on responses that may show emerging themes due to a lack of sufficient literature to follow a framework (Nobilt, 2020). This project will use a blend of exploratory and confirmation analysis to

enable me to confirm known facts about motivation theories but also be able to extend and link ideas into research on attachment theory.

A useful method of analysing qualitative data is through coding. This allows the researcher to systematically apply codes to themes and monitor their frequency (Saldana, 2016). For this project, that uses a blend of exploration and confirmation methods, codes will be identified from the literature and constructed based on participant responses (ibid). This will enable me to discover and identify new trends in the data.

Memo writing is stated to reveal participants inner and outer thoughts by focusing on close reading of the data whilst reflecting on key themes (Maietta, Hamilton, Swartout and Petruzzelli, 2018). Memo writing will be a crucial tool in supporting me answer the research question based on pupil and teacher perceptions.

It is important to note that the low sample size created challenges when analysing using the mean and standard deviation. The small numbers did not give an accurate representation of the data and so this will not be used in the analysis of the data.

3.7 Sampling and Pupil Information

I asked the school in question if I could complete the research with upper KS2 children as I felt it would be better to aim my questionnaire at older pupils who could complete the questionnaire independently. I also felt, from experience, that older pupils would have a better understanding of motivation and could articulate and express their viewpoints with greater ease. This also removed the power imbalance of an adult reading the questions

to the pupils (as the majority of upper KS2 children can read independently) and therefore improved the authenticity of the responses.

Every child in the two classes from Year 5 completed the questionnaire. From this large sample of 60, I then chose 6 children from each class whose responses showed low motivation or who scored their relationship with their teacher poorly (Appendix 4). It is important to note that at this sampling stage, I did not know any background information on the pupils and so the sample for the focus group interviews was picked solely based on the questionnaire responses. Once the sample of 12 pupils was chosen, I then asked the teachers for background information on each child. I spent a while contemplating whether this information was necessary, and I debated whether knowing this would create any bias or alter my interpretations. However, I concluded that this information would support my arguments regarding attachment theory and the impact of potential early childhood risk factors on mental health, behaviour, and ability to form healthy attachments.

The table below outlines some of the needs, socio-economic backgrounds and homelives of the twelve focus children bought to my attention from a discussion with the class teachers. These twelve children were picked based on their responses to the motivation questionnaire, prior to knowing background information. It is interesting that the background information demonstrated a range of social issues, parental separation, abuse and SEND. These have been widely acknowledged as risk factors to mental health issues for children and young people (Public Health England, 2019).

It is not possible to simply anonymise the data through labelling them as 'pupil A or B' as the needs or backgrounds described would enable staff at the school to identify them and then identify their interview responses. For this reason, I have kept the information general to provide context to discuss in relation to Attachment Theory.

Table 1

Additional needs, socio-economic backgrounds and homelives
Parental separation (9 out of 12 children in group)
Sexual abuse
Siblings with SEND
Domestic violence
Parental death
Sibling mental health issues (struggles with suicide)
Anxiety
EAL & SaLT
ADHD
History of time in foster care
Safeguarding concerns

After this information was gathered, I completed my interviews and observations. Once the 6-week period came to an end, I asked both classes to complete the questionnaire again. Even though I only studied the responses from the 12 pupils in focus, I asked all pupils to complete the questionnaire again to reduce bias. If those pupils were singled out to complete the questionnaire again and not the rest of the class, they may have changed their responses based on what they thought I wanted to know.

The two teachers involved in the CPD intervention also completed a similar motivation questionnaire at the beginning and end of the intervention. This enabled me to identify gaps in their knowledge of attachment theory and ascertain their perceptions of motivation and teacher-pupil relationships.

Considering the very small sample size, raw score data will be used in the analysis rather than percentages. This will prevent any misleading figures. It is important to note that the data cannot be generalised to the wider population due to the size of the sample and the limitation of only focusing on one geographical location (Silverman, 2007).

3.8 Ethical Considerations and Approval

Information from The British Educational Research Association's (BERA) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (2018) enabled me to complete my research in an ethical manner. To deepen my knowledge and understanding of ethical considerations, I consulted the work of Cohen et al (2018) who are champions of confidentiality, informed consent and transparency with the participants. I applied to the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) for ethical approval which was granted in advance of my research commencing (Appendix 5).

I sent out a letter to the Head Teacher of the mainstream school (Appendix 6) explaining the purpose of the research, outlining the ethical approval, the proposed research schedule in school along with a consent form to be signed and returned. This was returned swiftly by the Head Teacher who requested I composed a brief letter explaining the

research to the Year 5 parents and carers for their awareness (Appendix 7). This letter highlighted the freedom the pupils had to withdraw from the study at any point (Cohen at al, 2018).

Consent was obtained from the teachers that participated in the research. Before starting the questionnaire and interviews with the pupils, I explained that their identity would be kept anonymous and that they could choose to not participate at any time (Cohen at al, 2018). The interviews and questionnaires may have revealed potentially sensitive information in relation to pupil-teacher relationships and pupil perceptions of their relationships with their teachers. Therefore, it was important that I considered "how to balance maximising the benefits and minimising any risk or harm" (BERA, 2018, pg 8). I did not share the results of the questionnaire with the teachers or the school and did not discuss the group interviews with school staff. All notes were kept on my person during my visits to the school and were kept in a locked drawer at my home.

Another essential ethical consideration is how the researcher positions the child during the data collection phase. Four ways of viewing or positioning children during research have been identified by Christensen and Prout (2002): as an object, as a subject, as a social actor and as a participant/co-researcher. It is argued that a researcher needs to be reflective in the way they position children to maintain correct ethical standards and be able to ethically interpret the data (O'Reilly and Dogra,2017). In this project, children are positioned as social actors with their own experiences and opinions, who can take part in, change and be changed by the world (ibid). Therefore, little distinction is made between adults and children in this study. Adults are not viewed as being more superior in any way

or knowing more than children. The aim is to obtain the child's voice and experiences, something that is fundamental to understanding any connection between relationships and motivation.

Being the researcher completing the interviews, puts me in a position of power (Cohen et al, 2018). To combat this, a semi-structured approach will be used whereby the participants are able to speak freely and give their views through open ended questions (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003). The small number of participants means I will be able to manage the group, bringing back focus to the topic (if needed) by using pre-determined questions (Cohen et al, 2018).

The pupils participated in group interviews to provide comfort and flexibility for the students and to generate a discussion (Ary, 2010). It was important that the children did not feel pressured to participate and were made aware that they could exit the group at any stage (Cohen et al, 2018). However, it is important to highlight a limitation of group interviews being the personal dynamics between individuals in the groups and the complex social hierarchies that may be at play (Merton, Fiske and Kendall, 1990). My aim to overcome this was choosing the groups based on their questionnaire results and without prior knowledge of the children. This way, I could not knowingly choose groups from certain friendship groups. I made clear the importance of confidentiality within the interviews and explained that information discussed within the interview should not be shared outside of it (Groundwater et al, 2015). From a safeguarding perspective, being part of a group safeguarded both myself and the pupils participating – an important ethical consideration to be aware of.

The benefits of group interviews such as facilitating interactions and conversations and making efficient use of time (Ary et al, 2010) have been noted above. But it is important to note that the teacher interviews were completed individually. Firstly, this was due to cover implications and staffing but secondly, this was beneficial to reduce any power imbalances created by another member of staff being present. It is thought that teachers are more likely to share their personal feelings and views when interviewed alone (Cohen at al, 2018).

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory?

Both teachers' questionnaires and interviews revealed that before the CPD intervention, they were unaware of what attachment theory was or the different attachment styles. "I am aware of the impact of attachment styles on building relationships", for this question, both teachers disagreed. Interestingly, both teachers agreed to the question "I know how to build relationships with pupils", leaving me wondering what about those children with attachment difficulties? If you are unaware of how attachment difficulties manifest and impact on one's ability to form relationships, how can you foster successful relationships with them?

This lack of knowledge of attachment theory was further confirmed during the interview with the teachers.

Do you know what the different attachment styles are? Can you name them?

Teacher A: Very loosely

Teacher B: Not so much

Do you know how different attachment styles present themselves in children?

Teacher A: Not specifically, no

Teacher B: Maybe they are more emotional? I don't know, that's a guess

The teacher's responses to both these questions highlight the lack of knowledge and awareness of attachment theory among practicing teachers. Something that is supported by the work of Wetz (2009) and NICE (2015) who call for teacher training to include work on attachment theory due to a gap in knowledge among current teachers. The fact the teachers were unaware of how attachment difficulties / disorders may present through behaviour is another point of concern due to the widely acknowledged link between mental health and behaviour. The NICE (2015) have described that those children with attachment difficulties may be disruptive, clingy and struggle to form meaningful relationships with adults. If teachers do not know this information, they will not be able to appropriately support these children and may resort to more traditional behavioural sanctions. This evidence supports the argument for teaching training in attachment difficulties and other mental health disorders (NICE, 2015). This will equip teachers with the skills and knowledge to respond to and support the associated behaviours appropriately.

The questionnaire at the end of the intervention revealed that the teachers now did have knowledge and understanding of attachment theory, attachment disorders and the associated behaviours. “I am aware of the impact of attachment styles on building relationships” for this question, both teachers absolutely agreed, demonstrating the positive impact of the CPD intervention. It was also evident through the observations that the teachers were beginning to use strategies to support and develop relationships with pupils such as validation of emotions. Observations 3, 4 and 5 (Appendix X) demonstrate the teachers using strategies from the CPD intervention. The teachers name the emotion to validate the pupils’ feelings, for example:

“I wonder if you are feeling frustrated that the scavenger hunt was challenging”

(Observation 3, Appendix 9)

“I can see that you are feeling left out of the game and that must be hard for you”

(Observation 4, Appendix 9)

“I can understand that it might be frustrating for you to share the glue sticks as you want to get on with the task”

(Observation 5, Appendix 9).

These are examples of Emotion Coaching techniques and validation that were taught in the CPD intervention based on Gottman and Declaire’s (1997) Emotion Coaching theory. The children are being supported to identify and understand their emotions, something that is crucial in the development of emotional literacy. If a child feels that an adult understands them, they will begin to trust them and, in turn, develop a meaningful relationship with them Smyth, 2007).

Other examples of Emotion Coaching techniques were observed, including supporting the children to problem solve or find a solution to the problem.

"…how can we solve this? Would you like a friend to help you at lunch time?"

(Observation 3, Appendix 10).

"…What other things can we do to make this better?"

(Observation 4, Appendix 10).

Offering children a space to discuss a solution or giving ideas to help solve the issue is an important part of the Emotion Coaching theory (Gottman and Declaire, 1997). When children feel confident that an adult is there to support them, especially when things become challenging or difficult, they will start to develop trust in that adult and begin to regulate their own emotions (Bergin and Bergin, 2009). These are crucial ingredients to successful teacher-pupil relationships and something that is beginning to become evident in the teacher's practice after the CPD intervention.

