INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON,
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHLOGY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**How schools and youth provision support the wellbeing of all young
people and lesbian, gay and bisexual young people in particular.**

Sarah Judith Katherine Lemkin

July 2012

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
The Institute of Education, University of London, for the Doctorate in
Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology.

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is my own.

Signed: _Judith Henke_

ABSTRACT

There is significant evidence of the difficulties experienced by Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB) young people and the negative impact of those difficulties. It is argued that the psychological difficulties that some LGB young people experience are through the internalisation of heteronormative social messages and thus emphasis should be placed on changing the social context in order to promote the wellbeing of LGB young people. This focus on wellbeing mirrors interest in promoting the wellbeing of all young people. The current study drew on a Positive Psychology framework to explore support for the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular in secondary schools and youth provision.

A case study approach was adopted. The site of the study was an area in a Local Authority in the South East of England with high levels of deprivation. The settings were a secondary school and a LGB youth group. Individual interviews were conducted with three school staff, the LGB group youth worker and an Educational Psychologist. Group interviews were conducted with pupils from Years 8, 10 and 12 and a group of LGB young people attending the LGB youth group. Interview transcripts were analysed for common themes using thematic analysis.

Findings were discussed in terms of five important processes considered to promote wellbeing; 'promoting equality', 'preventing harm', 'supporting relationships', 'meeting needs' and 'understanding sexualities'. Although ways in which schools can promote wellbeing were reported, a number of difficulties were also reported. Thus, the Positive Psychology framework was adjusted to incorporate both what was supportive of as well as what compromised wellbeing. It is argued that those processes informed by convivial practices promote wellbeing and those informed by heteronormative practices compromise the wellbeing of LGB young people.

Implications for Educational Psychologists' practice were discussed in terms of supporting schools and other agencies to promote convivial practices and

reduce heteronormative practices in order to support the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank all the young people and staff who took part in the interviews, without which this study would not have been possible.

My thanks too go to Dr Ian Warwick, my academic supervisor at the Institute of Education (IOE), and Dr Martin Cook and Dr Ioanna Bakopoulou, my EP supervisors at the IOE. They provided ongoing support, encouragement and advice, all of which was invaluable throughout the development and writing of this thesis. Thank you also to Jane Birnie, my EP supervisor in my Local Authority for her unwavering support and faith.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, friends and work colleagues who have always been on hand to lend an encouraging and sympathetic ear over the last few years.

CONTENTS

Chapter 1:Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an introduction to the current thesis, including the main aspects of the background and rationale of the study, as well as details of the research questions and methodology involved. Lastly, an outline of the organisational structure of the overall thesis will be provided.

1.1 Background to the Study

In his book 'The New Gay Teenager', Savin-Williams (2005) wrote that modern young people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual, " are in the forefront of what can be called a 'postgay' era in which same sex individuals pursue diverse personal and political goals whether they be a desire to blend into mainstream society or a fight to radically restructure modern discourse about sexuality" (p.222).

In contrast to this description of a 'postgay' era there is significant evidence of the difficulties experienced by LGB young people and the long-term impact of those difficulties, particularly related to homophobia. A number of studies have found that many LGB young people have experienced harassment and violence (Rivers, 2001;Hunt & Jensen, 2007). Furthermore, there have been findings of significant levels of young lesbians and young gay men who have considered or attempted suicide (D'Augelli, Herschberger & Pilkington, 2001; Paul, Catania, Pollack, Moskowtiz, Canchola, Mills, Binson, & Stall, 2002; Russell, 2003; Remafedi, French, Story, Resnick & Blum, 1998). Despite these findings, questions of how to respond to homophobia have only recently reached school agendas and public policy. Furthermore, this is not consistent in all educational settings or even within the same setting (Epstein, Hewitt, Leonard, Mauthner & Watkins, 2007).

However, recently there has been interest in moving beyond a focus on difficulties experienced by LGB young people to a consideration of the context in which LGB young people live and study. The notion that the starting point for research into education and LGB young people should be suicide statistics

has been questioned because it presents this group of young people as an object of pathos (Rasmussen, 2006). Rather, it is considered that the psychological difficulties that some LGB young people experience are through internalisation of negative social messages Coyle (1998). Hence, it is viewed as more ethical to change the social context that devalues LGB sexualities rather than work to undo the negative effects of internalised messages (Coyle, 1998). These views echo recent constructions of sexuality in terms of emotional wellbeing and social justice (Warwick, 2007).

This shift towards emotional wellbeing and social justice for LGB young people is also reflected in recent legislation and guidance as well as increased interest in the wellbeing of all young people. At a national level in the UK there has been relatively recent legislation relating to the equal rights of LGB adults and young people (Sexual Offences Amendment Act, 2000; Equality Act, 2010). However, as Weeks (2007, p.186) argued, formal equality under the law has limited power unless the inequalities in power in daily life are addressed. The shift in focus for work with LGB young people to the social context is mirrored in increased interest in support for the wellbeing of all young people and how schools and Children's Services can promote this. Since the late 1990s there has been much interest in children and young people's wellbeing (Coleman, 2009). This has led to a number of policy initiatives relating to how schools and provision for children and young people can promote wellbeing and how this fits in with other responsibilities.

The increased interest in wellbeing is also mirrored in recent calls within psychology to focus on strength and virtue rather than the traditional focus on the study of pathology, weakness, and damage (Seligman, Ernst, Gilham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009). It is argued that psychology is focused on repairing a deficit model of functioning which ignores well functioning organisations. Seligman et al. (2009) call for a positive psychology approach to understanding well functioning institutions and communities.

A number of studies have investigated school factors considered effective in promoting the wellbeing of all pupils (Durlak & Wells, 1997; Wells, Barlow &

10

Stewart-Brown, 2003; Browne, Gafni, Roberts, Byrne & Majumdar, 2004; Green, Howes, Waters, Maher & Oberklaid, 2005) as well as the wellbeing of LGB pupils and young people (Davis, Saltzburg & Locke, 2009; Goodenow, Szalacha & Westheimer, 2006; Orban 2004). There are a number of common themes in these two streams of research, most notably the importance of an inclusive whole school ethos. With regards to LGB pupils, this echoes the importance of the social context, as noted earlier. However, whilst there are some relevant findings on how to promote wellbeing, most of the studies have been conducted in the U.S.A. and Australia (Coleman 2009; Maxwell, Aggleton, Warwick, Yankah, Hill & Mehmedbegovic, 2008) and few have explored young people's views (Coleman, 2009). Furthermore, little research has investigated which factors support both the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular.

With regards to Educational Psychology (EP) support for LGB young people, work with organisations is considered likely to be an effective approach because it is consistent with the eco-systemic approach underpinning EP practice (Monsen and Bayley, 2007). There has, however, been little research on LGB young people in the EP field (Monsen and Bayley, 2007). With regards to positive psychology, Gersch (2009) has proposed that it is vital EPs recognise the importance of using this approach because it is a useful tool to support the development of an education and youth environment in which all young people can benefit.

1.2 Rationale for the Current Study

A focus on how schools and youth settings support the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils and young people in particular could give some insight into what is considered effective in one particular area of the UK. Furthermore, it was considered a positive psychology frame would be useful in exploring those school level processes that are considered to support wellbeing.

The current study has the potential to enhance EPs' support of all young people and LGB young people in particular in secondary schools and youth

setting provision. With the evidence from the study, EPs may facilitate and promote a clearer understanding of the processes which can promote wellbeing.

1.3 Research Questions and Methods

The study aimed to explore the following research questions (RQs):

1. How have secondary schools supported the wellbeing of young people in general and of LGB young people in particular?

2 (i). What forms of support are perceived to be most helpful for the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular in secondary schools in a Local Authority in the South East of England by LGB young people, by pupils, by school staff and by Children's Services Professionals?

(ii). How can separate youth provision support the wellbeing of LGB young people?

3. What might be the implications of these findings for improving support for all young people and LGB young people in particular in secondary schools in a Local Authority in the South East of England?

The study was underpinned by an interpretative perspective because this approach enabled the researcher to be open to hearing the voices of the various perspectives. Exploration of RQ1 involved a review of the literature relating to the wellbeing of pupils in secondary schools. RQ2 was explored using a case study approach. RQ3 involved discussions of the implications of the findings for secondary schools and youth settings in the local authority and EP practice.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 outlines the relevant literature relating to how secondary schools support the wellbeing of all young people

and LGB young people in particular before finishing with a rationale for the current study. Chapter 3 provides an account of the methods used. This includes the theoretical background to the study, the research strategy and description of how the information was collected. It then describes how the information was analysed, how trustworthiness was established and discussion of the ethical considerations. The findings of the analysis are presented in Chapter 4. Finally Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings as well as consideration of possible professional implications of the study and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following chapter outlines the literature relevant to the research questions of the current study. It aims to summarise and analyse previous research and provide a legitimate basis for undertaking the current study.

2.1 Sexual Identity

The current language in use in the UK to describe sexual diversity is framed in a myriad of ways. There are no agreed definitions of the terms used or even whether identity categories should be used at all (Clarke, Ellis, Peel & Riggs, 2010, p. 5). Some theorists consider that sexual identity categories are important so as to, for example, help give people a voice or as a means of protecting rights (Clarke et al., p. 5). Others, such as queer theorists, argue that identity categories are instruments of regulation and normalisation (Butler, 1990, p. 13-14). Recently, acronyms such as LGBT and have been used (Clarke et al., 2010, p. 5). These represent a collective abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Lengthier versions include LGBTQ to embrace people who identify as queer and LGBTQQIA to include queer, questioning, intersex and asexual identities (Clarke et al., 2010, p. 5).

Savin-Williams and Cohen (1996) espouse that sexual identity is a term an individual assigns to himself or herself based on the most salient sexual aspects of his or her life including sexual attractions, fantasies, desires, behaviours, and relationships. They further outline that sexual identity provides meaning and significance to the configuration of feelings, perceptions, and cognitions that an individual has about the various domains of sexuality in her or his life (Savin-Williams & Cohen, 1996, p.672).

However, some young people are unwilling to adopt labels (Savin-Williams, 2005). There are many reasons why young people may reject labels. Some do so " in defiance of social identity labels which suggest the primacy of sexuality in their personal identities" (Cohler & Hammack, 2007, p.48). Savin-Williams (2005) has argued that it is now a 'postgay' era in which "same sex

individuals pursue diverse personal and political goals whether they be a desire to blend into mainstream society or a fight to radically restructure modern discourse about sexuality" (p.222). Thus, he argues, sexual identity is no longer central to young people who are same sex attracted. Some are attracted to others of the same sex and/ or engage in same sex sexual practices without self-identifying with a label (Clarke et al., 2010, p. 152). For others sexuality is viewed as fluid (Diamond, 2005).

Whilst there a number of ways in which young people describe or do not describe their sexuality, studies have found that sexual identification labels are still relevant to many young people. A study in the U.S.A. of LGB young people's experiences noted that there are two master narratives; one of 'struggle followed by success' and one of 'emancipation' (Cohler & Hammack, 2007). The latter refers to liberation from the categories of sexual identities consistent with a 'postgay' narrative (Savin-Williams 2005, p. 5). Whilst the study's findings indicated that the context for sexual identity has significantly changed, there was still considered to be a need to manage the impact of social exclusion; same sex desire was still often considered deviant and hence there was still a need for sexual identification labels (Cohler & Hammack, 2007). Another study in the U.S.A. found that 71% of a sample of 2,560 young people self-identified with LGB labels (Russell, Clarke and Clary, 2009). Taking these findings into consideration the present study assumes that many young people in the UK will also identify with these labels and therefore in the present study the terms LGB young people and LGB pupils will be used. Furthermore, within educational research on the lesbian, gay and bisexual and experience 'LGB' has become a common acronym (Gunn, 2010).

With regards to the numbers of young people who are LGB, the measurement of sexual orientation for young people of secondary school age is under-developed (McDermott, 2010). Studies carried out in the U.S. and Australia have found that between 5-11% of young people have reported being attracted to others of the same sex (Hillier, Warr & Haste, 1996; Lindsay, Smith & Rosenthal, 1997; Russell and Consolacion, 2003). With regards to

self-identifying as LGB, less young people tend to report this compared to same sex attraction. A study carried out in the U.S. in 1992 found that 1% of 12-18 year olds defined themselves as bisexual or predominantly homosexual and 11% were unsure about their sexuality (Remafedi, Resnick, Blum & Harris, 1992). However, Remafedi et al. (1992) found that with the passage of time and/or increasing sexual experience, fewer young people expressed uncertainty regarding their sexual identity. Whilst 25% of 12 year olds stated they were unsure of their sexual identity, only 5 % of 18 year olds did so. In addition, whilst 3% of 18 year olds reported engaging in same sex behaviour, only 1% of 12 year olds reported this. (Remafedi et al., 1992). As stated above, for some sexuality is viewed as fluid (Diamond, 2005). However, others identify their sexual orientation in adolescence and this remains relatively fixed into adulthood. In a study of young people under 25 in Northern Ireland, Carolan & Redmond (2003) found that 77 % of the sample realised they were LGB between 10 and 17 years of age.

2.2 Growing up as LGB

There are a number of theories and models that have been proposed regarding how young people come to identify as LGB. From the 1970s until the mid 1980s many stage models of 'homosexual' identification were published. Clarke et al. (2010) write that the most frequently cited of these stage models is that of Cass (1979). This model was based on Cass's (1979) clinical work with lesbians and gay men. The first stage is an awareness of same sex attraction and confusion which may involve sexual behaviour. This then leads to communicating one's sexuality to others known as the 'coming out' process. The final stage is integration of the LGB identity into the self as a whole (Cass, 1979). Stage models focused on the development of a lesbian or gay identity with bisexuality treated as a variant on homosexuality (Clarke, Ellis, Peel and Riggs, 2010, p.155) In the 1990s, work appeared on bisexual identity formation with the most widely cited model being that of Weinberg (1994). The first stage of Weinberg's (1994) model is that of initial confusion involving attraction to both sexes. The second stage involves finding the label 'bisexual' as well as first sexual experiences which are pleasurable with both

sexes. The next stage involves settling into the new identity which involves self-acceptance and self-labelling. This is then followed by continued uncertainty.

Although stage models have been popular, there have been substantial criticisms of them (Clarke, et al, 2010, p. 156). Models are overwhelmingly based on studies with usually men and small sample sizes (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005). In addition, they are based on retrospective data. Furthermore the models are based on studies involving a clinical population. A key criticism of stage models, however, is that they are based on an essentialist understanding of sexuality (Clarke, et al, 2010, p. 156). This approach understands sexuality as an inner 'essence' which an individual either represses, discovers or denies. According to essentialist models sexuality is understood in terms of sexual orientation which is biologically determined or acquired early in life and is fixed and unchanging. A key criticism of essentialist theories is that they present as fact a model of sexuality that is particular amongst Western culture rather than one amongst many (Hegarty, 2003). Furthermore, it is considered that these models inadequately describe the complexities of LGB development and that the evidence base for identity development for contemporary youth are lacking (Lasser, Tharinger & Cloth, 2006).

It is increasingly agreed that sexual identity is often determined by the society and culture an individual grows up in. In the 1980s a contrasting approach to essentialist models was proposed. Social constructionist theorists unravelled the taken for granted status of heterosexuality. The categories of heterosexual and LGB, according to social constructionists, are viewed as categories of historical, cultural and political contexts (Kitzinger, 1987). Whereas essentialist models view sexuality as real, social constructionists view sexuality as an abstract concept which is time and culture dependent. Meaning is understood through language which provides the categories we use to classify events and how new experiences are interpreted. Sexual identity categories are made 'real' through social processes and interactions and the varied conceptualisations of sexuality across time, place and culture.

More recently, Weeks (2010) defined the social construction of sexuality as the "intricate and multiple ways in which our emotions, desires and relationships are shaped by the society we live in". Thus, according to social constructionists young people's experience of LGB adolescent development varies according to the context in which he or she grows up.

In the past ten years, theorists have argued that there is a need to acknowledge that young people are sexually diverse (Savin-Williams, 2005, p. 5; Diamond, 2005) and there are multiple trajectories. One example of this is that for some young people sexuality is fluid. Diamond (2005) found that over an 8-year period 60 % of young people in her study changed sexual identity at least once and 50% gave up the lesbian/ bisexual label at some point. Thus research indicates there is a range of experience for LGB young people and that this is influenced by the contexts they live and study in.

1.3 Difficulties Experienced by LGB Young People

In contrast to Savin-Williams' (2005) claim of a post-gay era, there is a large body of research relating to the difficulties experienced by some LGB young people and the long-term impact of those difficulties, particularly related to 'homophobia'. Studies have found that many LGB young people have experienced homophobic harassment at school (Ellis & High, 2004; Hillier, Dempsey, Harrison, Beale, Matthews & Rosenthal, 1998; Mason & Palmer, 1996; Rivers, 2001; Hunt & Jensen, 2007) with percentages ranging from 30-50%. The higher rates of suicide and depressive symptoms amongst LGB young people have been strongly linked to experiences of homophobia (Lewis, Derlega, Grifen & Krowinski, 2003; Szymanski, Chung & Balsam, 2001). Furthermore, there have been findings of significant levels of young lesbians and young gay men who have considered or attempted suicide (Russell, 2003; D'Augelli et al., 2001; Paul et al., 2002). Homophobia is defined as occurring 'where general bullying behaviours such as verbal and physical intimidation is accompanied by or consists of terms such as gay, lesbian, queer or lezzie by perpetrators' (Douglas, Warwick, Kemp & Whitty, 1997). However, the word 'bullying' is not considered to describe adequately

all homophobic experiences particularly those involving violent acts such as having clothes set alight and being urinated on (Rivers 1996). A number of studies have found that a significant number of LGB young people have experienced harassment (Rivers, 2001; Hunt & Jensen, 2007). For example, a study conducted by the Schools Health Education Unit on behalf of Stonewall found that 65% of LGB young people had experienced direct bullying and in faith schools the figure was 75%. In a retrospective study, it was found that over 68% of participants reported that they had been physically bullied in their youth (Rivers, 2001). Despite these findings, questions of how to respond to homophobia have only relatively recently reached school agendas and public policy compared to addressing bullying more generally. Responses appear not to be consistent in all educational settings or even within the same setting (Epstein et al., 2007) and homophobia can be ignored or not noticed as a problem (Epstein, Hewitt, Leonard, Mauthner & Watkins, 2003, p132-133) with others describing the failure by UK public services to recognise LGB young people as a vulnerable group (Scott, Pringle & Lumsdaine, 2004).

One example of a study that focused on levels of homophobia is a retrospective study carried out by Rivers (2001). Significant levels of bullying at school were reported, although little detail on what can be done to support young LGB people was given. Some respondents, however, were reported to have received support from families and/or the gay community, although this is not explored in the discussion. Rivers (2001) concludes with a call for a societal response to challenge homonegativism.

A more recent study called 'The School Report' (Hunt & Jensen, 2007) was commissioned by Stonewall. Unlike the Rivers (2001) study, the Stonewall report (Hunt & Jensen, 2007) does involve a sample of young people who were in secondary education at the time. As stated above the 'The School Report' found that 65% of LGB young people had experienced direct bullying and in faith schools the figure was 75%. Examples of experiences involved being threatened with violence, having a knife pulled on them and having books thrown at them. However, these statistics need to be viewed in the

context of reports of bullying for all young people. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in England, for example, carried out national annual online surveys for pupils in Year 6, Year 8 and Year 10. These surveys asked young people about various aspects of their lives including bullying. The 'Tell Us' of 2008-9 survey (DCSF, 2009a) found that 48 % of all young people had experienced bullying. Whilst the Stonewall figures are high, the percentage for the general population also remains high. Furthermore, rates of depressive symptoms and suicide found in LGB young people are comparable for victims of other forms of bullying (Rivers, 2006).

The stated aim of 'The School Report' (2007) was to 'find out what school is actually like for young lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the 21st Century'. However, the focus of the report is on young people's experiences of homophobic bullying. While it is important to report these findings, this does not highlight what has been found to be helpful for LGB young people. The report concludes with a set of recommendations to support LGB young people at school. However, these are mostly not drawn from the findings. Having said that, the report noted that young people felt more supported when LGB issues were taught in a way they found positive. However, the study involved a quantitative analysis of questionnaire responses and thus it was not possible to further interrogate what aspects of teaching young people found positive.

It was also found that pupils reported that 50% of teachers did not respond to homophobic bullying. However, details of how the other 50% did respond were not commented on (Hunt & Jensen, 2007). Although it is necessary to highlight the statistics associated with the levels of homophobic bullying in 21st century schools in the UK, it is also important to acknowledge that 50% of the teachers did respond. The report includes quotations from respondents although these are not analysed systematically for themes.

Despite these limitations, the report includes some findings that may indicate how LBG young people can be supported at school. It is stated that young people are much less likely to have been bullied at schools which explicitly state that homophobic bullying is wrong. Furthermore, young people are more

likely to feel welcome at schools which respond to homophobic bullying when it occurs and which have explicit statements about anti-homophobic bullying. An encouraging finding is that over half of young people responding to the survey reported that they could be themselves at school. However, the design did not allow for the researchers to explore what elements of school life may have been associated with this.

In line with the social constructionist view relating to the influence of context on LGB development, a relatively recent shift in the research literature is towards understanding the influence of the social context rather than focusing on homophobic bullying. It is considered that LGB young people's experience of sexuality development is negatively influenced by their social context (Coyle, 1998). As young people come to terms with their sexual orientation, it is thought they have to take into account sociocultural factors relating to homosexuality (customs, policy, and law) as well as the attitudes of significant others (parents, families, and peers) (D'Augelli, 1994). It is argued that the psychological difficulties that some LGB young people experience are through internalisation of negative social messages (Coyle, 1998). Some authors refer to the concept of heteronormativity to understand how negative social messages can impact at an individual level (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). Heteronormativity is defined as existing when heterosexuality is perceived as the norm and is privileged over other sexualities and behaviours, which are deemed to be deviant. Heteronormativity is viewed as a 'celebration' of the socially constructed genders that highlight the difference between men and women and proscribes gender transgression (Chesir-Teran, 2003). It is considered to be 'celebrated' through the institutions and cultural practices that uphold this view (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009).

A study conducted in schools in the U.S.A. found that pupils are the victims of homophobic bullying not because they are attracted to others of the same sex but because they do not conform to socially constructed views of gender roles (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). The authors argued that through these behaviours young people are considered to be compelled to conform to socially constructed norms and thus same sex attraction is marginalised and

stigmatised (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). In contexts where these practices are widespread and institutionally supported, alternative sexual desires are marginalised and negatively sanctioned. Therefore LGB young people may feel stigmatised because their feelings conflict with normative expectations of appropriate sexuality and may develop a sense of difference. During adolescence there can be a need to fit in and a sense of difference may be distressing (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). The stigma may lead to shame and some young people may evaluate themselves negatively or withdraw from forms of social contact to avoid disapproval or rejection (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009).

1.4 Enhancing the Social Context to Support the Wellbeing of LGB Young People

However, it has been found that negative outcomes for LGB pupils can be preventable with a positive school climate and the absence of homophobic bullying (Goodenow et al. 2006; Mufioz-Plaza, Quinn & Rounds 2002). Furthermore, there have been calls for a move away from viewing LGB young people as victims to a shift in focus on changing the social context around the young person (Rasmussen 2006; Coyle, 1998). An emphasis on recognising the psychological impact of harassment and discrimination is considered to drive attention away from a need to get on with social change that will enable young LGB people the freedom to live life as a human being (Ellis, 1999). Rasmussen (2006) questions the notion that the starting point for research into education and LGB matters should be suicide statistics. She argues that this approach presents this group of young people as an object of pathos. Rofes (2004) also challenges the focus on victimisation which represents the lives of LGB people as a 'martyr-target–victim'. A further argument in the research literature states that rather than work to undo the negative effects of internalised messages, it is more ethical to change the social context that devalues LGB sexualities (Coyle 1998); this might be achieved through factual and positive education about sexuality and through ensuring that the wellbeing of LGB young people is promoted (Coyle, 1998). Sexuality is

increasingly being understood in terms of emotional wellbeing and social justice (Warwick, 2007).

1.5 Focus on Wellbeing
1.5.1 Rationale for Focus on Wellbeing

Since the late 1990s there has been much interest in wellbeing in schools (Coleman, 2009). Coleman (2009) argued that this interest followed the publication of a book called 'Emotional Intelligence' by Goleman (1996). Since the mid 1990s there has been interest in mental health promotion in the UK (Coleman, 2009). This followed concerns over levels of mental health problems in young people. The 1999 Office for National Statistics survey of psychological disordered revealed that approximately 10 % of 5 -16 year olds had mental health difficulties. However, statistics on mental health difficulties have changed little. In 2004, 12% of young people aged 11-16 had a clinically diagnosable mental illness (Office for National Statistics, 2004). In addition there has been a growing international momentum for mental health promotion based on mounting evidence for a link between health and educational outcomes and social exclusion (Coleman, 2009). Acheson (1998) argued that schools could play an important role in combatting mental health problems. There is a growing body of evidence that improving school ethos can reduce health risk behaviours. Thus, alongside a call for settings to promote the wellbeing of LGB young people there is a consensus that settings need to promote the wellbeing of all young people. This is accompanied by research into developing an understanding of the features of those settings.

1.5.2 Defining Wellbeing and Positive Psychology

With regards to wellbeing, a number of terms have been used as well as varied definitions of the terms (Counterpoint Research, 2008; Coleman, 2009) and there are calls for a consensus on which terms are used. Coleman (2009) argued that the term 'happiness' is important to raise awareness of wellbeing but is considered too vague a term to be useful scientifically and practically. Another term in common usage is 'emotional literacy' which refers to the skills

involved in understanding ourselves and other people. However, good emotional literacy is not necessarily related to good mental health. Some writers use the term 'mental health'. However, this is used by clinicians and has connotations of mental illness (Maxwell, Yankah, Warwick, Hill, Mehmedbegovic & Aggleton, 2007). Educationalists prefer to use the word 'wellbeing' and thus this term was used in the current study (Farrell, Woods, Lewis, Rooney, Squires & O'Connor, 2006; Maxwell et al., 2007).

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence refers to the three aspects of wellbeing: emotional, psychological and social (NICE, 2009). Coleman (2009) argued that it would be useful if this set of constructs were used to refer to wellbeing. Emotional wellbeing is described as a state that involves maximizing the amount of pleasure and minimising the amount of unpleasant feelings (Keyes, 2009). Psychological wellbeing includes notions of self-acceptance, positive relationships with others and environmental mastery. Self-acceptance includes positive attitudes towards the self. Positive relationships include the ability to cultivate trusting warm relationships with others. Environmental mastery results when individuals recognise personal needs and are permitted to take an active role in getting what they need from the environment (Keyes 2009). Social wellbeing is described as referring to those competencies associated with being members of society, groups, institutions and communities. This includes the extent to which an individual feels he or she belongs to a community or society. Social wellbeing also includes the notion of social coherence which refers to the perception that society is discernable, sensible and predictable (Keyes 2009)

In line with the focus on wellbeing in the current study, it is considered that a useful lens for framing this topic is that of positive psychology. In a study of parents' hopes for their children, it was found that wellbeing was a key wish (Seligman et al., 2009). Seligman et al. (2009) contrasted this with what schools teach; literacy, numeracy, discipline. They argued their findings highlighted the lack of overlap between what parents want and schools offer. Seligman et al. (2009) argued that psychology is not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue.