The teachers were also demonstrating a greater understanding of the importance of pupil-teacher relationships. It was evident that they were trying hard to create a safe and secure classroom through being present during conversations, showing humour, and making the effort to praise and encourage pupils.

The teacher laughs at a pupil's comment and involves the other children in enjoying the joke. The pupil who had made the comment is smiling.

(Observation 1, Appendix 10).

The teacher uses positive praise and encouragement "well linked to other learning," "thank you for sharing that, great idea" "what a good question".

(Observation 1, Appendix 10)

…"We all know that teacher XXX loves chocolate". The children begin to laugh.

(Observation 2, Appendix 10).

The examples above showcase the teachers' attempts to relate to the children, bring humour and fun into the room and give positive feedback. These types of teacher behaviour have been recognised as important ways to build relationships with pupils (Parker and Levinson, 2018 and NICE, 2015). The CPD intervention named and listed these types of strategies as ways to support and build relationships with children. The teachers were beginning to apply the knowledge taught in the intervention to their practice.

Although the sample size is small, the data demonstrates a positive impact on teacher application and knowledge of attachment theory. The teachers can implement Emotion Coaching and relationship building strategies into their everyday practice and are working hard on developing those successful relationships with pupils on an individual level. Of course, on-going training and support would be beneficial to develop teacher knowledge and practice further. Observations over a longer time frame would also yield more data to support the positive outcome of the CPD intervention.

4.2 To what extent does knowledge of attachment theory improve teacher and pupil perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?

To measure impact more closely, 12 pupils out of the 60 cohort were chosen as a case study for this project. These 12 pupil responses from the first questionnaire revealed some inconsistencies in their perceptions of teacher-pupil relationships. It also highlighted potential tensions or weakness in their relationship with their teacher. It is

widely recognised that strong, secure attachments provide a sense of value and meaning in school (Rose, McGuire, Gilbert and McInnes, 2018), therefore it is necessary to study the data that reflects difficulties in pupil attachments with their teachers.

There was an equal split between the group for the question "I feel that my class teacher cares about me" with 6 out of 12 children agreeing and 6 out of 12 children disagreeing. This was similarly echoed in the following question: "I feel my class teacher is friendly". For this question, 7 out of 12 children either agreed or absolutely agreed, with 5 children slightly disagreeing. This demonstrates a mixed response from the pupils and highlights areas of improvement for the teachers. The following question provided a similar response - "My class teacher makes me feel safe". Interestingly, 5 children agreed or slightly agreed with 7 children either slightly agreeing or disagreeing. More children felt that their teacher did not make them feel safe, explaining why there were low numbers agreeing with the previous two questions. This data demonstrates that this group of pupils lack the strong pupil-teacher relationship that is so crucial to educational success. It is argued that children need to form strong and secure attachments with their teachers to feel safe and ready to learn (Bergin and Bergin, 2009). Perhaps the current teacher-pupil relationships are too surface level to create the security needed to thrive.

It is interesting to note that there are distinct differences between the two classes' data. For example, the question "I feel that my class teacher cares about me", 5 out of 6 children in one class either slightly disagreed, disagreed, or absolutely disagreed compared with other class where 5 children agreed or absolutely agreed. This demonstrates that there is a difference between the two classes and therefore the two teachers in their approaches

to building relationships with pupils. This will be further explored in the later part of the data analysis.

After the CPD teacher intervention and the implementation of emotion coaching strategies, the same questions from the questionnaires were studied closely to make comparisons (Appendix 12). “I feel my class teacher is friendly” – 10 out of 12 children either agreed or absolutely agreed. “My class teacher makes me feel safe” – 7 children either agreed or absolutely agreed with 5 children either slightly disagreeing or disagreeing. This data provides very small evidence that the impact of the CPD intervention and the emotion coaching strategies was successful in improving pupil-teacher relationships. However, there is a slight increase for both questions and with such a small sample size, this should be recognised as a positive outcome of the intervention. Teachers were more aware of the importance of attachment and relationships to success in school which was evident through the second questionnaire. As noted earlier, teacher observations demonstrated a willingness in the teachers to improve their practice, implement new strategies to support emotional security and work on developing their relationships with the pupils in their daily practice. If the study was completed for longer, there may have been more time to allow for strategies and pedagogy to embed into teacher practice and as a result the longer time frame would have allowed for relationships to grow.

4.3 To what extent is pupil motivation affected by perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?

Smyth (2007) argues that children need to have good relationships with their teachers to enable them to participate more in class and engage in the learning. The following question reflects the anxiety the children stated they feel during lessons, especially when answering a question or asking for help. “My heartbeat gets faster if I am asked a question in a lesson” 8 out of 12 children either agreed or absolutely agreed with this, despite the fairly high number of children who felt their teacher was friendly. “When there is something I do not understand in a lesson, my class teacher explains it for me” 6 out of 12 children either disagreed or slightly disagreed with this statement. Half of the group is a high number of children who feel unable to ask for help, or who feel they do not receive appropriate help from their teacher. If children cannot get feedback and support, then they are less motivated to work towards their goals (Locke and Latham, 1990). Therefore, these responses support the notion that if pupil-teacher relationships are not secure, then children may be less motivated as they feel they are unable to ask for help and guidance.

If the children had the secure relationship with their teachers that Smyth (2007) champions for, they would feel confident and at ease to participate in lessons. The fact that some children feel their heart beat quickly, alluding to anxiety or nerves, reflects a lack of safety in the classroom environment.

Data from the pupil and teacher interviews highlighted the integral role in which pupil-teacher relationships play in motivating children in the classroom. Answers from the teachers revolved around themes of supporting children, building relationships, and being

able to meet their emotional needs. Responses from the children echoed these themes with discussions around when teachers are unkind, this makes them feel sad and unworthy in contrast to positive relationships providing both academic and emotional support. Based on Bowlby's (1991) theory of attachment, it can be argued that for those children with attachment difficulties it is significantly harder for them to form relationships. Whilst it is unclear whether any of the children interviewed had diagnosed attachment difficulties, information from the teachers revealed that 10 out of 12 of the children had experienced some childhood risk factors. These ranged from domestic violence, parental separation to experiences of sexual abuse and neglect (Table 1). It is well evidenced that these types of negative childhood experiences can lead to significant mental health conditions including attachment difficulties (NICE, 2015). So it is important that this background information is recognised within the discussion and the link is made between these risk factors, pupil-teacher relationships, and lack of motivation in the classroom.

After reading through the data, codes were used to categorise the data into common themes and trends (Saldana, 2016). These codes were based on theoretical trends from the literature alongside reoccurring topics in the data (ibid). The codes were (Appendix 8):

-Pupil teacher relationships

-Sanctions (pupil behaviour)

-Motivation

-Teacher behaviour

Interestingly, teacher behaviour had the highest number of mentions among both the teachers and pupils, with pupil-teacher relationships and motivation being the second and

third highest mentions. These codes reflect the wider literature on the interwoven nature of motivation, teacher behaviour and pupil-teacher relationships.

Both teachers were very much aware of the necessity to build and maintain successful relationships with pupils for them to feel safe and motivated to participate in the classroom (Appendix 9).

Why do you think being friendly is important to children?

Teacher A: You need to develop trust, show the children I care for them, build mutual respect and make them feel confident to ask for help.

Teacher B: Smiling at them and making them feel valued, sharing interests in their life out of school.

Why do you think building relationships with children is important? How does this impact on the classroom?

Teacher A: A positive relationship means they will be more receptive to learn, willing to follow instructions and allow you to have a dialogue with them when disruptive.

Teacher B: It makes them more willing to learn and they feel more comfortable. It makes them care about disappointing me. You notice more behaviour challenges in the first part of the year when you don't know them as well.

These answers reflect the teacher's understanding that having a positive relationship with a child will support them to be more successful in the classroom as they will feel at ease and willing to ask for help. However, running within this understanding is the very strong theme of 'good behaviour' and children being obedient. These answers reveal the

perception that if children have a good relationship with their teacher, they will be less disruptive. A perception that is dated and fails to understand the core meaning of making children feel safe and secure. Making children essentially 'fall in line' should not be the motivating factor for teachers wanting to build relationships with children. These notions of pupil obedience and compliance are strongly argued for by Bennet (2017) and, disappointingly, a concept that seems to remain at the very centre of teacher practice.

Similar themes of behaviour and sanctions were drawn from the pupil interviews, where this code was mentioned 18 times (Appendix 9).

> Child C: You get your name on the board for literally anything
>
> Child C: When you do something wrong, they put your name on the board and if you get two ticks you get sent out
>
> Child F: I think we get unfair punishments in this class like even for yawning
>
> Child H: Some teachers are just so strict and like scary always telling you off

These are a few examples of the comments pupils stated when a discussion was generated within the group. There is a strong sense of injustice here, pupils feel the sanctions are unfair and the dislike of strict teachers who 'tell them off ' was evident. These comments also linked to codes around pupil-teacher relationships and teacher behaviour, further highlighting the interconnected nature of these concepts in the classroom.

Pupil motivation is strongly affected by the relationships they build with their teachers. The interview data revealed that these relationships were heavily impacted by teacher behaviour – something that the codes revealed was mentioned 56 times by the pupils.

Thus, providing evidence to support the need for teacher training so that teachers become more aware of the impact of their own behaviour and work towards changing their practice to focus on building relationships (Appendix 9).

Do you feel confident asking all teachers for help?

Child G: No some teachers are just rude

Child H: Yeah or like mean and shout at you

Child I: Some teachers are nosey as well like asking you loads about your life

Child J: no some are strict and get you in trouble

Child K: Some teachers are funny and nice and you can ask them for help as you know they won't shout at you

Child L: Yeah I think they can be rude so I wouldn't always ask them for help

Do you think it is important for your class teacher to be friendly? Why?

Child A: Yes otherwise you won't want to come to school

Child B: Yeah I think so

Child C: Yeah they shouldn't call out your mistakes

Child D: Like telling you off in front of everyone isn't friendly is it

Child E: I think if they aren't it can really affect your confidence

Child F: You just want them to be nice and like not shout at you or make you feel stupid

The pupils felt very strongly about those teachers who they perceived as strict or mean and there is a correlation to the impact on their motivation levels. This follows the work of Deci and Ryan (2000) who argue that people are more likely to perform tasks when they feel attached to an individual and therefore have higher self-determination. Positive

relationships are argued to be the most important factor to develop self-determination (Field and Hoffman (2012). For this reason, environments that foster and develop relationships foster higher levels of intrinsic motivation compared to those that don't (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

The pupil comments summarised the literature, theory and research on motivation theory, and simultaneously linked it with attachment theory. Quite simply, if you do not have a positive relationship with your teacher, you will not want to come to school.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Limitations

To be a reflective researcher, it is important to recognise and address the limitations of this research project (Cohen et al, 2018). On paper, the project seemed thorough enough to generate useful data to answer the research questions. However, after analysing the data it appears that the sample was too small to generate enough data to see and apply trends to wider audiences. Time restraints placed by the school on staff time for the CPD intervention prevented teaching assistants joining the training sessions. Therefore, the attachment focused practice and Emotion Coaching was only being modelled and used by the teachers - creating a lack of consistency for the pupils.

On reflection, the CPD intervention should have been on-going and should have incorporated team teaching and modelling 'in real time' during lessons and throughout the school day. This is the model used in my current provision and is something that is

proven to have a greater impact on teacher practice. The two short training sessions did not give enough time to embed knowledge and develop deeper understanding. This is something that I could have changed in the research design in the first instance. However, I was conscious of requesting too much teacher time from the Head Teacher and detrimentally impacting on teacher workload and mental health.

The literature demonstrated that attachment focused programmes or initiatives in school need to be implemented on a school wide level to have the most impact. Small scale emotional and social learning programmes have limited impact. But whole staff training and whole school approaches have been proven to have a greater success rate in supporting pupil mental health in school (Parker and Levinson, 2018). It can be argued that this project did not have the intended impact due to its small-scale nature and lack of school wide training. It is documented that school wide attachment focused programmes such as Attachment Aware Schools (AAS) should be implemented and reinforced over a year or more (Bath Spa University, 2012 and Kelly, Watt and Giddens, 2022). This study was based on a time frame of 8 weeks and therefore it can be argued that the small impact reflected in the data was due this short time frame. This is a limitation of the research design, but something that for this project, could not be changed. Bath Spa University (2012) also argued that teachers lacked confidence and knowledge to support a pastoral curriculum due to academic pressures. This is evident in this project where time in school for training and mentoring was limited due to the Head Teacher's concerns regarding teachers and pupils missing core subjects.

Data from both the pupil questionnaires and the interviews revealed a significant difference in pupil perceptions of teacher-pupil relationships between the two classes studied. Knowing which class each child was in during the interview and questionnaire meant that I was able to see this difference and identify the teachers in question. This was not elaborated on during the analysis or discussion due to the small sample size and the strong possibility of the teacher being identified. Although the contrast between the two teacher's approaches and styles would have bought a useful insight into the discussion, I felt it was unethical to make the distinction and risk the teacher's identity being revealed. I also will share some of this paper with the school in question and so I would not want to cause unnecessary scrutiny or ill-feeling for the teachers involved. Perhaps if the study was repeated on a larger scale, this could be explored in more detail.

Bias is possible in both the observations themselves and the analysis/interpretation of the observations due to being both the observer and researcher. The teachers were aware of what I was looking for in their practice based on the CPD training and so when I was present, they may have changed their practice accordingly. Time restraints also limited the amount of time I could observe in school and so there may have been missed opportunities to generate further data to improve validity. Observations of interactions with pupils where emotion coaching, or attachment focused strategies were implemented may have been overinterpreted as changes based on the CPD intervention instead of normal practice. However, the specific nature of Emotion Coaching means these approaches were unlikely to have been used previously without training.

Another limitation noted on reflection was the lack of interviews after the intervention. This prevented the generation of qualitative data that may have revealed a change in pupil and teacher perceptions of relationships after the intervention. The short time frame prevented these from going ahead and something that should be changed if the study was to be repeated.

Bias was reduced in the interviews by creating an informal atmosphere where discussions and opinions were welcomed. I also did not know the pupils or the teachers and did not work at the school, reducing the power imbalance described by Cohen et al (2018). Validity of the data generated from the pupil interviews may have been impacted by Watling's (2019) description of reputation management. Reputation management is one's attempt to control the way in which we are viewed by others (ibid). This concern of the perception of others may have impacted on pupil responses during interview. Pupils may have agreed with others in the group to be perceived a certain way or may have refrained from sharing their true opinions in fear of rejection or humiliation. This was reduced as much as possible by choosing the groups based on their responses from the questionnaire and without prior knowledge of them. The groups were therefore chosen without knowledge of friendships groups and should limit the impact of Watling's (2019) reputation management on the data.

Despite the limitations listed above, it is important to recognise that the study did improve teacher knowledge and awareness of attachment theory. There is also some evidence to suggest a small impact in the teacher-pupil relationship dynamic because of

the CPD intervention, and so it is important to look once more at the research questions to summarise and conclude.

5.2 Returning to The Research Questions

To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory?

Albeit a small-scale study of two teachers, the impact of the CPD intervention did improve their knowledge, awareness, and application of attachment theory. The findings mirrored literature that highlights a gap in knowledge in this area and confirmed the need for teacher and school wide training (Rose, McGuire-Snieckus, Gilbert, L and McInnes, 2018). Data from the second teacher questionnaire revealed increased confidence in the awareness of attachment theory and attachment styles. Observations of teachers practicing emotion coaching strategies and working on their relationships with pupils through empathy demonstrated that the teachers understood the importance of attachment theory. They were beginning to apply their knowledge in the classroom. If this study was completed again, on a school-wide level and over a long-term period it could be argued that results would yield large enough data to whole-heartedly declare this research question answered. At present, it is enough to acknowledge that the CPD intervention did cause a positive change in knowledge and awareness, and it is the hope that this change would be enough to inspire those teachers to continue their learning journey in the realm of attachment theory.

To what extent does knowledge of attachment theory improve teacher and pupil perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?

The second round of pupil questionnaires did reveal a slight change in pupil perceptions with a small number of pupils alluding to a friendlier and more approachable teacher. It can also be seen, on a small-scale from teacher questionnaires, that teachers felt more confident in ways in which they build relationships with pupils. The improvement in their knowledge and awareness of attachment theory and attachment disorders means that they have greater understanding and empathy for those children who may struggle to build relationships. Observations demonstrated teachers using emotion coaching and attachment aware strategies to support emotional regulation. Research demonstrates that when teachers do this, children begin to feel more at ease and can start to develop successful relationships with staff (Pianta, 1992). It is hoped that this intervention created a similar shift in pupil-teacher relationships, but the data is insufficient to justify this.

To what extent is pupil motivation affected by perceptions of teacher pupil relationships?

Pupil questionnaires and interviews revealed a link between motivation in school and their relationships with their teachers. The pupils who answered more negatively about their teacher's friendliness or care for them also answered negatively about their motivation in school. The questionnaire data showed these pupils had increased anxiety when answering questions in class, were happy to skip classes and felt that they could not ask their teacher for help when the task was challenging. Interview data showed similar trends with pupils voicing their dislike of teachers who are unapproachable, strict, or scary and sharing that they would not ask teachers who they perceive as strict or scary for help

in class. Some pupils shared that they no longer wanted to come to school because of their teacher and were able to reflect that this was a change to previous years when they had a good relationship with their teacher and enjoyed school. In summary, motivation is detrimentally affected when pupils have a negative relationship with their teacher.

Having collated, analysed, and discussed the findings of this research project, we must now look to the future to establish next steps and seek change.

5.3 Implications for Future Practice

It has been established that this research project had a small sample size and so the data generated cannot be generalised or reflective of the wider population. The project needs to be carried out again on a much larger scale to establish generalisable data. However, the findings did support existing research and literature in areas surrounding teacher training and attachment theory. It is worth noting that pupil perceptions revealed during the interviews were powerful statements of the detrimental impact a negative pupil-teacher relationship can have on school motivation and enjoyment; and their voice should not be dampened or ignored.

Teachers need to be aware of attachment theory and the crucial importance teacher-pupil relationships play in school success (Wetz, 2009). Reese and Anderson (2012) argue that when schools had greater awareness of attachment difficulties and associated behaviours, they had noticeably greater academic success and positive mental health in pupils. The government needs to reform current teacher training to include work on

attachment theory, the importance of relationships, and the impact of attachment disorders on behaviour and mental health.

More work needs to be done to raise the status of programmes such as the Attachment Aware Schools programme as successful school wide initiatives. This way, more schools may adopt the programme and become mentally healthier places for children to spend their years. In turn, schools would see greater academic success and attainment and improved motivation to achieve.

Another change within the education system that this small-scale project has highlighted is the need to review behaviour policies in schools. The narrative in government policy and agenda is conflicting and contradictory. On the one hand arguing for mental health awareness and support (DfE, 2018) and on the other hand supporting papers that call for schools to become tougher on behaviour (Bennet, 2017). Too many schools (including the one researched in this project) are focusing on the social construct of 'good behaviour' to promote outcomes rather than centring their practice around relationships, empathy, and emotional literacy. Mental health is still an area yet to be supported at both government and school wide levels due to a lack of clear expectations from the government (Pearson et al, 2015). Whilst government expectation of clear behaviour and discipline policies is still very much fore fronted (DfE, 2018). Until we see a shift in thinking from 'good' and 'bad' behaviour to 'what is this behaviour telling me this child needs', mental health will always remain side lined.

5.4 Final Thoughts

It has been acknowledged that there is a threat to validity due to the data not being generalisable, but the project did provide some data that reflected trends identified in the literature. The project is theoretically significant as it is centred in relevant and current government papers that call for improved mental health support and the recognition of attachment disorders as mental health conditions. Attachment Theory is very much topical and something that is gaining momentum among researchers and members of the government.

The gap in teacher and school staff knowledge surrounding attachment theory is significant and something that is in desperate need of change. Likewise, the detrimental impact pupil-teacher relationships can have on pupil motivation is huge and the link to attachment theory is still very much missing from the conversation (Murray-Harvey, 2010 and McLaughlin, and Clarke, 2010).

The battle between government agendas remains the larger issue to contend with here. Schools are desperately trying to navigate ways to support pupil mental health whilst also being pushed for academic results and the need to promote 'good' behaviour. There appears to be a disjointed approach to these huge elements within the education system and consequently, it is the children who suffer as a result.

And finally, to return to the overarching research question '*To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge of attachment theory and will this increase pupil motivation in the classroom?'.* Teacher's participating in training that enables them

to learn about attachment theory will improve their knowledge and awareness. Whether or not this will increase pupil motivation over time is yet to be evidenced in the paper due to the short time frame of this project. However, it is widely accepted that those pupils who have developed strong relationships with their teachers experience higher academic success and attainment. Based on this existing research, one would hope that if I returned to the school in question and repeated the questionnaire after a year, the pupil responses may demonstrate increased motivation.