They wrote that psychology is focused on repairing a deficit model of functioning but this ignores well-functioning organisations. They called for a social science of positive institutions and positive communities.

1.6 Wellbeing: Legislation, Policy and Guidance

In recent years there have been a number of policy initiatives relating to how schools can promote wellbeing and how this fits in with other responsibilities. In addition, there has been relatively recent legislation to improve the equal rights of LGB adults and young people and others at risk of discrimination. In terms of the wellbeing of young people, the Education and Inspections Act (2006) stated that schools have a duty to promote the wellbeing of their pupils. In addition, it demanded that headteachers must determine measures on behaviour and discipline for the school's behaviour policy. The National Curriculum in England is statutory for all young people up to the ages of 16. The Orders for Key Stages 3 and 4 (11-16 years of age) define inclusion as being about 'the active presence, participation and achievement of all pupils in a meaningful and relevant set of learning experiences'. It is stated that learning occurs not only in the classroom but also beyond the classroom. Schools are required to develop whole school approaches to the curriculum and to ensure that it is relevant to young people's experiences.

In 2000, the legal age of consent was changed to 16 for all young people regardless of sexual orientation (Sexual Offences Amendment Act, 2000). In 2005, same sex couples were given the right to enter into Civil Partnerships. This gives legal status and recognition to same sex relationships and many of the legal rights of marriage.

The Equality Act (2010) states that public bodies have a duty to demonstrate how their services, policies and programmes affect persons of relevant characteristics. Previous duties covered age, gender and race. Since April 2011 this has been extended to include age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity services, religion or belief. The Act requires public bodies to eliminate discrimination, provide equality of

opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic'. Thus in line with this duty, schools and Children's Services are now required to demonstrate how they promote equality for persons of 'relevant characteristics' including LGB people.

In addition to statutory requirements aimed to promote equality, there have been recent policy initiatives and guidance aimed to promote the wellbeing of all pupils including LGB pupils. Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) is a non-statutory part of the curriculum (QCA, 2007). It consists of two interrelated programmes of study at Key Stages 3 and 4; personal wellbeing and economic wellbeing. Personal wellbeing draws together personal, social and health education, including sex and relationships education (SRE) and the social and emotional aspects of learning. Key themes are respect for diversity and the importance of combating bullying including homophobic bullying.

Currently the statutory requirements for SRE include knowledge of body parts, reproduction and sexually transmitted infections (QCA, 2007). However, other elements of SRE are non-statutory (QCA, 2007). In January 2010, The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced draft guidance on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE)[1]. This states that SRE must demonstrate awareness of and be responsive to the diverse faith, cultural and family backgrounds of children and young people as well as the abilities, gender and sexual orientation of children and young people (p. 10). It should promote awareness of and respect and understanding for the wide range of practices and beliefs relating to sex and relationships within our society. Discrimination should be discussed and challenged (p. 12). SRE is described as an opportunity to explore the different views that children and young people hold (p. 17) in a safe and supportive learning environment guided by a well-trained teacher. It is considered best taught by specialists (p.

---

[1] In 2011 the Department for Education launched a review of PSHEE including SRE. However, at the time of writing this review is suspended. (http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PHG/0, retrieved 20.06.2012)

16) with one-to-one support available to answer questions of a personal nature as well as informing children and young people about sources of help and advice (p. 7). Those with particular needs should receive good quality education about sex and relationships. Groups include those with English as a Second Language, young people who are LGB or transgender, those from certain black and minority ethnic groups, those with physical, learning or communication difficulties and those who do not attend school or college regularly (p. 7) Furthermore the guidance states that children and young people with particular needs "may want to have at least part of their education in less traditional settings and from educators who have more experience of their particular needs" (p. 32).

A number of initiatives have been set up to facilitate ECM outcomes such as the National Healthy Schools Programme (DH, 2005) and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (DSCF, 2009b). The National Healthy Schools Programme (DH, 2005) was set up to support young people in developing healthy behaviours, reduce health inequalities and to promote social inclusion. It was a joint initiative between the DCSF and the Department of Health with the aim of promoting a whole school approach to health including emotional health and wellbeing, healthy eating, physical activity and PSHE.

In addition to recent legislation that is aimed to create a more equal society there have been guidance documents aimed to reduce homophobia and develop inclusive, safer and more successful school environments for LGB young people. The Healthy Schools Guidance 'Stand Up for Us' (Jennett, 2004), for example, identifies a number of areas in which action should be taken to create a shared supportive school ethos including school culture and environment, leadership and management, curriculum planning and resourcing, pupil voice, support services, staff professional development needs and wellbeing and valuing achievement. The guidance states the most effective way to eliminate homophobic bullying is through a whole school approach. Schools should have an up to date policy and procedures for dealing with homophobia and homophobic bullying. Staff should model the kind of behaviours they want pupils to demonstrate; respect, understanding

and self-awareness. Furthermore, all in the whole school community should be valued as well as the needs of the individual pupil.

Stand Up for Us (Jennett, 2004) also outlines how staff should give support and respect to a pupil who 'comes out', give reassurance that there are many other LGB people in the world, and ensure them the information will be treated as confidential unless there is a safeguarding concern. A further recommendation in this guidance is to create a supportive atmosphere in tutor groups in which diversity is accepted and pupils can trust their tutor (Jennett, 2004). It also advocates that all staff take responsibility for the welfare of pupils and should not to abdicate this role to a school counsellor (Jennett, 2004).

Further guidance on reducing homophobic bullying 'Safe to Learn', states that schools have an important part to play in challenging homophobia (DCSF, 2007). This guidance states that homophobia is fueled by a lack of awareness, and educating young people about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) issues is fundamental to overcoming widely accepted prejudice. Furthermore, when schools respond strongly to homophobic bullying, LGBT students are more likely to feel able to be themselves, more likely to feel part of the school community and more likely to be happy. There are various ways in which schools are recommended they can ensure students of all sexualities feel included and valued; including homophobic bullying in anti-bullying policies, teacher training and the integration of sexual orientation into the curriculum for building knowledge and understanding. Further recommendations include providing information and support for LGB students and taking assertive action against homophobic bullying. (DCSF, 2007).

The recent legislation, guidance and Healthy Schools initiative point to a number of ways in which the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular is supported. These include statutory requirements for more equal rights, the promotion of inclusion and wellbeing, as well as eliminating discrimination, providing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

In addition, guidance and the Healthy Schools Initiative point to the importance of a whole school ethos that values all and highlights the importance of leadership in promoting this. Furthermore, legislation and guidance highlights the importance of a curriculum that reflects the needs of all pupils. Finally, guidance highlights the importance of specialist support for pupils with particular needs such as LGB pupils which may involve local support services.

1.7.1 Promoting Wellbeing: All Pupils

In addition to the legislation, guidance and Healthy Schools initiative discussed above, there have been a number of reviews reporting evidence of the positive impact of school settings on wellbeing (Durlak & Wells, 1997; Wells et al., 2003; Browne et al., 2004; Green et al., 2005).

Durlak and Wells (1997) carried out a systematic review of studies exploring how schools prevent behaviour and social problems. A number of approaches were found to be helpful including modifying the school environment, meeting the needs of individual pupils and helping young people to negotiate stressful transitions.

Wells et al. (2003) carried out a systematic review of studies of universal approaches to mental health promotion in schools in the U.S.A. They concluded that whole school approaches are the most effective in promoting positive mental health when all in the school community are engaged in promoting wellbeing and appreciate and value the commitment to change. These approaches aim to involve changes to the school culture and environment. This may involve changes in teachers' attitude, beliefs and behaviours.

Browne et al. (2004) found that multi-component programmes, an interactive rather than a didactic method of delivery, positive adult-child relationships and targeting children at risk of mental health problems were the most effective ways of promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. The finding relating

to adult- child relationships echoes a recurring theme in the literature on schools relating to the importance of positive relationships between all in the school community (Osterman, 2000)

Green et al. (2005) concluded that promotional rather than preventative strategies were more effective as well as those at a whole school level rather than classroom based programmes. Merrell, Ervin and Gimpel (2006) report that support for wellbeing should be provided at three levels; whole school prevention, small group targeted prevention and tertiary prevention targeted at those who are having problems.

Most of the research in the field of wellbeing has been carried out in the U.S.A. and Australia (Coleman, 2009; Maxwell et al., 2008) and very few reviews have been carried out in the UK (Maxwell et al., 2008). The demographic, policy and service context is different enough to challenge the validity of transferring findings from these contexts (Maxwell et al., 2008). Thus, there is a need for research in contexts in England.

A criticism of mental health promotion research is that it has not taken young people's views sufficiently into account (Coleman, 2009). It is argued that more consideration of young people's views would facilitate more effective interventions. One study that did explore the view of young people involved a correlational study of demographic factors and bullying among same sex and opposite attracted young people (Rivers & Noret, 2008). It was found that same sex young people had many of the same concerns and wishes for their wellbeing as heterosexual young people. Thus, an exploration of the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular would further our understanding of those features of the school environment that could support all pupils and those features that particularly support the wellbeing of LGB pupils.

1.7.2 Promoting Wellbeing: LGB Young People

In contrast to the studies referred to earlier focusing on documenting levels of homophobic bullying, Warwick (2007) conducted a study that explored young people's and staff's perceptions of how to address homophobia at individual, classroom and systemic levels. Staff and pupils at three secondary schools were interviewed. It was found that work to combat homophobia was included through the schools' equal opportunities policies and through the inclusive ethos at the schools. All staff were reported to want to promote inclusion. Pupils considered their school generally to be a safe place and this was thought to be associated with a low level of homophobic bullying. Staff reported that it was important to acknowledge the extent of homophobic bullying and that inservice training (INSET) had been carried out at the schools, although there was a varied level of interest and commitment to the INSET (Warwick 2007). In addition, young people were reported to consider that sexuality should be responded to in a similar way as racism. In terms of support from the senior management, Warwick (2007) found that it was considered important that senior leadership viewed homophobic bullying as a problem. In addition, middle managers contributed through ensuring that schemes of work included work in this area. At a classroom level, a participatory and interactive style of teaching and learning was considered helpful. Warwick (2007) concluded that the responses to homophobia were consistent with characteristics that are considered to be key to effective schools generally. These include leadership from SMT, building of a shared vision and goals, INSET and high expectations for all pupils. Warwick (2007) concludes that although it is important to acknowledge the level of homophobic bullying that still persists, it is also important to communicate and celebrate what is happening in schools to counter homophobic bullying.

In schools and youth settings social relations are structured in formal and informal ways (Biddulph, 2006). Formal ways include examples such as policies, curriculum planning and audits of pupils' needs. Informal ways include interactions between pupils and between pupils and staff. Biddulph (2006) proposed that there are formal and informal ways that wellbeing is

promoted for LGB young people. Biddulph (2006) argued that wellbeing could be achieved through dialogue at a strategic level, a whole school approach combined with classroom activities and teacher values and relationships with pupils. Dialogue is argued to be key to being able to make changes in this area of work. In addition, incorporation of topics relating to the lives of LGB young people and adults into the curriculum has been found to be effective (Biddulph, 2006). Furthermore, he notes that teachers' values can be very influential in the lives of young people; young people may confide in teachers and school staff who they trust and may initiate a 'coming out ' conversation with teachers to begin a discussion of their sexuality.

Despite criticism over lack of research on the views of young people (Coleman, 2009) there have been some studies including young people, most notably in the U.S.A. One correlational study explored the protective factors associated with wellbeing and found that perceptions of school safety correlated positively with psychological wellbeing (Orban, 2004). Goodenow et al. (2006) carried out a quantitative study into the school level factors protective of LGB young people. In the U.S.A. there are a number of schools that have 'Gay Straight Alliance Clubs (GSA)'. These are student led clubs, which are open to young people of all orientation and are aimed to support LGB young people and their heterosexual friends through reducing prejudice and harassment. Schools that had GSAs are rated as having a more supportive climate for LGB young people (Szalacha, 2003). Goodenow et al. (2006) found that at the schools with GSAs young people were less than 50 % likely to report being threatened or injured. In addition, LGB young pupils were much less likely to report being threatened or injured at schools at which there was a member of staff they could speak to (Goodenow et al., 2006). Other programmes that were positively correlated with greater wellbeing among LGB people were peer support groups, anti-bullying policies and staff training on sexual harassment.

Another study carried out in the U.S.A. found that LGB young people consider they need psychological and physical safety to ensure wellbeing (Davis et al., 2009). This involved those in authority standing up for LGB youth. Young

people also said that it was important to have positive self-worth, school based resources such as LGB literature, inclusion of LGB matters in the curriculum and the creation of a normative school environment in which young people could "feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation". A normative environment was considered by the young people to include staff that were willing to stand up for LGB young people and schools being open-minded and accepting of LGB young people. It was found that LGB youth centres offer layers of support including social and emotional support (Davis et al., 2009). Mufioz-Plaza et al. (2002) explored the views of 12 young LGB people on the support they had received; young people reported that addressing health related issues, policies of non-discrimination, staff training and including LGB issues in the curriculum were helpful strategies.