As this is based in idealism, we must stay grounded in what we know. Teachers do lack knowledge of attachment theory and pupils have voiced the detrimental impact negative relationships with their teacher can have on their schooling career. Therefore, more must be done to champion Attachment Aware School programmes that can simultaneously raise awareness of attachment theory whilst also fostering positive teacher-pupil relationships. With schools being more attachment aware, hopefully, those children with trauma and attachment difficulties can be appropriately supported and loved as opposed to sanctioned and isolated.

17,083 words

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Appendix 1 – CPD Teacher Intervention Presentations

Attachment Theory



What do you know?

Discuss in groups
- feedback in 5mins

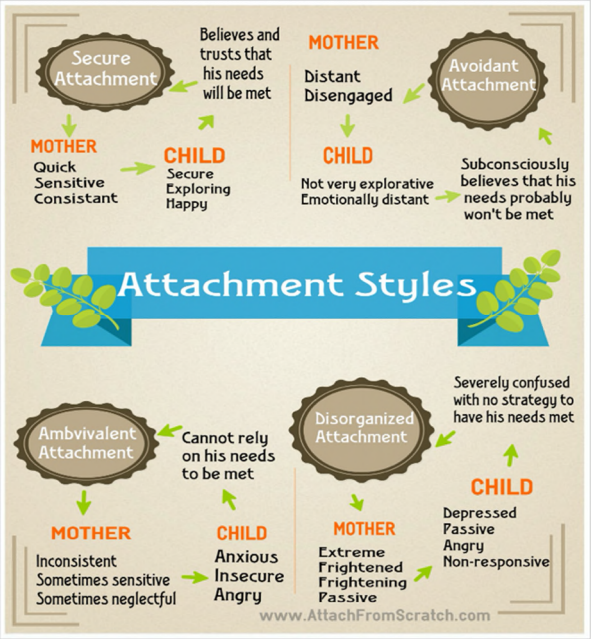


Attachment Theory

- Attachment Theory is the work of Bowlby and Ainsworth. Bowlby described attachment as a lasting psychological connection between human beings.
- The central theme in Attachment Theory is that when primary caregivers are available and responsive to an infant's needs they are able to form secure attachments.
- With this secure foundation, a child is more likely be able to explore the world successfully in the future.
- The quality of attachment to a child's primary caregiver shapes their relationships, their self-esteem and ability to learn.

Attachment Theory

- Infants who experience secure attachment can explore the world confidently because they feel protected and safe. When infants feel stressed, frightened, threatened, or unwell their attachment system is triggered and so they begin to seek attachment from care givers through crying, cooing, or clinging. Once reassurance and safety has been achieved, the attachment system can deactivate. This process creates the sense of safety and reassurance from care givers that they can protect and look after them.
- If these needs are not met, infants begin to develop unhealthy attachments because they cannot be certain that their care givers can keep them safe



http://www.attachfromscratch.com/attachment-theory.html

Impact on Emotional Regulation and Behaviour

- Data shows that those with insecure attachment patterns are more likely to suffer from various mental health conditions.
- Attachment has been found to impact on a variety of areas in a child's development such as controlling one's behaviour, self-regulation, sustaining attention, social competence, low self-esteem and controlling emotions.
- The ways in which a child develops attachment strategies early on has major implications for their inter-personal relationships in the future and their ability to self-regulate and manage their emotions and behaviours.

Can you think of children in your class that present with these behaviours?

Why is this relevant to schools?

- Research shows that approximately one third of children have an insecure attachment with at least one care giver, thus impacting on school behaviour and performance.
- Children with attachment difficulties can present with clinginess, disruptive behaviour and difficulties forming relationships with teachers and peers.
- Research linked attachment theory to teacher-child relationships and argued that secure attachment is closely linked to school success.
- Good teacher-pupil relationships enable children to participate more effectively in school.
- Strong, secure attachments provide a sense of value and meaning in school whereas weak or insecure attachments reflect hostility and indifference towards school

Why is this relevant to schools?

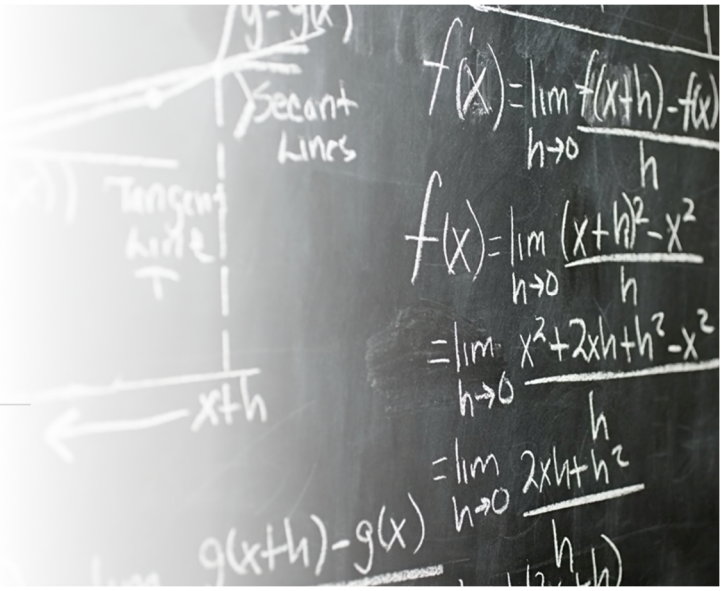
- New teacher training guidance notes that trainees must be taught the importance of attachment issues and emotional development to improve pupil progress and outcomes (DfE, 2019).
- Children who experience a range of behavioural and emotional problems may be described as experiencing mental health conditions or disorders. This includes children who have attachment disorders and trauma disorders (DfE, 2018).
- Good mental health leads to increased academic achievement, reduced behavioural problems, improved attainment, and happier children in general (Public Health England, 2021).

How do you motivate pupils in your classroom?

Links to Motivation

- Self-Determination Theory highlights pupil-teacher relationships as the main driver to motivation and lists the way in which teachers can foster and encourage motivation through relationship building strategies.
- Goal theory discusses conditions that impact on success, these conditions are commitment, ability, performance feedback, goal specificity and goal difficulty.
- Without a secure relationship in place, teachers might not have the knowledge of the pupil to set specific goals and pupils might not respond to the feedback as well as to a teacher who makes them feel safe and supported.

How can Attachment Theory be used in the classroom?



Impact on Practice

- Focus on building meaningful relationships with each child.
- Be aware of attachment styles and how a child might be presenting with associated behaviours.
- Viewing behaviour as a language – what is their behaviour trying to tell us? What are they communicating?
- Showing empathy, understanding and patience.
- Validating children's experiences and emotions – "I can see you are feeling angry about…… that must be really hard for you."
- Emotion Coaching

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Building Relationships



Why are teacher-pupil relationships important?

The Importance of Relationships

- Feedback can only be purposeful when it is delivered by teachers who are valued by pupils
- The discourse of feedback can construct children's identify in a powerful way
- A key factor to improving self-confidence and risk-taking behaviour is through building relationships that enable children to feel safe
- The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy – how teacher expectations can impact on motivation, levels of aspiration and confidence
- Intrinsic motivation is more likely to flourish in environments where secure relationships are formed and maintained
- The basic psychological needs of competence, belonging and relatedness are essential to wellbeing and motivation
- Children with attachment difficulties struggle to form and maintain relationships

How do you form relationships with your pupils?

Forming and Maintaining Meaningful Relationships

- Consistency
- Boundaries
- Play – find, enjoy and share interests and activities
- Empathy and validation (Emotion Coaching)
- Emotional check ins
- Sharing parts of yourself
- Social modelling
- Listening
- Not holding grudges
- Filling the attachment cup
- Getting to know pupils as individuals and making links with family / home
- Celebrating successes and failures (including your own)

Emotion Coaching

What is emotion coaching?

Emotion coaching was first introduced by John Gottman and his colleagues in the USA. Emotion coaching is about helping children to become more aware of their emotions and to manage their own feelings particularly during instances of 'misbehaviour'. It entails validating children's emotions, setting limits where appropriate and problem-solving with the child to develop more effective strategies.

In effect, emotion coaching techniques instil the tools that will aid children's ability to self-regulate their emotions and behaviour. It enables practitioners to create an ethos of positive learning behaviour and to have the confidence to de-escalate situations when behaviour is challenging. Emotion coaching provides a value-added dimension to behaviour management strategies and creates opportunities for longer-term solutions to children's well-being and resilience

(https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/projects/emotion-coaching/)



Emotion Coaching

The key steps of emotion coaching are:

Empathy
Labelling and validation
Limit-setting (if needed)
Support with problem-solving

Emotion Coaching

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KJa32r07xk



Top Tips

- Avoid excessive criticism, humiliating comments, or mocking
- Challenge your own ideas about how you 'should' be as a teacher or how your students 'should' be at this age.
- Take time to praise your students.
- Listen to your student's point of view first if they are willing to share in difficult times.
- You can always offer to talk later if you're busy or refer them to another member of staff.
- If a student choses to connect with you, it is a compliment. Take it.
- Don't try to impose your solutions on their problems.
- Empower them by giving choices and respecting wishes.
- Be honest with them.
- Turn towards, don't walk away.

Role Play

Scenario:
A pupil in your class has pushed another pupil because they scored a goal during play time football.

Role Play

Scenario:
A pupil in your class is crying because someone left them out of a game at play time.