In addition to evidence relating to how schools can support the wellbeing of LGB pupils, Rasmussen (2006) describes educational provision in the U.S.A. specifically set up to provide safe places for young LGB people so traumatised by the school system that they do not attend. In addition to these school based systems there is robust evidence internationally for 'safe spaces' (Davis et al., 2009). However, Rasmussen (2006) questions the value of this type of provision, arguing that educational spaces that separate may operate as a dividing practice. These groups are perceived as 'outgroups' (Rasmussen, 2006). In the UK, LGB Youth Groups are considered to provide an opportunity for LGB young people to 'be themselves' amongst equals (Keogh, 1999). One qualitative study on this topic, carried out in the UK, explored LGB young people's views of a LGB summer school (Crowley, Harre & Lunt, 2007). Themes in the narratives included having an equal footing and being able to speak clearly when they were in the majority, being able to create a network, having the opportunity to flirt in a safe space, having the possibility of non-sexual touch and being able to develop personal resources to cope with the adult challenges of bars and clubs. Crowley et al. (2007) concluded that safe spaces could lead to improved social integration for LGB young people.

Findings from studies on the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils and young people echo the key themes in legislation and guidance described earlier. Key processes that have been found to support wellbeing are a whole school inclusive ethos, psychological and physical safety and supportive relationships. Further key processes are support for pupils at a whole school, group and individual level as well as a focus on discussion. With regards to LGB young people there is controversy over whether 'safe spaces' support wellbeing or lead to 'operate as a dividing practice'.

1.8 Educational Psychology

With reference to the skills base and practice of Educational Psychology, it is considered EPs are well placed to support the wellbeing of LGB young people because they are duty bound to promote inclusive practice (Monsen and Bayley, 2007). EPs work at a number of different levels (Farrell et al., 2006). A review of the EP role in Scotland (SEED 2002) identified the EP's core role as consultation, intervention, assessment, research and training. The review identified these functions at the level of the child, the group (class, family) and system (school, LA). These functions are identified in the British Psychological Society (2006) Occupational Standards as research, assessment, training, the application and communication of psychological skills and knowledge, and management. In a review of the role of EPs, (Farrell et al., 2006) stakeholders were able to distinguish between these various roles in work they considered to have made a distinct difference to children and young people.

With regards to LGB pupils and young people, EPs are well placed to support this group of young people through raising awareness, challenging attitudes and practices and discussion of how schools can best respond at individual, group and systemic levels (Monsen and Bayley, 2007). Monsen and Bayley (2007) argue that the latter is more likely to be an effective approach for EPs because it is consistent with the eco-systemic approach underpinning Educational Psychology practice. EPs work for a significant amount of time at a systemic level to increase capacity of schools and other organisations (Farrell et al., 2006). In addition to work with schools, EPs are well placed to

bridge the gap between health, social services and educational institutions in their work with LGB pupils and young people (Monsen and Bayley, 2007).

With respect to practice and research, there are few studies relating to EP work with LGB young people and there are calls for applied research on this topic (Monsen and Bayley, 2007). One study that did explore the EP role with young LGB young people was carried out by Imich, Bayley and Farley (2001). They describe how an Educational Psychology Service (EPS) developed practices to support the needs of LGB young people. The EPS attended a whole service training session. This involved raising awareness of the needs of LGB young people, sharing experiences of working with LGB pupils and identifying priorities for action relating to the EPS Equalities Action Plan. Fifteen months later a questionnaire was carried out to explore the impact of the training on EP practice. It is not reported how questionnaires were analysed. Most of the items about LGB young people were about them as victims of bullying and not about their rights. Imich et al. (2001) argue that this view of LGB as victims serves to continue the oppression. The critique of EPs' view in this study echoes wider concerns that research studies focus largely on LGB young people as victims, as noted earlier.

A more recent study that did aim to explore how to support LGB young people in school reported teachers' views of the facilitators as well as the barriers to the inclusion of LBG pupils in a Scottish school (McIntyre, 2009). The rationale for this study was that little is known of teachers' views of LGB pupils and issues. However, the study was based on the premise that there is a silence surrounding this topic and the aim of the study was to interrogate this silence. It was reported that teachers did not have the knowledge of the language with which to discuss sexuality, that there was institutional heterosexism and that teachers adopted a liberal approach, which assumed equality for all. During the interview teachers were asked how LGB pupils could be supported in school. It was reported that teachers considered LGB pupils could be supported by treating all young people the same. However, if, as stated above, the aim of the study was to explore the nature of the silence around this topic it may be that the researchers did not interrogate which

35

features of the school environment did support the needs of LGB young people. There may have been aspects of the whole school provision that would support LGB pupils alongside other pupils. It would be useful to explore what aspects of this whole school provision that supported all pupils including LGB pupils but these were not explored. Thus, despite the stated aim of the research as being to report on barriers and facilitators, the study focused mainly on the barriers.

It is argued in the current study that there is a need for research that can inform EP work with LGB pupils and young people highlighting what is considered helpful to promote wellbeing. It is proposed that a positive psychology frame could be a useful approach to facilitate EP work in this area. However, whilst it has been reported that EPs work for a significant amount of time at a systemic level, it is widely considered that the predominant approach in Educational Psychology Services (EPSs) tends to be reactive rather than proactive. EPs often work with schools over concerns regarding individual pupil's difficulties with learning or behaviour (Akin-Little, Little & Delligatti, 2003). Furthermore, it is reported that EPs make a significant contribution to the statutory SEN process, whilst much of what they can offer is not taken up by schools or LAs (DfE, 2011). Many EPs, however, have called for a greater emphasis on working preventatively rather than reactively (Reschly, 2000), reflecting the increasing emphasis on the role of schools in promoting wellbeing. Reschly (2000) argues that EPs should move towards competence enhancement and capacity building which is consistent with the aims of Positive Psychology. As noted earlier the current study is framed in terms of Positive Psychology. Gersch (2009) proposed that it is vital that EPs recognise the importance of using this approach in the profession. He argues that it is a useful tool to support the development of an education and youth environment in which all young people can benefit. With regards to EP work with LGB pupils, it is argued in the current study that a positive psychology frame could be useful to support competence and capacity in schools and other agencies in order to promote the wellbeing of all pupils as well as LGB pupils.

1.9 Aims of Study

This study aimed to further understanding of those individual, groups and school level responses to support the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular building on previous studies on this topic. Coleman (2009) argued that support for wellbeing needs to be informed by the views of young people. This study involved interviews with LGB young people as well as pupils in a school and explored commonalities and possible differences in their perspectives. It also explored the views of senior management staff in one school as well as the views of other Children's Services' staff who work in the local area. It was hoped a study of the perceptions of staff and young people could illuminate what aspects of the school can promote wellbeing amongst all pupils and LGB pupils and young people in particular. An additional aim of the study was to explore the role of LGB youth setting provision in supporting the wellbeing of LGB young people. Through an exploration of the formal and informal expressions that constitute the beliefs, norms and customs (Biddulph, 2006) of the school and youth group it was aimed to explore how these institutions promoted wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular. The study is framed by positive psychology and it is aimed that the findings of the study will add to the social science of positive institutions and positive communities.

A final aim was to further understanding of how support for the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils and young people in particular can inform Educational Psychology practice in the future both locally and in the UK.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter sets out the theoretical background to the research. It delineates the specific approach to data collection and its relation to the research aims and questions. Details of the site, settings and participants and how the information was collected and analysed will then be discussed. Finally, criteria for establishing trustworthiness will be outlined.

3.1 Theoretical Background

A number of philosophical assumptions lead to the choice of research strategy (Cresswell, 2007, p.16). These include ontological and epistemological assumptions. Ontology refers to the nature of reality and social life. Epistemology refers to the forms of knowledge for understanding the world appropriate to the ontological position taken and how this knowledge can be developed. These are informed by the particular paradigm or worldview that represents the beliefs of the researcher (Cresswell, 2007).

Moore (2005) argues that within the social sciences it is increasingly accepted that the social world does not contain universal rules that exist independently of people's own subjective viewpoint. A social constructionist paradigm assumes that 'each person perceives the world differently and creates their own version from events' (Burr, 2003, p.19). These understandings are varied and multiple and the role of the researcher is to explore and analyse the complexity of views (Moore, 2005). Social constructionism considers that subjective meanings are constructed socially and historically formed through social interaction with others and through cultural and historical norms. A research paradigm based on this worldview involves inductively developing a pattern of meaning in the discourse of participants.

The ontological assumption underpinning the current study is a social constructionist worldview of reality that embraces an assumption that there are multiple realities. A qualitative research methodology was used to explore

these multiple versions of reality. In a qualitative study the epistemological stance is one that involves the researcher getting as close as possible to participants' perspectives.

An interpretative social constructionist perspective was adopted because this approach enabled the researcher to be open to hearing the voices of the various perspectives. As stated above, there has been little research in this area. Thus, through talking to those who are affected by and involved in the education of young LGB pupils, it was hoped that an exploration and analysis of the varying perspectives on this topic could be achieved. The research methodology aimed to allow the researcher an opportunity to explore young people's and adults' understanding of appropriate support for the wellbeing of young people in general and LGB young people in particular.

3.2 Research Strategy and Methods

The design involved a case study approach (Yin, 2009). Case studies share similarities with other qualitative methodologies such as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith, Jarman & Osborn, 1999) and Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006). IPA is a method for describing an experience and considers a relatively homogeneous sample to capture differences in experience. As stated above the current study aimed to enable the researcher to hear the voices of various perspectives and thus IPA was not considered because of the focus on a homogeneous sample. Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006) actively seeks out variation in order to develop and substantiate a theory. The current study did not aim to develop a theory, rather it aimed to explore and analyse the complexity of views on the subject of the study. A case study approach, on the other hand, was considered a more useful strategy because it is an exploration of an issue through one or more cases within a bounded system or setting and context (Cresswell, 2007,p.73). It involves an analysis of the bounded system through detailed in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. It is the study of a specific instance designed to illustrate a more general principle which recognises the influence of the context (Yin, 2009) and strives to portray what

it is like to be in a particular situation aiming to catch reality up close and provide a rich description of that situation. This method was considered useful because it would facilitate the exploration and analysis of the complexity of views on this topic.

An exploratory case study approach was employed. The source was semi-structured interviews with individuals and focus groups drawn from a LGB youth group, a secondary school and Children's Services in the bounded system as well as a review of documentation relevant to the local area. Although data was drawn from a number of sources the main source was the LGB youth group and the secondary school rather than from multiple sources of information. Thus the method is defined as a case study approach rather than a case study.

The rationale for choosing to answer the research questions through interviews rather than questionnaires was because it was hoped to modify lines of enquiry. This would not be possible through questionnaires. In addition, interviews allowed for responses to be followed up.

Semi-structured interviews are widely used in flexible, qualitative designs and are particularly useful for studies that focus on meanings of experiences for individuals (Robson, 2002, p.271). Willig (2001) outlined the use of semi-structured interviews that are directed by the research question but which provide the researcher with an opportunity to hear participants talk about aspects of their lives and experience.

This study aimed to answer three research questions. These are: -

RQ1. How have secondary schools supported the wellbeing of pupils in general and of LGB pupils in particular? This is based on the literature review as discussed in Chapter 2.

RQ2 (i). What forms of support are perceived to be most helpful for the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular in

secondary schools in a Local Authority in the South East of England by LGB young people, by young people in schools, by school staff and by Children's Services Professionals?

(ii). How can separate youth provision support the wellbeing of LGB young people?

This research question was explored through a case study approach.

RQ3. What might be the implications of these findings for improving support for LGB pupils in secondary schools in a Local Authority in the South East of England?

Research question 3 will be discussed in Chapter 5. It is based on the literature review presented in chapter 2 and the findings relating to RQ2 presented in the next Chapter.

3.3 Development of Interview Guides

With the overall aim of the study and the research questions as a starting point, five interview guides were developed: LGB young people, school pupils, school staff, EP and LGB Youth Group staff. Interview guides were designed to explore participants' perspectives of how schools support the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular. In addition, they were designed to explore views of support from community provision for LGB young people.

Cresswell (2007) writes that the interview questions should be broad and general so that participants can construct meaning. Questions should be open-ended to enable the researcher to listen carefully to how interviewees construct meaning (Cresswell, 2007).

With these considerations in mind, interview schedules were designed based on the definition of wellbeing, as discussed in Chapter 2. This definition

encompasses emotional, psychological and social aspects of wellbeing (Keyes 2009). Perceptions of support for emotional wellbeing were explored very broadly by asking how school was for the participant, for school pupils or pupils in the local area. Pupils and staff participants were asked to consider how life at school was for LGB young people. This question aimed to explore their perspectives on levels of emotional wellbeing for young LGB people at school. Psychological wellbeing was explored by asking how school supported young people to feel good about themselves (self- acceptance), to be themselves and support to develop good relationships. Support for social wellbeing was explored by asking how young people were supported to feel they belonged and get on well with others. Feeling safe emotionally and physically is not included in the Keyes (2009) definition of wellbeing. However, due to the incidence of all types of bullying in UK school, as outlined in Chapter 2, it was considered important to include questions on incidence and support to reduce it. Participants were also asked what next steps should be taken to support the wellbeing of all and LGB young people in particular.