Questions & Thoughts

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Appendix 2 – Pupil and Teacher Questionnaires

Teacher Motivation Questionnaire

Name: _____

Class: _____

Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
Students in my class always do their best when learning						
Students in my class always do their homework						
Students in my class often rush through learning activities						
My students know that I care about them						
Being friendly is important to students						
My students feel respected						
My I know how to make students feel safe						
Building relationships with students is important						
I know how to build relationships with students						
I am aware of the impact of attachment styles on building relationships						

Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
Students feel confident asking me for explanations in a lesson						
Students can ask for help in my lessons						
Students know that they can speak to me at any time for support						
Students can continue with a difficult task after additional guidance from me						
Students in my class like learning						
Students in my class think learning is fun						
Students in my class look forward to learning						
Students in my class would like to have additional classes						
Students in my class would like to skip classes						
Some students are tense in lessons						
Some students are nervous in lessons						
Some students display anxiety asked a question a lesson						
Some students get so nervous that they can't think straight						

Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
If there is something students do not understand in class, they ask me for help						
If there is a problem that they are not able to solve, they ask me for advice						
Some students do not ask for help even if they do not understand the problem, they are working with						

Pupil Motivation Questionnaire

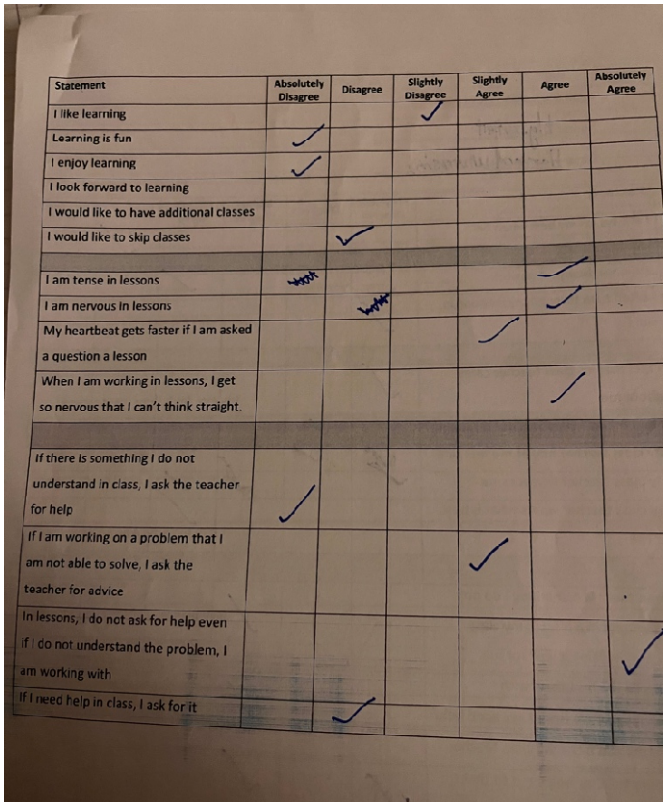
Name: _____

Class: _____

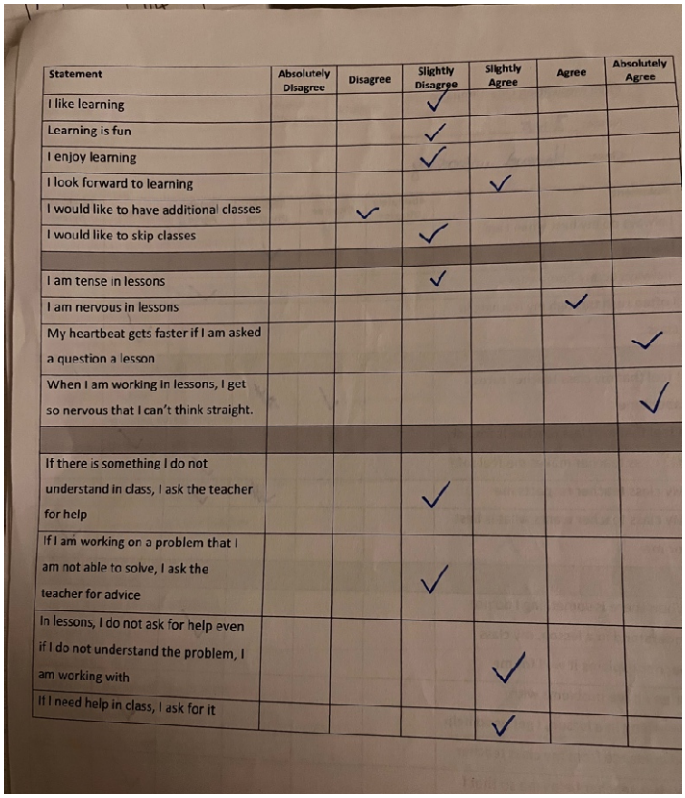
Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I always do my best when I am learning						
I always do my homework						
I often rush through my learning in class						
I feel that my class teacher cares about me						
I feel that my class teacher is friendly						
My class teacher makes me feel safe						
My class teacher respects me						
My class teacher wants what is best for me						
When there is something I do not understand in a lesson, my class teacher explains it well for me						
When I have problems with something in a lesson, I get good help and guidance from my class teacher						
My class teacher helps me so that I understand the tasks in the classroom						
My class teacher is always available when I need assistance.						
My class teacher is good at explaining challenging problems						

Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I like learning						
Learning is fun						
I enjoy learning						
I look forward to learning						
I would like to have additional classes						
I would like to skip classes						
I am tense in lessons						
I am nervous in lessons						
My heartbeat gets faster if I am asked a question a lesson						
When I am working in lessons, I get so nervous that I can't think straight.						
If there is something I do not understand in class, I ask the teacher for help						
If I am working on a problem that I am not able to solve, I ask the teacher for advice						
In lessons, I do not ask for help even if I do not understand the problem, I am working with						
If I need help in class, I ask for it						

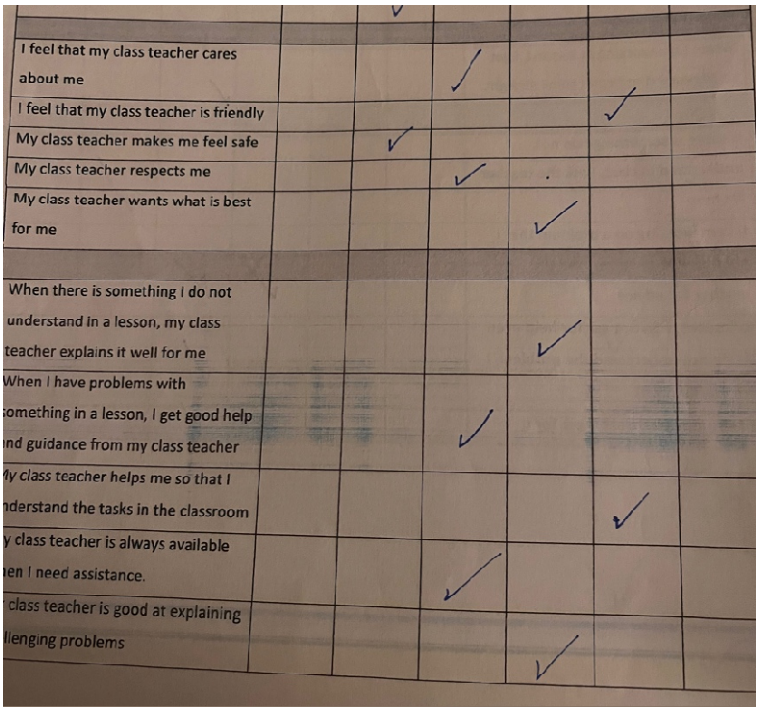
Appendix 3 – Photo Examples of Questionnaires



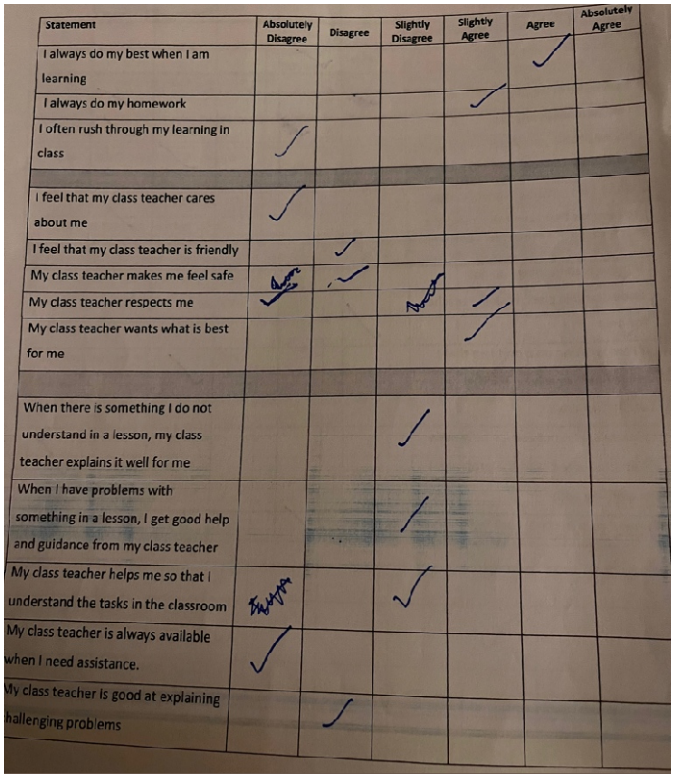
Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I like learning			✓			
Learning is fun	✓					
I enjoy learning	✓					
I look forward to learning						
I would like to have additional classes						
I would like to skip classes		✓				
I am tense in lessons	✓				✓	
I am nervous in lessons		✓			✓	
My heartbeat gets faster if I am asked a question a lesson				✓		
When I am working in lessons, I get so nervous that I can't think straight.					✓	
If there is something I do not understand in class, I ask the teacher for help	✓					
If I am working on a problem that I am not able to solve, I ask the teacher for advice				✓		
In lessons, I do not ask for help even if I do not understand the problem, I am working with						✓
If I need help in class, I ask for it		✓				



Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I like learning			✓			
Learning is fun			✓			
I enjoy learning			✓			
I look forward to learning				✓		
I would like to have additional classes		✓				
I would like to skip classes			✓			
I am tense in lessons			✓			
I am nervous in lessons					✓	
My heartbeat gets faster if I am asked a question a lesson						✓
When I am working in lessons, I get so nervous that I can't think straight.						✓
If there is something I do not understand in class, I ask the teacher for help			✓			
If I am working on a problem that I am not able to solve, I ask the teacher for advice			✓			
In lessons, I do not ask for help even if I do not understand the problem, I am working with				✓		
If I need help in class, I ask for it				✓		



		✓				
I feel that my class teacher cares about me			✓			
I feel that my class teacher is friendly					✓	
My class teacher makes me feel safe		✓				
My class teacher respects me			✓			
My class teacher wants what is best for me				✓		
When there is something I do not understand in a lesson, my class teacher explains it well for me				✓		
When I have problems with something in a lesson, I get good help and guidance from my class teacher			✓			
My class teacher helps me so that I understand the tasks in the classroom					✓	
My class teacher is always available when I need assistance.			✓			
My class teacher is good at explaining challenging problems				✓		



Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I always do my best when I am learning					✓	
I always do my homework				✓		
I often rush through my learning in class	✓					
I feel that my class teacher cares about me	✓					
I feel that my class teacher is friendly		✓				
My class teacher makes me feel safe	✓	✓				
My class teacher respects me			✓	✓		
My class teacher wants what is best for me				✓		
When there is something I do not understand in a lesson, my class teacher explains it well for me			✓			
When I have problems with something in a lesson, I get good help and guidance from my class teacher			✓			
My class teacher helps me so that I understand the tasks in the classroom	✓		✓			
My class teacher is always available when I need assistance.	✓					
My class teacher is good at explaining challenging problems		✓				

Appendix 4 – CUREC Approval

Dear [redacted]

Title: To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory and will this increase pupil motivation in the classroom?
CUREC Ref: CIA-22-026

The above application has been considered on behalf of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to DREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly, approval has been granted.

If your research involves participants whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question (this includes those under 18 and vulnerable adults), then it is advisable to read the following NSPCC professional reporting requirements for cases of suspected abuse
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/information-service/factsheet-child-abuse-reporting-requirements-professionals.pdf

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application you should submit details to research.office@education.ox.ac.uk for consideration.