Interview guides asked school staff to state their area of work and their understanding of wellbeing with respect to young people at the school. They were asked to describe how the school supported all young people's wellbeing and the wellbeing of LGB young people in particular. The EP and LGB Youth Worker were asked broadly the same set of questions except that they were asked about secondary schools in the local area they had knowledge of rather than one particular school. Staff were also asked how they considered LGB youth groups supported the wellbeing of LGB young people.

LGB young people were asked broadly the same set of questions as staff. They were asked how school was for them or had been for those who had left school. They were not asked to define 'wellbeing' because it was considered they might not be familiar with the term. A review of wellbeing research commissioned by the DCSF reported that young people did not know the meaning of the concept (Counterpoint Research, 2008). Young people in the current study were asked how schools supported them to do their best, to feel

safe, to feel good about themselves, to be themselves, to feel that they belong, to help young people get on well with each other and to learn about relationships. In addition, they were asked what makes a good relationship. They were also asked what had been helpful at school when they first realised they were attracted to someone of the same sex. They were asked the same set of questions about the LGB youth group.

Pupils were asked broadly the same set of questions as the youth group young people. However, they were not asked about the LGB youth group or about support for LGB young people the first time they realised they were attracted to someone of their own sex.

The school staff interview schedule was piloted with an Assistant Headteacher at a Secondary School known personally to the researcher. The interview schedules for the LGB young people and the Youth Group Youth Worker were piloted at a LGB youth club in a separate local authority of South East England. School pupil interviews were piloted with young people known personally to the researcher: an interview was carried out with a Year 13 girl from a secondary school in a separate local authority of South East England and a focus group comprising one Year 12 girl and two Year 9 boys from a secondary school in the same local authority as the research study. All interviewees considered the questions made sense to them and they thought the topic was valuable. The LGB youth worker considered it was timely to explore effective practice in schools. He considered there had been significant improvement in terms of legislation promoting the rights of LGB people and the next stage was to develop support in schools.

A number of lessons were learnt from the pilot studies. Following on from this some revisions were made to the interview guides. The LGB Youth Worker cited conversations with parents who were comforted that general concerns about bullying and safety were being responded to. Following this, it was decided to frame the research to parents as an exploration of how schools support the wellbeing of young people who are being bullied for their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay.

The LGB Youth Worker also stated the view that whilst it was timely to focus on what worked for young people, LGB young people still experience a number of difficulties. He and the young person both cited examples of homophobia and heteronormative interactions in schools. This was a key lesson to take into the data collection process because it was important to be open to hearing about difficulties as well as exploring what was viewed as helpful.

Staff in the pilot interviews understood the term 'wellbeing' but young people did not. Following on from this, the purpose of the study was presented to young people as an exploration of how schools support all young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others.

A further change following the pilot interviews related to a question asking how homophobic bullying was dealt with. Staff considered this should be preceded by asking whether there was any bullying of people for their sexuality or for being LGB.

A final lesson taken away from the pilot interviews refers to a list of prompts included in the interview schedule. These were prompts that aimed to encourage participants to reflect on different aspects of the school or LGB youth club. These were included to encourage participants to think broadly about the type of support for wellbeing and to prompt recall. The importance of the use of these prompts in the pilot interviews was reinforced, particularly with young people.

3.4 Selection of and Access to Sites and Participants

The site of the study was an area in a Local Authority in the South East of England where the researcher was employed as a Trainee Educational Psychologist. There is one Lesbian Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth Group in the local area. In December 2009, there was an informal conversation with the youth worker at the LGBT youth group and two young people from the group to discuss whether they would be keen to be involved.

44

All agreed and the young people considered that other young people would also be keen. However, they would not want to inform their parents/carers of their involvement in the study nor did they consider that other members of the group would want this either. In November 2010, there was a further conversation to inform LGB group participants of the purpose of the study, timescales, issues of consent, confidentiality and anonymity. Young people were given the opportunity to ask questions. The interview schedule for the young people was shown to the youth worker to ensure that all questions were considered appropriate.

During the planning of the study there were conversations with EPs which influenced the research design. The study was commissioned by the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) with whom the researcher worked as a Trainee Educational Psychologist. The EPS were keen to understand how to develop support for LGB young people in the Local Authority (LA). Following the researcher's decision to carry out a study on this topic, there was a conversation with the Senior EP for the local area. The Senior EP recounted an incident that had occurred at a local primary school the previous year. The Headteacher at the primary school had discussed different types of families in an assembly including those with parents of the same sex. The Senior EP reported that parents had complained about the assembly and the story had been reported in the local media. With regards to the current study, the Senior EP expressed concern that if the study design included LGB young people at a school, there may be parental complaints and possible negative media coverage. She was concerned that this may lead to criticism of the school, the researcher and the EPS. The Senior EP advised the researcher to interview LGB young people outside of school. In addition, the researcher was advised to ask for approval of the research design from the Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP).

Following instructions from the PEP, the Assistant PEP who had commissioned the study informed the researcher that the study be presented to the school as being part of the Doctoral training and not as one commissioned by the EPS. The Assistant PEP informed the researcher that

senior LA executives might have concerns about the EPS commissioning a study around the wellbeing of LGB young people. The researcher was not concerned about any potential criticism directed at her. However, it was considered that interviewing LGB young people may present a risk to those young people, if there were parental complaints and negative media coverage relating to the study. In addition, it was considered that there may not be support for the school from senior LA executives over any possible criticism of the study. Bearing these constraints in mind, it was decided to interview LGB young people at a LGB youth group only rather than at a school.

On the suggestion of the Senior EP for the area a secondary school was approached in October 2009. The Senior EP considered this school might be relevant to the study because it had a strong pastoral focus. It was considered that a school with a strong pastoral focus would be suitable because of the study's aim to explore what might work in promoting wellbeing. The school was approached about participating in the study. The Inclusion Manager reported that the school was keen to be involved because they wanted to develop this area of work. In October 2010 there was a meeting with two staff from the Leadership Team at the secondary School and a link teacher was identified to liaise with school staff and pupils who would participate in the study. An information letter (Appendix 3) was given to staff to pass on to the Headteacher outlining the rationale and aims of the study, details of the participants to be invited to take part, timescales, and issues of consent, confidentiality and anonymity. The interview schedule for the young people was shown to the staff to ensure all questions were considered appropriate. The link teacher was asked to identify groups of pupils from Years 8, 10 and 12 who were articulate in group discussions and had views on a range of topics. It is acknowledged that the link teacher may have chosen pupils who presented the school in a favourable light and may not have represented the cross section of views held across the pupil body. In addition, the link teacher's understanding of 'articulate' may have influenced their choice of pupils for the study. Pupils with views that did not conform to the school's stated aims may not consider they have a voice and hence may not have been viewed as articulate. Pupils were to be informed that questions would be

46

all about school and not about their own personal experiences of feelings or relationships. After groups were identified by school staff there were brief meetings with each group of pupils. This was to explain the aims of the study and answer any questions. Each pupil was given two information leaflets: one for them and the other for their parents/carers. They were also given a 'Parent Opt In' form (Appendix 2) so that parents/carers could give permission for their son/daughter to take part in the study.

The group of Year 12 pupils included 4 girls and two boys, the Year 10 group included 2 boys and two girls and the Year 8 group consisted of three girls and one boy. The group of LGB young people included one young person who was attending a local secondary school and three young people who had recently left local secondary schools. The young people had all attended different schools.

Staff interviewed in the school included the Head of Year 10/11 and the Head of Humanities. Three other Children's Services professionals working in the area were interviewed including an EP, a youth worker who ran the Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Youth Group and a Community Youth Worker based at the secondary school.

3.5 How Information was Collected

Table 1-Summary of Participants and Interviews

Site	The bounded system for the study was an area in a county in the South East of England where the researcher worked as a trainee Educational Psychologist.	
Settings	1) A secondary school in the area	2) A LGB Youth Group
Participants	1) 4 Young people (3 boys and 1 girl) at the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Group who have identified themselves as LGB	

	2) 6 pupils (2 boys and 4 girls) from Y12 at a secondary school in the area
	3) 4 pupils (2 boys and 2 girls) from Y10 at a secondary school in the area
	4) 4 pupils (1 boy and 3 girls) from Y8 pupils at a secondary school in the area
	5) 2 Staff from Senior Management Team of the secondary school referred to above; the Head of Year 10/11 and the Head of Humanities
	6) 3 other Children's Services professionals working in the area; an Educational Psychologist, a Youth Worker who ran the Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Youth Group and a Community Youth Worker based at the secondary school
How Information was collected	4 focus group interviews with: - 1) LGB young people. (1 hour) 2) Y12 pupils (50 minutes) 3) Y10 pupils (40 minutes) 4) Y8 pupils (40 minutes) 5 individual semi-structured interviews with: - 5) School Senior Management Team Staff (45 minutes.) 6) Children's Services professionals (1 hour). A review of documentation relevant to the site.

The site of the study was an area in a county in the South East of England. It has a varied demography, however it has high levels in indicators of socio-economic deprivation. The 2009 Health profile produced by the Department of Health reported that a number of health indicators were significantly worse in

this area compared with the average in England[2]. These indicators included deprivation, GCSEs achieved and violent crime. There has been an annual Pride event in the local area since 2007[3]. The stated aims of the event are to bring together people of 'different sexual orientation, culture and physical and mental ability as well and to promote inclusion, equality and diversity'. The settings for the study were a secondary school, a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender youth group within an arts youth club and Children's Services.

The secondary school is an academy. It opened in 2005 on the site of a former school and transferred to new buildings in 2006. The number of young people on Free Schools Meals at the school is twice the national average. Almost half the pupils are identified as having a special educational need (Ofsted inspection 2010) and the number of pupils joining the school other than at usual times is much higher than the national average. In October 2010 an Ofsted inspection was carried out at the school and it was given a notice to improve. The school was reported to have an effective pastoral support and guidance team and effective partnerships in promoting learning and wellbeing. It was reported to have good safeguarding processes and a good sixth form. Promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination were described as satisfactory. The quality of teaching, however, was reported to be unsatisfactory with pupils making slow progress. Furthermore, GCSE results in English and Maths are low although vocational subjects are closer to the national average. However, a monitoring visit by Ofsted that took place 6 months after the interviews reported that the school was making satisfactory progress to meet its targets as highlighted in the October visit. It was reported that there were more effective systems of assessments and the school had established baselines for pupils. Action had also been taken to develop literacy throughout the school. Both the SRE and anti-bullying policies include reference to different sexualities.

The LGB Youth Group had been running for two years at the time of the interviews. Youth workers at an Arts Youth Club had noticed that many of the

[2] http://www.apho.org.uk/resource. Accessed 15.06.2010
[3] http://www.gscene.com/national/xxx_Pride_2010.shtml. Accessed 15.06.2010

young people attending the club were gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Initially the group was set up informally with young people at the youth club. It has subsequently been established formally with funding from the PCT and Youth Service and open to young people across the locality. Publicity material for the LGBT Youth Group had been distributed to all secondary schools in the locality and to agencies and settings that young people may engage with. The Youth Worker stated that at the time of the interviews the young people in the group were between 13 and 18 years of age and that most were between 14 and 16 years of age.

As can be seen in the Table 1, there were focus group interviews with pupils and LGB young people and individual interviews with staff at the school and the Children's Services for the local area. There were a number of reasons for choosing to interview young people in a focus group rather than individually. Robson (2002, p. 284) has noted that participants often enjoy focus groups. It was hoped that interviewees would be stimulated by the thoughts and comments of others and empowered to make their own comments. In addition, it was considered speaking in a group might reduce inhibition amongst some young people on what could be a topic they may not have had much experience of discussing. Hearing others' stories could stimulate the recall of their own memories of what had worked in school. There are also disadvantages of focus group discussions. The nature of the group dynamic can lead to dominance by some group members and non-participation by others. In addition, intra-group disagreement and conflicts may arise (Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2007, p.377). In terms of interviewing school staff and other professionals it was considered relevant to explore this area from the standpoint of their particular role and so individual interviews were deemed more appropriate.

It is acknowledged that some of the participants' responses may have been influenced by a wish to be seen as liberal. Ellis (2001) defines liberalism as being broad minded and tolerant of diversity. She states that the dominant political climate is one of liberalism, arguing that in the contemporary political climate it is not considered appropriate to make prejudiced comments against

marginalised groups such as LGB people. Rather, prejudice is now expressed in subtle ways. Three of these subtle strategies include distancing from other people's homophobic views, agreeing with the need for equality with certain qualifications or 'fence sitting' and a discourse that all including LGB people are 'the same'. Distancing from homophobic views, according to Ellis (2001), reinforces prejudice by directing blame elsewhere and limits the opportunity for collective strategies that can influence social change. 'Fence sitting' can be seen as justifying prejudice by denying the absolute nature of equal rights for all including LGB people (Ellis, 2001). The discourse of 'sameness', according to Ellis (2001), is an expression of a heterocentric worldview which does not acknowledge the political, social and legal inequalities that exist for LGB people. It can be argued that these expressions of liberalism are informed by a heteronormative worldview (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson 2009). Liberalism can be viewed as a mask to hide heterososexism and can be used to avoid addressing the issues of equality for LGB people (Ellis, 2001). In a study exploring the perspective of LGB awareness trainers, participants considered liberalism could be undermined by showing statistics of homophobic attacks (Peel, 2002). In the context of the current study, two interview questions were included to challenge views which may be informed by heteronormative practices. These questions were included to encourage participants to reflect on the experience of school from the perspective of LGB pupils. This, it was considered, may facilitate a consideration of any issues of equality facing that pupil. Participants were asked whether there was any bullying of young people because of their sexuality or because they were LGB and how this was dealt with. Later, participants were asked how they thought life was for LGB young people in the school or district.