Good luck with your research study.

Best wishes

Joshua McGrane
Member of the DREC

Appendix 5 – Letter to Head Teacher

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY
Tel: +44(0)1865 274024 Fax: +44(0)1865 274027
general.enquiries@education.ox.ac.uk www.education.ox.ac.uk

Director Professor Jo-Anne Baird

[redacted]

14.11.2021

Dea[redacted]

I am writing to enquire about conducting research in your school this academic year. As you know, I am studying for the Master's in Learning and Teaching at Oxford University, supervised by Katy Granville-Chapman. In my final research project 'To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory and will this increase pupil motivation in the classroom?' I will explore the link between teacher-pupil relationships and motivation in the classroom.

The research will take place in two Year 5 classes and will focus on how pupils and teachers perceive their relationships with each other and will begin to develop an understanding of pupil motivation levels in the classroom. The research will provide teacher training on attachment theory and aim to improve teacher awareness of the impact of attachment disorders and difficulties on building secure relationships. With this knowledge in place, the research will seek to discover whether teacher-pupil relationships can be improved and if pupil motivation levels can be improved simultaneously.

By participating in the research, the school would be contributing to a project that will deepen understanding of the potential link between attachment disorders, pupil-teacher relationships, and pupil motivation in the classroom.

I hope to conduct this research between January 2022 and April 2022. I would interview teachers and pupils to obtain their views and opinions of teacher-pupil relationships and motivation levels. I would complete a training session with Year 5 teachers and implement a 6-week intervention in the classroom. During this time, I would complete observations of pupils and students in the classroom. I would also ask pupils to complete a motivation questionnaire at the start of the research and at the end of the research to test any potential improvements.

Oxford University has strict ethical procedures on conducting ethical research, consistent with current British Educational Research Association guidelines. The University also recognises, however, that my study is a piece of practitioner research, and that schools already operate with the highest ethical standards. Therefore only your formal consent as headteacher is necessary, and not that of individual parents or staff. However, throughout the research, students and other teachers will be able to refuse to participate in any research activities at any time.

All participants, including students, teacher and the school, would be made anonymous in all research reports. The data collected would be kept strictly confidential, available only to my supervisor Katy Granville-Chapman (katy.granville-chapman@wolfson.ox.ac.uk) and me, and only used for academic purposes. It will be kept for as long as it has academic value.

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Director Professor Jo-Anne Baird

If you are happy for me to proceed with this study, please confirm that using the attached reply form. If you have any concerns or need more information about what is involved, please contact me or my supervisor. Further, if you have any questions about this ethics process at any time, please contact the chair of the department's research ethics committee, though: research.office@education.ox.ac.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Appendix 6 – Head Teacher's Approval

To what extent does a teacher CPD intervention improve teacher knowledge and application of attachment theory and will this increase pupil motivation in the classroom?

[redacted]
University of Oxford, Department of Education

[redacted]

☐ We do not wish to participate in this project.

☐ We would like to find out more about this project.

X We would like to take part in this project.



_____

_____
Head teacher's signature

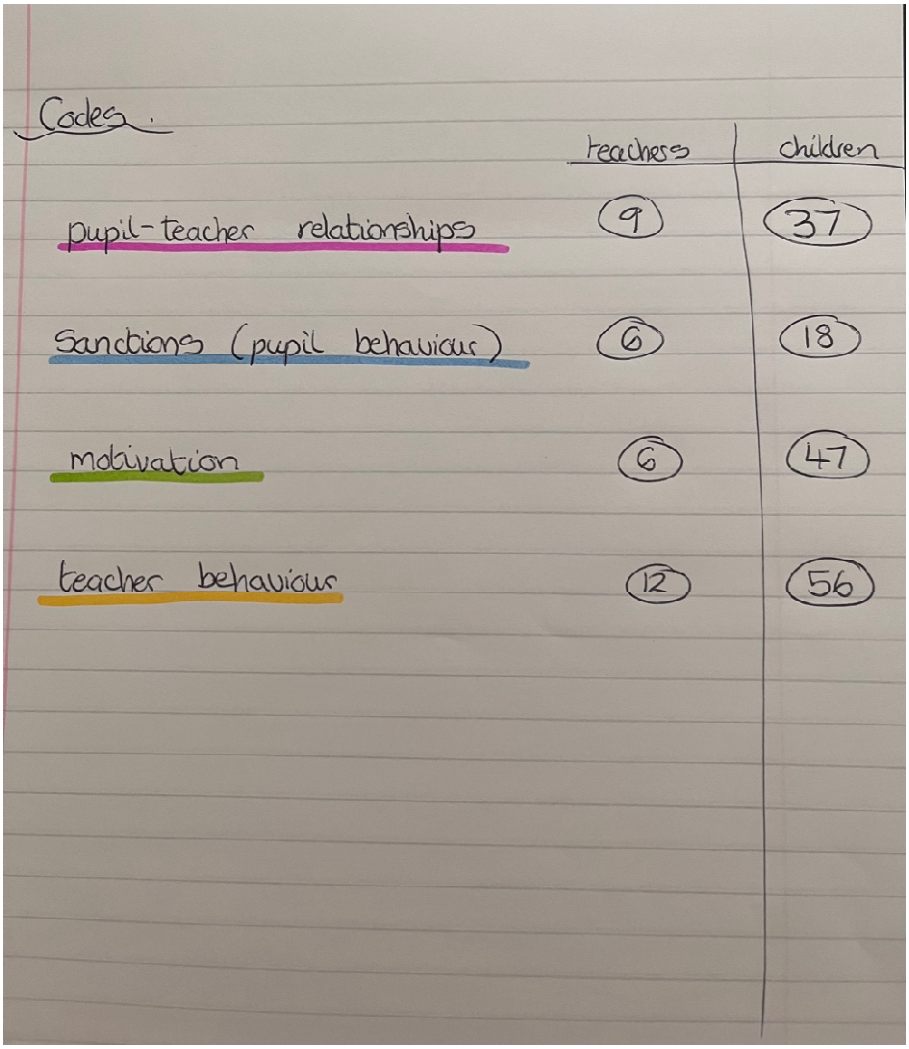
Please return this form to me.
Thank you for your help.

Appendix 7 – Letter to Parents (emailed to Head Teacher to send out in newsletter)

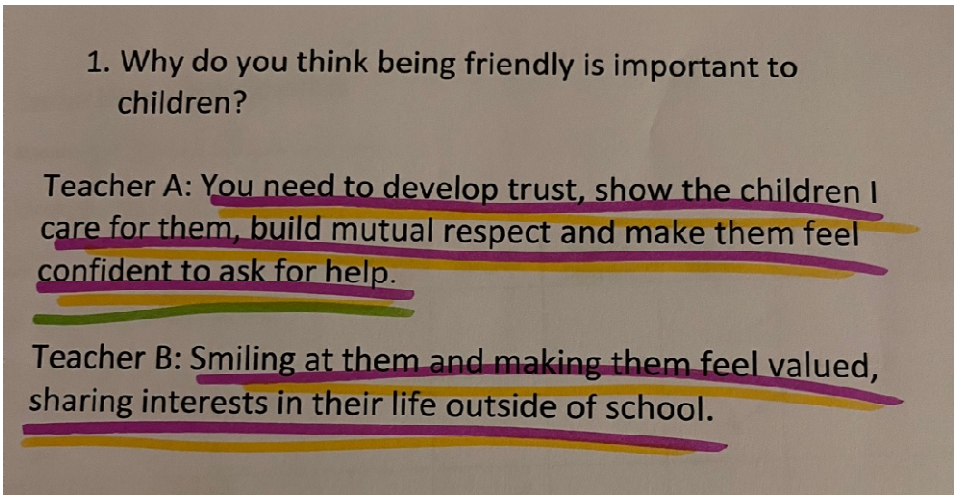
Dear Parents,

My name is [redacted] and I am currently studying a Masters in Learning and Teaching at Oxford University. I will be completing a small-scale research project with Year 5 pupils at [redacted] between January and March 2022. The aim of the project is to develop understanding of pupil-teacher relationships and motivation in the classroom. Pupils will be participating in a short questionnaire and some group interviews. All of the data collected will be anonymous and my project has been approved by the ethical committee at Oxford. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions: [redacted]

Appendix 8 – Codes for Interview Data



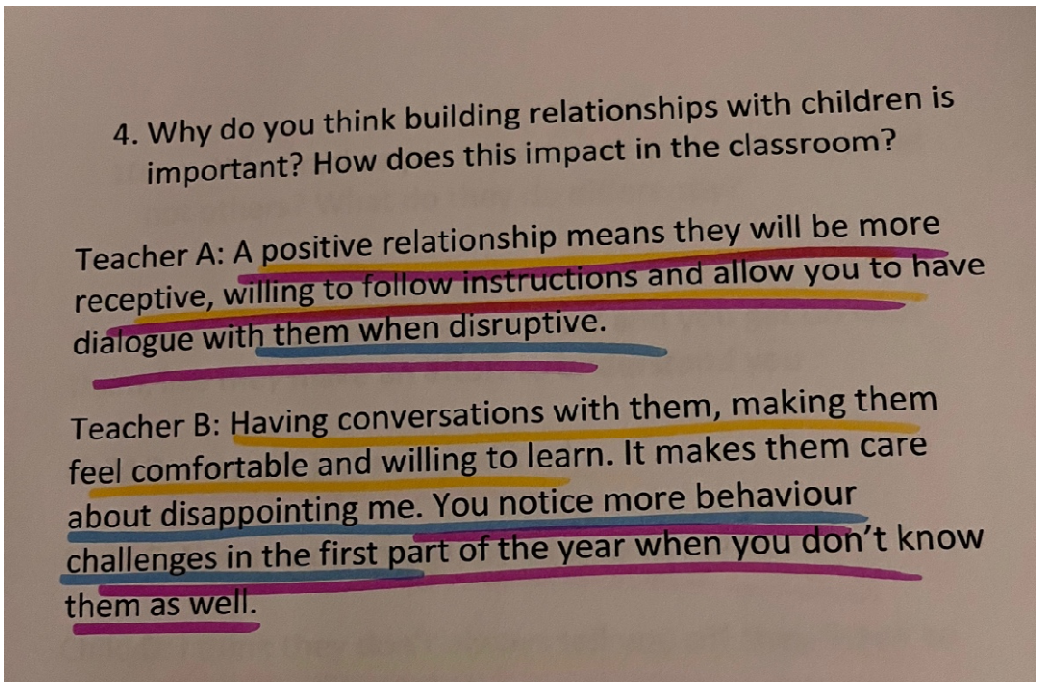
Appendix 9– Coded Interview Question Examples



1. Why do you think being friendly is important to children?

Teacher A: You need to develop trust, show the children I care for them, build mutual respect and make them feel confident to ask for help.

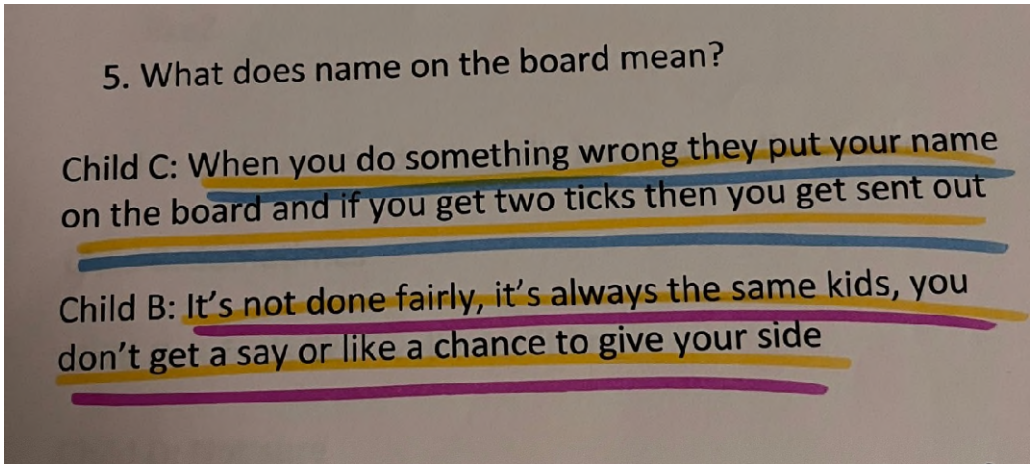
Teacher B: Smiling at them and making them feel valued, sharing interests in their life outside of school.



4. Why do you think building relationships with children is important? How does this impact in the classroom?

Teacher A: A positive relationship means they will be more receptive, willing to follow instructions and allow you to have dialogue with them when disruptive.

Teacher B: Having conversations with them, making them feel comfortable and willing to learn. It makes them care about disappointing me. You notice more behaviour challenges in the first part of the year when you don't know them as well.



5. What does name on the board mean?

Child C: When you do something wrong they put your name on the board and if you get two ticks then you get sent out

Child B: It's not done fairly, it's always the same kids, you don't get a say or like a chance to give your side

Child F: Yeah you just want them to be nice and like not shout at you or make you feel stupid

2. Do you think it is important for your class teacher to be friendly? Why?

Child A; Yes, otherwise you won't want to come to school

Child B: Yeah I think so

Child C: Yeah they shouldn't call out your mistakes

Child D: Like telling you off in front of the class isn't friendly is it

Child E: I think if they aren't it can affect your confidence

2. Do you think it is important for your class teacher to be friendly? Why?

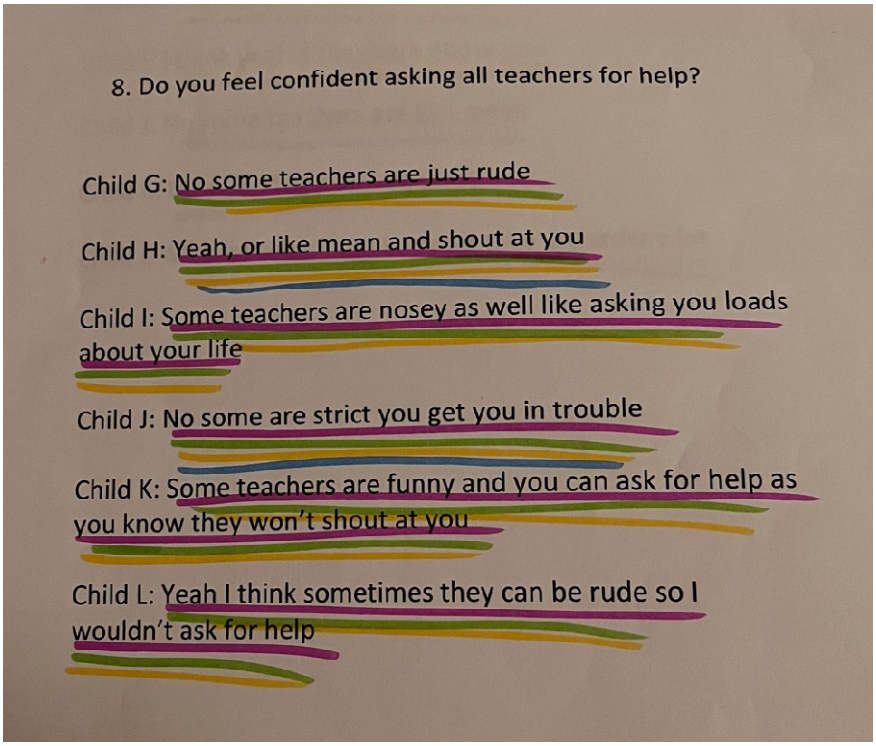
Child A; Yes, otherwise you won't want to come to school

Child B: Yeah I think so

Child C: Yeah they shouldn't call out your mistakes

Child D: Like telling you off in front of the class isn't friendly is it

Child E: I think if they aren't it can affect your confidence



8. Do you feel confident asking all teachers for help?

Child G: No some teachers are just rude

Child H: Yeah, or like mean and shout at you

Child I: Some teachers are nosey as well like asking you loads about your life

Child J: No some are strict you get you in trouble

Child K: Some teachers are funny and you can ask for help as you know they won't shout at you

Child L: Yeah I think sometimes they can be rude so I wouldn't ask for help

Appendix 10– Observation Notes

Observation 1

Date: 24th February 2022	
Time: 09:46	
Location: XXX classroom	
Lesson/subject: RSE lesson, teacher led question and answer activity	
Adults Present: Laura Grace (researcher), Teacher, Teaching Assistant	
Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
The teacher uses positive praise and encouragement "well linked to other learning" "thank you for sharing that, great idea" "what a good question"	Not all children listening, some are flicking pencils to each other over the table.
The teacher laughs at a pupil's comment and involves the other children in enjoying the joke. The pupil who had made the comment is smiling.	The child seems noticeably happy by this interaction with his teacher.
The teacher shares personal story to relate to a pupil comment about being tired and falling asleep. "my son fell asleep at Lego Land, can you believe that?". This made the majority of the class laugh.	The teacher is working hard on sharing some appropriate life story with the class – use of one of the strategies from the CPD training. This will support the relationship development as the children will feel like they know their teacher and can relate to them.

Observation 2

Date: 24th February 2022	
Time: 10:13	
Location: XXX classroom	
Lesson/subject: Maths lesson	
Adults Present: Laura Grace (researcher), Teacher, Teaching Assistant	
Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
Use of positive praise to reward and encourage children. "I like what you did there" "good idea" "well done, yes I like it"	Most of the children had hands up and to offer their ideas. About 5 children were looking in the wrong direction or had their head on the table.
Use of a 'life line' (chance to ask a friend for help) for a child who is stuck on a question. Child smiled when friend helped them.	The child looked relieved after their friend helped.
Links to personal life and personal qualities of both the teacher and the pupils. "We all know that teacher XXX loves chocolate". The children began to laugh.	Children did seem to enjoy this and some made specific comments about which chocolate the teacher enjoyed.
"Child X I know you really like sharing your chocolates and sweets with your friends because I've seen you be so kind but for this maths problem we want to see if we can have the most chocolate for ourselves".	Shows good knowledge of the child and is praising them whilst giving them a different instruction to follow. Another strategy mentioned in the CPD training.

Observation 3

Date: 3rd March 2022	
Time: 11:00	
Location: XXX classroom	
Lesson/subject: Preparing for English lesson just after break time	
Adults Present: Laura Grace (researcher), Teacher	
Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
A child is upset and crying. The teacher asks "I can see that you look upset, can I help?" The child shrugs and says no. Another child offers to answer and says "XX was upset and raging at the scavenger hunt at break time because XXX did not know how to spell the title thing". The teacher says "I wonder if you are feeling frustrated that the scavenger hunt was challenging". The children nods but still crying. The teacher asks "put your hand up if you've ever felt frustrated at something when it was hard". All of the class and the teacher then put their hands up. "See, everyone can feel frustrated sometimes it is a normal feeling. How can we solve this? Would you like a friend to help you at lunch time?" The child nods again and has now stopped crying. "Who can help XX at lunch time?" half the class raise their hand and the child smiles and chooses one. A few moments later, the teacher asked the child "how do you feel now?". The child said "happy".	The teacher has noticed a child upset and asked them. Perhaps this was quite public? Emotion coaching strategies in use here. Naming the emotion and supporting problem solving. Empathy and compassion are evident. The child stopped crying and looked at the others who also get frustrated with a smile – supporting self-esteem. Problem solved and child feels regulated.

Observation 4

Date: 3rd March 2022	
Time: 13:04	
Location: XXX classroom	
Lesson/subject: After lunch time, preparation for next lesson	
Adults Present: Laura Grace (researcher), Teacher, teaching assistant	
Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
A child is upset and crying. The teacher asks "Would you like to talk about it?" The child nods and the teacher says "lets step outside quickly". The teacher says "Please let me help if you're feeling sad, what happened?". The child says "at lunch all the boys were pushing me and I didn't get a chance to play football because they kept pushing me out of the way when I went to get the ball". The child begins to cry. The teacher says "I can see that you are feeling left out of the game and that must be hard for you". The child nods. "Tomorrow, before lunch, I will remind all of the children to be more aware of their bodies and not to push and exclude others. I will ask speak to the lunch time supervisors to let me know so they can keep an eye out. What other things can we do to make this better?" The children said "can I play with my friends separately?". The teacher says "yes of course you can use a different part of the playground, but there might not always be a spare ball. So you'll need to share". The child said "yeah that's alright, thanks XXX"	The teacher has noticed a child upset and asked them in a quiet and private space. Options given to talk about it or not. Emotion coaching strategies in use here. Naming the emotion and supporting problem solving. Empathy and compassion are evident. The children became less upset and was able to offer an idea to problem solve. The child came up with some problem solving solutions and left the conversation happy and smiling with a solution to support them next time.