3.6 Conducting Interviews

The purpose of the research was stated at the beginning of each interview. Respondents were informed that they did not need to answer any questions and it was explained that when reported the data would be anonymised and any names of individuals or places would not be mentioned. Consent forms

(Appendix 2) were given to and explained to participants. Written consent was gained from each participant before the interview began.

Young people at the LGB youth group were told that the purpose of the study was to explore how secondary schools support all young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others. They were also informed that the study would also particularly explore how schools support young people who are or may be lesbian, gay or bisexual to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others. In addition, young people were informed that the findings would be fed back to the LA EPS who might use the findings to develop their work with young people, families and schools. Pupils were given broadly the same introduction to the focus group discussion. However, the purpose of the study was framed as an exploration of how schools support the wellbeing of all young people and those who were LGB. As noted earlier, there are a number of advantages and disadvantages to focus groups. Disadvantages can include group conflict and dominance by some group members. Ground rules for the discussion were agreed with the groups prior to the interviews to minimise possible group conflict and dominance by individuals. These shall be outlined later in the ethical issues section.

Interviews with staff lasted from 45 -60 minutes and with young people from 40-60 minutes (see summary table above). The interviews with staff were conducted individually. Pupil focus group interviews were conducted in empty classrooms with no other pupils or any staff present. The focus group with the LGB young people took place in a side room of the youth group. The LGB Youth Worker chose to be present for most of the focus group interview with LGB young people. However, she left the room during the section of the focus group interview relating to the LGB youth group. It is acknowledged that the presence of the LGB Youth Worker may have influenced the group dynamics and the data collected. Her presence may have invoked a shared understanding that school was a difficult place for LGB young people. However, her presence may also have been reassuring for the young people

that the researcher was interested in their perspectives and her presence may have encouraged young people to be more open about their experiences.

3.7 Analysis

Interview data was transcribed and the transcripts were analysed using 'thematic analysis'. This is a qualitative research method for "identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79). This involves the recording of patterns of experiences, which are then interpreted into themes. A theme can be defined as being, in the judgement of the researcher, of core importance in relation to the research questions, and as showing a recurring pattern of meaning in the data. (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Braun and Clarke (2006) write there are a number of choices that need to be made prior to conducting thematic analysis. Each of these choices and the decisions made shall be discussed in turn. The first choice refers to what counts as a theme. Themes in this study were included that related to the research questions. The second choice refers to the size of the theme and whether they are within each data item or across the data set. It was decided that themes would be included that appeared across the entire data set so that contrasting perspectives could be represented within each theme. The third choice is whether all the data set is included or detailed accounts of particular aspects. All the data in the study that referred to support for young people's wellbeing and learning was included in the analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006) next choice is whether to take an inductive or deductive approach to analysis. An inductive approach is a bottom up one that draws on themes strongly related to the data. A deductive approach links data to prior research and/or theories. Due to the exploratory nature of the study it was decided to use an inductive approach. The final choice described by Braun and Clarke (2006) is whether the analysis should be at a semantic or latent level. The former involves themes being identified within the explicit or surface meanings. The analysis involves a systematic description of the patterns in the data. According to the semantic approach, the 'analyst is not looking for

anything beyond what a participant has said' (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.84). The interpretation of the significance of these patterns is then discussed with reference to previous literature. A latent level of analysis involves identifying the ideas, assumptions and ideologies informing the data. This study aimed to explore participants' perceptions rather than analyse ideologies, ideas and assumptions that may inform their discourse. Thus it was decided to search for patterns based on an analysis of the data at a semantic level.

The analysis followed Braun & Clarke's (2006) guidelines on thematic analysis as follows.

Generating Initial Codes

An initial list of codes was created from reading all the interview transcripts. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that a code is the most basic segment, element or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way. The data was coded manually with phrases, sentences or sets of sentences underlined and a number assigned to each code. Data was collated relevant to each code. Certain codes were only present in one data source. In the staff interviews it may have been only one interviewee mentioned information of that type. In the focus group interviews it may have been only one young person mentioned that type of information. Where it was not applicable to merge these codes and it was considered they reflected unique information pertinent to the research this was included. These afforded insight into the diversity of participants' perspective. Examples of codes include 'Can feel safe when accepted at school', 'Staff have time to talk through problems', 'Distress relating to the use of the word "gay" depends on the conversation', (setting) 'like family/home and staff like parents' and ' young people do not care what sexuality someone is'.

Collating Codes for Potential Themes

Next, codes were organized into potential themes. Within each theme codes were grouped into subthemes. Mind maps were used to help the researcher

think about the relationships between codes, themes and main sub-themes. Here some initial codes were extended.

Reviewing Themes

The researcher then considered the data extracts within each theme as a whole and made the decision whether they hung together in a coherent pattern. Similarly, themes were considered together as to whether they reflected the story of the data set as a whole. Some of the themes were either discarded or collapsed into another theme. Consideration was given at this point to the prevalence of data extracts required to justify retaining a theme, a sub-theme or sub-section of a theme. Some sub-sections that represented only one to two interviewees' experience were retained. This was felt to represent the diversity of participants' perspectives and provide an accurate picture of the data set as a whole.

Defining and Naming Themes

The final phase involved defining, refining and naming the themes. These will be presented in the next chapter. In total four themes were indicated. Themes were generally broad and were comprised of a number of sub-themes.

3.8 Establishing Trustworthiness

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is typically referred to as 'the consistency or stability of a measure; for example, if it were to be repeated, would the same result be obtained?' (Robson, 2002, p. 93). Reliability is a borrowed word from quantitative research. In qualitative research, due to its focus on individual experiences and meanings and use of words rather than numbers, it has been proposed that the word 'dependability' is more appropriate (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Mertens, 2010). Therefore 'dependability' (rather than 'reliability') can be an indicator of the quality of the data collection that 'can be determined by a

means of a dependability audit in which the change process can be inspected to attest to the quality and appropriateness of the inquiry process' (Mertens, 2010, p. 259). Dependability in the current study was enhanced by recording each interview closely followed by a verbatim transcription of each interview and using a peer-reviewed thematic analysis coding process as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Validity can be described as 'the degree to which it (the research) is accepted as sound, legitimate and authoritative by people with an interest in research findings (Yardley, 2008, p.235). As with 'reliability', 'validity' is a term borrowed from quantitive methodology. 'Credibility' has been proposed as a more appropriate term in qualitative reasearch, especially when employing a constructive approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Mertens, 2010). To ensure credibility (or validity), the following principles for evaluating the validity of qualitative research were considered including sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence and impact and importance (Yardley, 2000). The particular way of using the principles depends on the method. Sensitivity to context includes notions of being sensitive to participants' perspective and ethical issues. The latter shall be discussed in the next section. Yardley (2000) argued that choosing participants who may have contrasting views on the topic ensures sensitivity to context. Participants in this study were chosen as it was considered they might have contrasting views on this topic. A crucial element of being sensitive to the context, according to Yardley (2000), is the relationship between the researcher and participants. Mitchell (1998) found that interviewees preferred a warm, friendly but detached interviewer manner and this enhanced compliance, willingness to answer questions honestly and thoroughly and reassurance of confidentiality. The researcher was warm, friendly and did not refer to her own experiences in order to communicate that she was sensitive to the participants' perspective. In addition, active listening skills were employed by the researcher including maintaining appropriate eye contact, summarising, asking for clarification where necessary and acknowledging difficulties such as experiences of homophobic bullying.

Yardley (2000) also argued that qualitative researchers need to demonstrate how they have considered commitment and rigour in their design methodology, although, she added, these are a requirement of all good researchers. Commitment and rigour requires an in depth understanding of the relevant literature and skill in the methods. In terms of rigour this study aimed to represent a construction of reality through triangulated perspectives. It is hoped that the criteria for transparency were fulfilled by means of the detailed account of how information was collected and analysed. In the findings section quotes of interview transcripts are included so the reader can discern the patterns of meaning. The criteria of impact and importance will be fulfilled by communication of the study's findings to the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service in order that EPs may develop their practice in this area. In addition, the findings will be communicated to the LGB youth group and school.

It is assumed that the findings of the current study may not be transferrable to another context. A study with different participants in a different context or if analysed by a different researcher or using different methods may have led to different findings and conclusions. The school in the study had a strong pastoral focus and this may have influenced the findings. An area with a different socio-economic make-up may have different ways of supporting the wellbeing of young people including LGB young people.

Finally, the findings of the study may have been influenced by the method of analysis. Codes and subsequent themes were developed using an inductive method. This method influenced the findings and may have resulted in different findings if a deductive, theory driven method had been used (Boyatzis, 1998). However, by capturing the experiences of the study's participants, it is argued that the findings of this study could be helpful in other contexts.

Reflexivity

The researcher is a white middle class heterosexual woman in her 40s. Initially she questioned whether she should be carrying out a study on this topic because she had not experienced being a lesbian or bisexual adolescent or adult. However, talking informally with LGB adults known personally to the researcher, assurances were given that it may be an advantage that she did not have the experience of a lesbian or bisexual. They considered a negative experience of growing up in a heteronormative environment may influence how open a researcher may be to hearing what was helpful for young people.

Throughout the research process the researcher was aware of potential taken for granted assumptions such as the impact of her sexuality. Interpretation of the research literature and analysis and interpretation of the research data was discussed in supervision with professional researchers and this minimised the bias at these stages.

The researcher also questioned how her sexuality may influence the possible ways in which participants may respond to her presence. Bradford, Ryan, Honnold & Rothblum (2001) argues that there is a need to match researchers working in the sexual orientation field. However, McManus (2003) cites the argument that interviewers should be 'neutral' and not disclose hidden characteristics such as sexual orientation so as not to influence responses. If interviewees consider a researcher is 'like' them they may assume the interviewer already 'knows' what they are trying to explain and not verbalise their experiences fully. However, Yardley (2000) argues interviewers contribute to what is being said through verbal and non-verbal cues and by actively or passively encouraging the shared understandings and social identities that underpin speech. She argues that attempts to remain neutral are futile and thus the design should include a consideration of how the researcher's behaviour and characteristics may influence the discourse. It is acknowledged that participants' discourse may have been influenced by assumptions regarding the interviewer's sexuality, age, gender and class.

However, as stated earlier a warm, friendly but detached interviewer manner is considered the most important factor by interviewees (Mitchell, 1998). It was considered that this manner employed by the researcher would communicate that she was sensitive to the participants' understanding and social identities that underpinned their discourse.

Prior to carrying out the interviews, the researcher was anxious about the possibility of homophobic comments in the focus group discussions at the school. In supervision it was agreed to have a ground rules to minimise the possibility of this.

3.9 Ethical Issues

In line with the British Psychological Society's 'Code of Ethics and Conduct Guidance' published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society (August 2009) a number of ethical principles guided this study. The relevant sections of the guidelines are noted in brackets.

<u>Informed Consent</u>

A key ethical issue was that of parental/carer consent. With regards to the ethical principal of 'Respect' and the Standard of 'Privacy and Confidentiality' the Code states that' Psychologists should normally obtain the consent of clients who are considered legally competent or their duly authorised representatives, for disclosure of confidential information' (1.2ii). Competence is defined as having 'sufficient understanding and intelligence to understand what is proposed and sufficient discretion to enable a child to make a wise choice in his or her own interests' (Gillick 1985). According to the Gillick (1985) ruling all young people who are considered competent could be asked to give consent without asking for parental permission. However, the Gillick ruling (1985) has not been formally or clearly agreed in social research (Alderson and Morrow 2004). It was considered there may be some Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual participants who would not be comfortable with obtaining permission to be invited to take part in the study from their parents. In English

law, minors over the age of 16 can give legally valid consent (Family Law Reform Act 1969). It was therefore decided that only those Lesbian Gay or Bisexual young people who were over the age of 16 would be included in the study. These young people had their confidentiality respected and parental permission was not sought.

It was considered important that all participants were informed of the objectives of the investigation explained including all aspects of the research that might reasonably influence willingness to participate (1.3i). In addition, all participants had the opportunity to have all aspects of the research explained to them (3.1). Information to young people was given in a format they could understand and they were given the opportunity to ask questions and confirm they had understood what they were being asked to do. Young people were informed that the purpose of the study was to explore how schools support young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others. Young people were also informed that recently there had been worries in the local authority and elsewhere that some young people were being bullied for being lesbian or gay. A further aim of the study presented to young people was to explore how schools support these young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others. Young people were told that the questions would be all about school and not about their personal experiences of feelings or relationships. Young people were told that the research would collect ideas to help young people and adults in the future. They were informed that other schools would be interested in learning what had worked at their school and may use some or all of the findings in their won school. Young people were informed that they would miss a lesson. Consent was completed at the beginning of the focus group so they could make an informed decision that they wanted to participate. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, for those under 16, consent was gained from 'duly authorised representatives'. The school gave permission for young people to be invited to take part. Parents/Carers of school participants were given the option to not give permission for their son/daughter to be invited to take part in the study (1.2ii). All participants were given a consent sheet asking them to agree that they were aware that their participation was voluntary, that they

were aware of what their participation involved and that all their questions had been satisfactorily answered (1.3ii). All participants were asked to return signed consent forms (1.3ii) stating that they give permission for audio recordings to be made of the interviews and focus groups (1.3 ix). In addition, the Headteacher of the school signed a consent form agreeing that the researcher could carry out and make audio recordings of interviews with staff and focus groups with pupils (1.3ix) and (1.2ii). The manager of the youth club signed a consent form agreeing that the researcher could carry out a focus group discussion with the young people at the youth provision (1.3ix) and (1.2ii).

Parents at the school were informed of the research. They were asked to sign, complete and return a form if they did give permission for their son/daughter to be invited to take part in the study.

Confidentiality, Privacy and Anonymity

All participants were informed that all the information given would be confidential and treated anonymously unless there was a concern for the safeguarding of a young person (1.2vi). According to the Code of Ethics and Conduct' (BPS 2009) statement of values regarding the principle of respect it is stated that 'psychologists value the dignity and worth of all persons....with particular regard to people's rights including those of privacy....'

To protect young people's privacy both at the school and at the youth club they were interviewed without a member of the school staff present. As stated earlier the LGB Youth Worker stayed for some of the focus group interview with the LGB young people. LGB young people were asked if they were in agreement with this. This conversation took place without the Youth Worker present. The LGB young people agreed that the youth worker could be present. When discussing their school experience the LGB Youth Worker was aware of the need to respect the right to privacy relating to information given by the participants. At the point of the interview relating to the LGB youth group, the youth worker left the room because this would have

breached young people's right to privacy regarding their views on the group. School staff, youth club staff and other professionals were interviewed on their own to protect their privacy. Prior to conducting the interviews and focus groups ground rules were established including that the 'recording, processing and the storage of confidential information would be in a fashion designed to avoid inadvertent disclosure' (1.2iv), that information would be treated anonymously unless there was a safeguarding concern (1.2vi) and that interviewees had the right of privacy, that what was said in the interviews and focus groups would not be discussed beyond the interview or focus group and that they were aware of their right to withdraw at any time from research participation (1.4ii).

Protection from Possible Harm

Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason (1.4ii). They also had the right to decline to answer questions (3.3 vii) and to ask for their data to be withdrawn from the study at any time (1.4ii). Participants were told that there would be no consequence if they withdrew from the study or declined to answer questions.

The research was monitored for adverse effects and would have been stopped if there were a concern for the health or wellbeing of a participant (3.3i). It may have been that there were some pupils who had romantic and/or sexual feelings towards those of the same sex or both which they have not discussed with anyone else (3.3ii). The researcher observed how the young people and staff responded and would have stopped the interviews/focus groups if any of the participants had appeared distressed. If any young person teased or accused another of being gay the researcher would have reiterated that it had been agreed to respect each other's views and that young people were not here to discuss their own sexual feelings or relationships. In addition, the researcher informed herself of the support mechanisms available within the youth club and school in case any young person had a need for further support. LGB young people were given the opportunity to talk to either a youth worker at the youth club or the researcher if they were distressed (see

Appendix 2). School pupils were given the opportunity to talk to the staff liaising with the researcher on the project, the researcher or other school staff of their choice.

The researcher had an enhanced CRB check carried out which was available for all participants and staff.

Dissemination of Findings

Participants were told that the report would be stored in the university library at the Institute of Education and that the research may be disseminated further. However, their words would not be identifiable.

The following set of ground rules were established with the young people at school.

1. The discussion should be confidential and not discussed outside the group unless the researcher thinks you or someone else is at risk of being hurt.

2. All should listen to and respect others views including not interrupting and giving everyone a chance to speak.

3. No discussion of your own sexual feelings or relationships.

4. Any participant can withdraw from the study at any time.

5. Any participant can refuse to answer questions.

At the youth group the same set of rules were established except for the rule referring to 'discussion of own sexual feelings and relationships'.

Chapter 4: Findings

Chapter 3 presents the main themes and sub-themes indicated in the thematic analysis.

Table 2: Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subtheme	Subsection of theme
Supporting Young People	General Ethos	Equality
		Focus on Relationships
		Physical Environment
	Supporting Individual Needs	Treat Everyone the same
		Recognise difference
Protecting from harm	Bullying Definitions and	General
		Homophobic
	Actions against Bullying	Immediate Responses
		Preventative
Understanding Sexualities	Understanding Sexualities	Recognition of different sexualities
		Normalised
		Not necessarily normalised
	Talking about Sexualities	lessons
		Talked about/not talked about
		Day to day life
Future	Recognising Needs	Groups (including those with different sexualities)
		Individuals (including those with different sexualities)
	Helping young people to learn more about sexualities	The curriculum
		Role models
	Responding to discrimination	Responding to discrimination

4.1 Supporting Young People

General Ethos: Equality

Staff respondents all stated that an ethos that promotes equality is key to supporting the wellbeing of all young people including LGB young people.

> It was always the ethos of the school that students and staff were as one if you like and it should not be a 'them' and 'us' society.
> (Head of Year 10/11)

At the school equality was considered to be reflected in the behaviour and composition of the senior leadership, understanding of every pupil's individual needs, promoting pupil voice and academic and vocational options in the curriculum.

> T: The way the Head is visible and out there. He is not behind a door. He is out every break time, speaking to staff, speaking to students.
>
> He will speak to students at break time?
>
> I: A student will go and find him if they have a problem. If I had a problem with my class I would go and tell him. That is the open
> T: policy. I think that starts it off and I think that there is that modelling of that relationship and being listened to. He values everybody and I think in this school as well, I don't think there is a hierarchy – there obviously is a hierarchy – there is not a hierarchy of importance. Teaching staff, non-teaching staff, support staff are all seen as the same. On inset days the first hour is all staff in the theatre regardless if you are a cleaner – everybody. Generally we talk about what the term has been like, what's the view for next year, what do we see. Perhaps for the cleaners it is not that important but it creates that feeling that we are all equal.
>
> (Head of Humanities)

Furthermore, the school leadership team was reported to be mostly female which was thought to communicate a message of equal opportunities. Staff stressed that a culture that accepts all members of the school community as they are, enables all to feel equally valued; all feel included and can be themselves including staff and LGB pupils.

The emphasis on listening to pupil voice was also perceived by staff to be important for supporting wellbeing. Staff respondents felt this gives young people power in schools and settings because their suggestions can be implemented. In addition, all are considered to benefit when pupil voice is listened to. An example given by a member of school staff was an INSET which involved young people talking about being bullied by teachers and the impact of this. Equality was also considered to be reflected in the range of subjects and qualifications available at the school.

Older pupils commented on how they were treated as adults by staff and that there were no cliques in their year. They were keen to stress how LGB young people are accepted at school.

One LGB young person emphasised the value of being eventually accepted at school and made an explicit connection between this and his wellbeing.

> I think when I was in year 8-9, I had a much smaller group of friends and they were all completely comfortable with it because they had been around it. But then when it was 'here I am' the whole school had then to get comfortable with it. By the end of year 11 I actually loved school because everybody was comfortable with it because they were used to it. (LGB Young Person)

However, LGB young people spoke of lack of equality with regards to LGB people beyond school and the local area. They cited the absence of LGB people in exam papers although they had noticed that people of different ethnicities were represented. Further examples of inequality cited were that LGB people cannot marry.

General Ethos: Focus on Relationships

All staff respondents considered that a focus on supportive relationships was a central component of a school ethos that promoted wellbeing. Both the school and the LGB youth group placed a high priority on this. Pupils do their best, it was considered, when they can trust staff and see that staff care about their learning and welfare. Features of this include being welcoming, approachable, working collaboratively, consistency and not belittling young people. In addition, being aware of individual pupils' needs and how home circumstances may impact on a young person's learning and life in school was viewed as helpful. It was considered important that young people can confide in staff while understanding the limits of confidentiality in cases where someone may be harmed. A further feature of positive relationships was an awareness that not every young person responds well to every adult; it is important to explore which person or even organisation/group may be more helpful.

> I think the other way students feel important is that all students in this school feel they have 1,2 or 3 maybe more people that they can go to and speak about any issues............. She had issues and came in one day in tears and said what can I do? I knew that she didn't want to speak to me. So I said tell me who, I don't care, it needs to be someone, identify that person and I will go and get them for you.
> (Head of Humanities)

School staff respondents also emphasised the importance for LGB young people being able to develop trusting relationships with staff and in particular with LGB staff.

School staff considered that staff at the school were viewed as role models for all young people and this was thought to promote wellbeing. Young people learn to develop good interpersonal skills by having these modelled by staff, it was considered. Such skills include listening, being polite, trust and tolerance.

In addition, it was considered important at the school for pupils to have teachers who they could confide in.

However, positive relationships were considered to be undermined by the government focus on academic grades. This was thought to exclude some young people; the focus on achieving a C grade rather than improving from a G to a D was not helpful because it did not encourage inclusion of young people with behavioural difficulties.

All pupils and LGB young people were asked to define a 'good relationship'. Trust and honesty were the most important features of good relationships reported by each group. They also highlighted the importance of being able to confide in someone. Older pupils and LGB Young People highlighted 'fun' as being important in relationships.

Pupils felt that teaching staff were helpful when young people had problems; staff were proactive if pupils are upset and ask if anything is wrong. School staff were reported to have time to talk through problems and pupils knew they could trust staff to help. This helped pupils feel safe.

Pupils in Y12 were very enthusiastic about the relationships with all in school emphasising how they felt school was like home and staff like parents.

> I: How does school help you to feel good about yourself?
> P: We are all more like a big family.
> P: We all get on.
> P: We obviously don't get on with everyone.
> P: No, we don't hate anyone in school, do we? We normally all get on.
> P: They act like your parents.
> P: X's mum is actually called Mother Y.
> (Year 12 pupils)

They could have conversations with staff and joke with them and valued being treated as adults. Due to their friendships with teachers they felt they were more likely to ask questions in lessons if they did not understand.

In addition to relationships with peers, friendships were also highlighted by all pupils as facilitating feeling good about themselves. However, older pupils considered friendships get easier when pupils are older and that older pupils get on better with each other. Year 8 pupils felt that school did not do much to help people who did not have friends.

Pupils and LGB young people were asked where they learnt about relationships. Pupils reported learning from family members such as parents, grandparents and siblings. Year 10 and 12 pupils stated they learnt from talking to school staff about relationships and could get support from staff about relationship difficulties. They reported learning to negotiate and manage friendship difficulties through problems that arose with friends at school. All felt they learnt from their friends' experiences and the over 16 year olds considered they learnt about relationships from their own experiences. Learning about relationships through discussion at youth clubs was mentioned by one Year 8 pupil.

LGB Young People recounted experiences of positive relationships with a small number of school staff who had helped them do their best; they had connected with these staff who would come to find them if there had been incidents

> One was my French teacher. I don't know if I had a really shit day it was someone I could go and have a natter with. She was more like a friend than a teacher.
> (LGB Young Person)

When asked about relationships with youth club staff, LGB young people were particularly positive. Their description of this experience was very similar to the Year 12s' accounts.

I: How do they help you get on well with each other here?

LGB YP: Everyone here is just one giant family.

LGB YP: It is not like there are groups it is just one big family.

LGB YP: There is a nickname for one of the staff here and we call her Mother X Youth Club – we feel that they are our mothers but at the same time they have to remain professional.

(LGB Young People)

The laid back atmosphere at the LGB youth group was highlighted. Young people felt they could confide in staff and if there were a problem at school, staff would advise them who to speak to at the school and what to do. Professional boundaries of the relationships with staff were clear and young people knew they were workers and not friends. The advantage of being able to talk to Youth Club staff about sexual and romantic relationships was also highlighted as was the opportunity to get advice on relationship problems. All at the youth group spoke with enthusiasm of the social activities arranged by the youth club such as residentials which facilitated getting on and learning about relationships. LGB young people agreed with pupils that friendships were important to wellbeing. They cited friendships with peers at the youth group as helping them to feel good about themselves.

When asked where they learnt about relationships, LGB young people also mentioned their family and friends. They agreed with the Year 12s that learning from their own experience was key. None of the LGB young people mentioned learning about relationships from school staff.

General Ethos: Physical Environment

A further strategy that facilitated positive relationships was the physical setting of both the school and the youth group. The secondary school is centred around a large open area on the ground floor with a cafeteria leading on to an open lunch room. Most of the classrooms lead off open hallways

accessed from open stairwells. School staff highlighted the shared use of the cafeteria and lunchroom by school staff at break times rather than the staff room. They considered this promoted a sense of being available and approachable to pupils.

Pupils also highlighted the design of the school building as promoting wellbeing.

> I: How does school help you to be yourself?
>
> P: I think when you are around your friends, that helps. Outside school when you are with them you can be yourself but in school you can as well. You are comfortable around them.
>
> P: I think because you know everyone. You are not meeting anyone new.
>
> P: Because here as well, we are all under one building and you can see the faces of everyone. If you pass them in the street, you would go, 'Hi' because you know them because everyone is in there together.
>
> (Year 10 pupils)

Pupils corroborated staff comments about the benefits of sharing communal areas at break times which encouraged a sense that staff were approachable.

The role of the physical setting in developing wellbeing was also highlighted by LGB young people. Working together to decorate the youth group had helped them feel they belonged to the group.

> I: What is it that helps you feel that you belong here?
>
> LGB YP: We got the kitchen painted and we all did it together. We painted everywhere. During the summer two years ago now, everyone came in and two people painted the boys' toilets and two people painted the girls' toilets, two people painted in here and two people were painting there.
>
> LGB YP: Now it is like this is a house and we have built it.
>
> LGB YP: It's not our youth centre it's like our house.

(LGB Young People)

A further advantage of the LGB youth group setting was its physical separateness from school which they felt help them feel safe there.