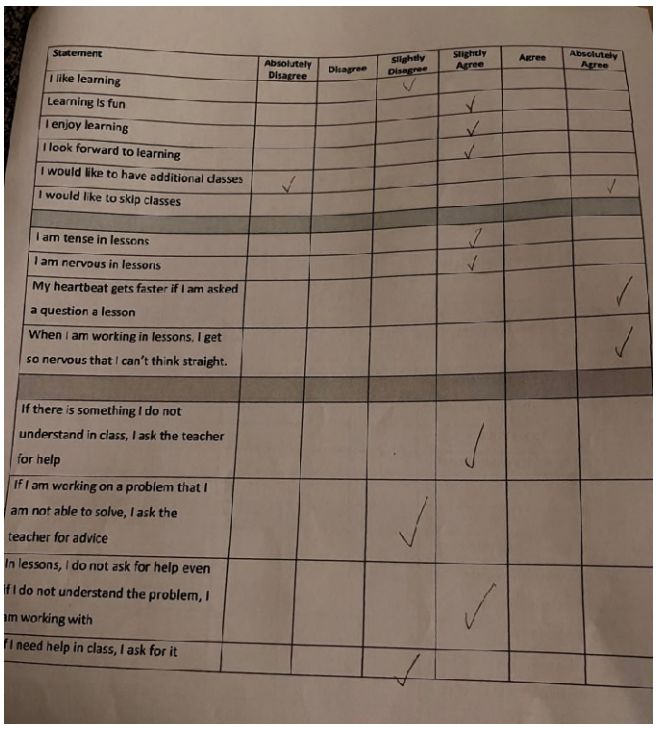
Observation 5

Date: 10rd March 2022	
Time: 10:23	
Location: XXX classroom	
Lesson/subject: English lesson	
Adults Present: Laura Grace (researcher), Teacher, teaching assistant	
Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
The children are given a task to stick in a sheet of paper into their books. There are not enough glue sticks for one each. A child snatches the glue from another child who was using it. The other child gets upset and calls for the teacher. The teacher says "I can understand that it might be frustrating for you to share the glue sticks as you want to get on with the task. But we need to be mindful of snatching from others as it can make them feel sad and annoyed". The child stops and gives back the glue. "Thank you for understanding, XXX can you give the glue to XXX when you've finished using it?".	The teacher was called to support this situation. Shows that they feel confident the teacher can help them. They can ask for support. Emotion coaching strategies in use here. Naming the emotion and supporting problem solving. Empathy and compassion are evident. The child changed their behaviour and waited their turn. Shows respect for their teacher and other pupil.

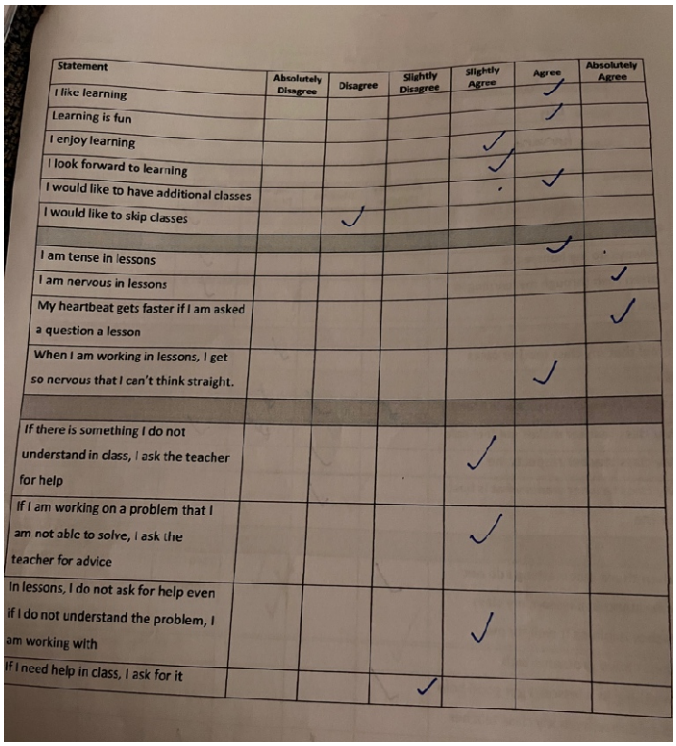
Observation 6

Date: 10rd March 2022	
Time: 10:23	
Location: XXX classroom	
Lesson/subject: English lesson	
Adults Present: Laura Grace (researcher), Teacher, teaching assistant	
Descriptive Notes	**Reflective Notes**
Group of pupils are having a discussion among themselves and are not engaged in the lesson. The teacher looks over and calls one of their names. They all stop chatting. When the teacher continues, they carry on talking. The teacher continues to look over to the group. The teacher then calls a number of names of children in the group and says "you have not been listening to the lesson and are talking over me which is rude. Your names are going on the board". The teacher then writes the names of the children on the board. The children look at each other and one or two of them blush. They stop talking.	The children are not listening to their teacher during the lesson – could this demonstrate a lack of respect for their teacher? The children ignore the teacher's request to stop talk. Perhaps demonstrating a lack of respect or interest in the lesson. The teacher does not use emotion coaching strategies or attempt to understand why they might be disengaged. The teacher uses a behaviour sanction to stop the presenting behaviour. The children stop talking – they are concerned for the consequences of this sanction. Must have been used before to have this impact.

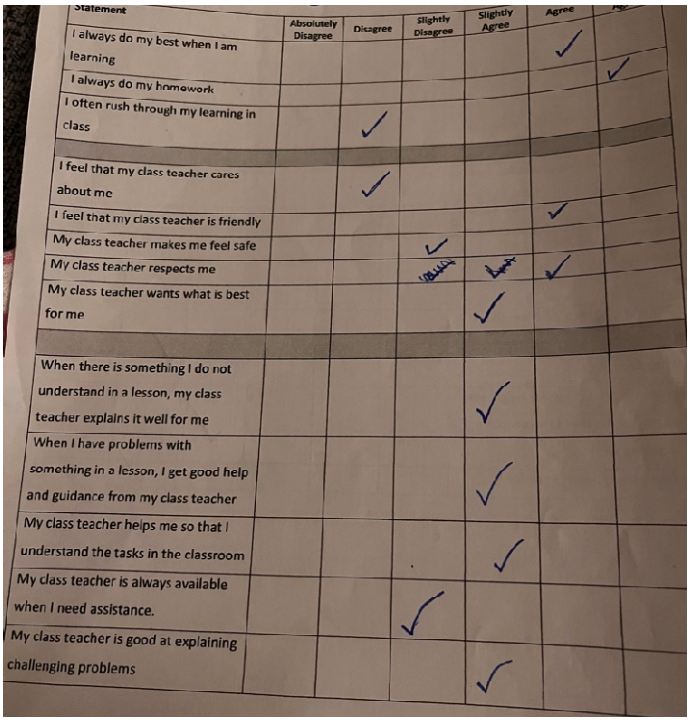
Appendix 11 – Photos Examples of Second Questionnaire Data



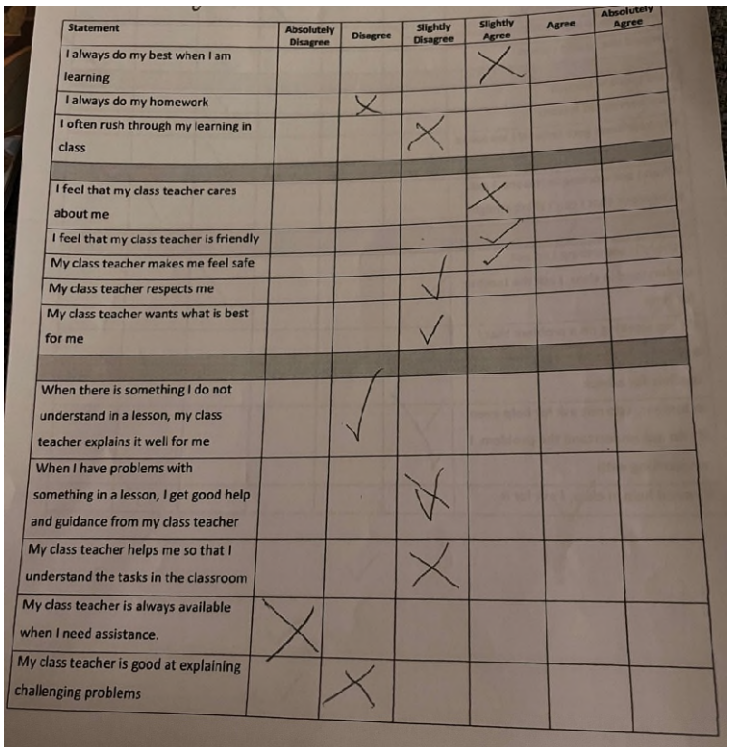
Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I like learning			✓			
Learning is fun				✓		
I enjoy learning				✓		
I look forward to learning				✓		
I would like to have additional classes	✓					
I would like to skip classes						✓
I am tense in lessons				✓		
I am nervous in lessons				✓		
My heartbeat gets faster if I am asked a question a lesson						✓
When I am working in lessons, I get so nervous that I can't think straight.						✓
If there is something I do not understand in class, I ask the teacher for help				✓		
If I am working on a problem that I am not able to solve, I ask the teacher for advice			✓			
In lessons, I do not ask for help even if I do not understand the problem, I am working with				✓		
If I need help in class, I ask for it			✓			



Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I like learning					✓	
Learning is fun					✓	
I enjoy learning				✓		
I look forward to learning				✓		
I would like to have additional classes					✓	
I would like to skip classes		✓				
I am tense in lessons					✓	
I am nervous in lessons						✓
My heartbeat gets faster if I am asked a question a lesson						✓
When I am working in lessons, I get so nervous that I can't think straight.					✓	
If there is something I do not understand in class, I ask the teacher for help				✓		
If I am working on a problem that I am not able to solve, I ask the teacher for advice				✓		
In lessons, I do not ask for help even if I do not understand the problem, I am working with				✓		
If I need help in class, I ask for it			✓			



Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	
I always do my best when I am learning					✓	
I always do my homework						✓
I often rush through my learning in class		✓				
I feel that my class teacher cares about me		✓				
I feel that my class teacher is friendly					✓	
My class teacher makes me feel safe			✓			
My class teacher respects me					✓	
My class teacher wants what is best for me				✓		
When there is something I do not understand in a lesson, my class teacher explains it well for me				✓		
When I have problems with something in a lesson, I get good help and guidance from my class teacher				✓		
My class teacher helps me so that I understand the tasks in the classroom				✓		
My class teacher is always available when I need assistance.			✓			
My class teacher is good at explaining challenging problems				✓		



Statement	Absolutely Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Absolutely Agree
I always do my best when I am learning				X		
I always do my homework		X				
I often rush through my learning in class			X			
I feel that my class teacher cares about me				X		
I feel that my class teacher is friendly				✓		
My class teacher makes me feel safe				✓		
My class teacher respects me			✓			
My class teacher wants what is best for me			✓			
When there is something I do not understand in a lesson, my class teacher explains it well for me		✓				
When I have problems with something in a lesson, I get good help and guidance from my class teacher			X			
My class teacher helps me so that I understand the tasks in the classroom			X			
My class teacher is always available when I need assistance.	X					
My class teacher is good at explaining challenging problems		X				