I like it this way because you don't feel that the youth group is mixing with somewhere you have to go and somewhere you might feel uncomfortable.
(LGB YP)

Supporting Individual Needs: Treat Everyone the same

Most staff respondents considered that secondary schools understand the need to plan for the wellbeing of all young people. The EP considered Inclusion Managers are aware of the various needs of young people and systems are established to support these needs. School staff made particular reference to the notion that support for young people who are LGB is met through meeting the needs of all young people. However, support at the school was based on an assumption that every child is different which was encapsulated in the school motto 'Proud to be Different'. In addition to the focus on equality and positive relationships with all in the school community, school staff commented on whole school systems considered to promote wellbeing. At a whole school level school staff stated that a sense of belonging was promoted through reward systems such as tutor and house competitions and pastoral support was given by year teams. The school was comprised of a number of 'houses' including pupils from different year groups. Year teams were groups of staff that supported particular year groups.

 When first asked about support for LGB young people Year 10 and 12 pupils did not consider there was a need for particular support because all pupils are treated equally.

P: I feel that if this school needed it they would do something about it. They are quite proactive about doing things for everyone.
I: Ok, so they have seen that there isn't a need.

P: They haven't asked us directly though.

I: How does school help lesbian, gay and bisexual young people to do their best and to feel good about themselves?

P: They don't do anything.

P: They don't need to do anything.

P: They ignore it. They don't treat them differently.

P: They don't need to do anything because none of us make them feel that they are different so they don't need to make them feel wanted because we don't make them feel unwanted.

(Year 12 pupils)

Supporting Individual Needs: Recognise difference

As stated above, school staff emphasised how the school recognised and responded to individual needs. Indeed nearly 50 % of school pupils are identified as having a special educational need. Staff stated that emotional needs were the responsibility of all staff and most respondents considered school staff were aware of these needs. In terms of support for young people with particular needs, school staff said there was specialist support both in and out of class. There were staff with specialist knowledge such as how to support young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Working with different agencies on school site was considered helpful for young people because they could engage with agencies directly in negotiating support.

My Afghan group, the reason it came about is because they were unhappy about how little support they were getting from social services. So I fed that back to social services and said that they have an opportunity to come along once a week and meet 15 of your unaccompanied asylum seekers in one place and talk to them. So social services come along every week.

(Community Youth Worker)

Support for LGB young people was described as being part of whole school systems that were triggered when any pupil had difficulties. For example, one young person had been placed on a part-time timetable to support his reintegration back to school full time. However, in addition to whole school systems, two strategies particular to LGB pupils were mentioned. One was a group called 'Brothers and Sisters'. These were described as groups run separately for young men and young women with a discussion focus on matters relating to gender and sexuality. It was reported that during these sessions pupils were encouraged to view diverse sexualities as normalised. In addition, school staff were aware of the LGB youth group. School staff who did not know about the LGB youth group said that there would be school staff who did know about this and they could speak to them. Some staff were reported to be aware of the LGB youth group and had passed on the details to some young people. The LGB youth worker had sent details of the group to all 9 secondary schools in the local area. However, she had only received referrals from the staff at the target school and one other. However, the EP interviewed was not aware of this provision in the local area.

Specialist staff and systems for young people with emotional difficulties and learning difficulties were also highlighted by pupils as being helpful. This included spaces for young people to go with staff available. Some pupils said that staff working with them one to one in class was helpful. These staff would check in with pupils regularly once they stopped working one to one with them. Out of class support included groups for young people with friendship difficulties and spaces for young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties. Pupils considered specialist support for ASD and BESD and teaching adapted to needs helped them do their best. LGB young people considered there was a lot of support at their respective schools for pupils who were 'bad' but not for those who were well behaved. Pupils and LGB young people were largely unaware of specialist support within school for young LGB pupils. However, Year 8 pupils did state that LGB pupils could talk to the school counsellor.

4.2 Protecting from harm

<u>Bullying Definitions: General</u>

School staff reported conversations with the school council who had reported that the school was largely safe. Pupils had told staff that there was bullying at school, although they felt there was bullying everywhere. Most staff stated there was bullying for a wide range of reasons. The EP said that bullying was for any difference that was not acceptable to the peer group. Other reasons for bullying included alleged promiscuity by girls, being a bit noisier, what clothes pupils wore, how others are perceived or problems arising from conflicts between families. One of the school staff respondents considered that Facebook bullying was a big problem.

Pupils also considered there was bullying in school for varying reasons such as race, being poor or how a pupil dressed. Older pupils also commented on bullying for any difference stating that this mostly happens in younger years. There was some debate over whether rumour and gossip were bullying and some older pupils also mentioned Facebook although there was disagreement over whether this was bullying or just 'banter'.

> P: To be honest if someone puts something on Facebook and then someone thinks ,'Oh' and they get the wrong idea and make something completely different up or something.
>
> P: So is Facebook a way that people can be bullied?
>
> P: Definitely.
>
> I: So that is something people do?
>
> P: It's not bullying.
>
> P: It's rather immature I would say.
>
> P: It's banter.
>
> (Year 12 Pupils)

Bullying Definitions: Homophobic Bullying

All respondents considered homophobic bullying was detrimental to young people who are LGB. Understanding of this type of bullying centred mostly around the use of language.

Awareness of homophobic bullying occurring was inconsistent amongst staff respondents. With regards to homophobic bullying only Children's Services staff mentioned this without prompting. When asked if LGB young people were bullied for reasons relating to their perceived sexuality one school staff respondent felt that there were LGB young people who were bullied for traits other than their sexuality. However, he was not aware of homophobic bullying. Another member of school staff was not aware of this and the third felt there could be homophobic bullying in the school.

The LGB youth worker was aware of homophobic bullying of young people by school staff and pupils locally. She considered some teachers collude with this 'bigotry' by not confronting those teachers or pupils. This, she felt encouraged pupils to view homophobic bullying as acceptable and led to young LGB people being afraid of their peers and community's response to their sexuality. In addition, the LGB youth worker said it was not safe to be LGB in the local area.

School staff said that teachers say that use of the word 'gay' is not acceptable and considered the use of the word is wrong because it can hurt some people's feelings. All staff drew parallels with racist bullying which was responded to seriously. However, with regards to the use of racist and homophobic language school staff felt the use of the word 'gay' is not always clear-cut or as clear as racist language and depends on the context of the relationship between the two people. In addition, one school staff respondent considered LGB young people understand that 'gay' is not used in a negative way but is used when young people do not know how to articulate their thoughts or feelings. The EP and the LGB youth worker were clear that the day to day use of the word 'gay' was chiefly homophobic in nature.

Pupils had varied understandings of the use of the word 'gay'. Y10 pupils were in agreement with school staff that distress resulting from the use of the word 'gay' depended on the context; varying according to how it was said, interpreted and the nature of the conversation. However, Year 12s considered the use of the phrase 'you're so gay' is banter, a joke. They stated their lesbian friend liked the attention during this type of banter. They also spoke of similar banter with a black friend. However, Year 8 pupils did question why straight people tease LGB people and not vice versa.

> We are straight and people who are straight take the mick out of lesbians and gays but lesbians and gays don't take the mick out of straight people and I don't get why it should be like that. I would understand if the lesbians and gays took the mick out of the straight people but they don't, it is just the straight people taking the mick out of lesbians and gays. I don't get why that happens?
> (Year 8 Pupil)

In contrast to the school staff's and pupils' view of the word 'gay', LGB young people were clear that this was homophobic bullying. They stated that bullying can consist of 'tiny' incidents over a period of time and that it can have a negative impact on wellbeing.

> If you moaned at my school about being bullied and constantly said that you were – because bullying is tiny little things – well it was at my school, tiny little things that eventually add up to you snapping and because you snapped they had done tiny little things that can't be disciplined but because you snapped and did one big thing. You were getting the punishment. So if you say there and said 'he called me gay' it was 'oh don't be silly'. If you sat there and said he just kicked me, well it was only a kick. But if someone stood there and kicked the shit out of them then they would be disciplined. But all the tiny little things; like you hear on the news about people who have killed themselves or whatever or had been bullied for such a long time, it is the tiny little

things and because they are so small, how do you discipline something that is so small. So they just give up.

(LGB Young Person)

Furthermore, it was felt being called 'gay' may lead a young person to think they are gay. This experience, it was considered by LGB young people, may stop people 'coming out'.

People would say 'oh, you're gay' but then if you are thinking I might be and someone says you are, it doesn't really help to make your mind up, does it? It is like when someone says I can safely say that I'm gay and I'm not gay because I was bullied into being gay, but some people would if you sit there and they say 'you're ugly, you're ugly' then that person is eventually going to think that they are ugly. So some people who aren't completely sure could be pushed into something that they are not completely sure about.

(LGB Young Person)

Non-verbal behaviour perceived as homophobic bullying was described in detail by one LGB young person.

LGB YP: At mine, most of the male teachers, the PE staff you would never hear them say anything solidly but they would just give you a look and give the other boys a look. So if you had done something and it was really camp or something they would just look at the other boys as if to say what's he up to and then that would egg on the students sometimes. It was mainly the male staff. They would just give a look to some of the students and then the students would think 'oh, yes that's quite funny' and the students would do the bullying so the teachers wouldn't be labelled as discriminating or anything.

I: So in fact the teachers would?

LGB YP: Egg on the students sometimes. Don't get me wrong the students loved that they were egged on by the teachers.

78

LGB YP: It is like teachers bullying but without actually doing it.

LGB YP: So it is like teachers bullying through the students.

(LGB Young People)

A further form of homophobia was cited by a LGB young person who attended a Church of England School. She spoke of discrimination in teaching about sexuality quoting staff as saying that being LGB was 'against the religion'. She described the negative impact on her wellbeing.

> I had to leave for a couple of months for depression because I kept getting notes thrown at me saying 'lesbian, you shouldn't be here' and stuff like that from people.
> (LGB Young Person)

A final type of discrimination described by LGB young people referred to the local area and the media. LGB young people said it was not safe to be LGB in the local area. In terms of the representation of LGB people in the media LGB young people felt it tended to promote homophobia.

> LGB YP: Yes. There was a gay person in Skins and it was actually shown in Skins her getting persecuted for it. So in my eyes it actually promoted people being horrible to her because she was a lesbian.
>   I: So it didn't show her having a happy relationship?
> LGB YP: No. It showed her just getting bullied.
> (LGB Young Person)

Actions against Bullying: Immediate Responses

Staff views on appropriate support to reduce bullying centre mainly around discussion although sanctions were also mentioned. School staff highlighted how the ethos of equality is reinforced daily through challenging discrimination by staff and pupils both at a reactive and proactive level of engagement.

It was considered important that bullying reports were responded to quickly and involve staff mediation including discussion with both parties. This was said to best happen separately because it could be intimidating for the bullied person to discuss the bullying with the other person. Mediation was reported to involve listening and encouraging young people to see things from different perspectives. Staff reported that they felt school staff were fair and facilitated the development of empathy, forgiveness and taking responsibility. Discussion with the bullied party included negotiating what the consequences will be.

> Initially I would be the mediator. That's my approach individually actually. I would speak to one person and speak to the other person, find out and then go back and this is what happened, are you ok with that – yes, go back – are you ok with that, yes. I don't want to hear that again and any issue come and speak to me from both sides.
> (Head of Humanities)

Repeated incidents of bullying including homophobic bullying were referred to by senior staff who may include parents in discussions. However, as stated earlier, response to the word 'gay' was considered to depending on the context. At the LGB youth group bullying incidents were said to involve a discussion about equality. Repeated incidents led to exclusion from the club. However, no young people were reported to have been excluded from the LGB youth group.

Pupils agreed with school staff's description of the responses to bullying. However, they added that not all staff were helpful and pupils knew which staff to speak to if they wanted an effective response. In addition to adult responses to bullying, pupils spoke of how they would support younger pupils if adults had not seen an incident.

Older pupils spoke about how they and their peers would step in to respond to bullying by younger pupils if staff have not seen it.

P: If teachers don't notice older students will step in.

P: If we see that something is going on and you can see that they are bothered about it, it will bother you and you will think that is not very nice, you shouldn't be doing that so you just say "Why are you doing that?".
   (Year 10 Pupil)

Year 8 pupils felt that homophobic bullying could not be stopped.

P1: They say 'go away you lesbian' and every time they see her they push her or something .a few times if the teacher sees then they just tell the person who is calling her names to leave her alone and go somewhere else. That's it. The teachers don't do anything except to tell the bullies to go away.

P2: It normally happens outside and there is a teacher called Mr X out there and if you get caught doing it, then Mr X calls you over and says 'why are you bullying her' and all that. They stop and leave her alone and then it will probably happen again the next break and then it will keep happening and it doesn't stop.
   (Year 8 pupils)

LGB young people did describe some support from school staff when they had experienced homophobic bullying. Some staff would speak to the bullies. However, they agreed with Y8 pupils about the inevitability of homophobic bullying. Although they would report it to staff, they said incidents were not investigated or responded to. They saw this as collusion with homophobic bullying and felt it was based on staff's own negative views on LGB people. When LGB young people spoke to staff about behaviour by other staff they viewed as homophobic this also was not responded to. LGB young people felt that staff think it is unprofessional to challenge another member of staff. They did, however, state that violent behaviour was responded to. Older pupils felt that LGB people did not always tell staff about homophobic bullying.

Actions against Bullying: Preventative Measures

Discussion on discrimination was a key feature of the PSHE curriculum. Different forms of discrimination were discussed including that of LGB people. School staff said that homophobic bullying was responded to as seriously as racist bullying.

Year 10 pupils spoke of learning about prejudices being based on stereotypes. During the focus group interview pupils made an explicit connection between the concepts of stereotypes and some pupils' perceptions of LGB young people. However, this stereotype had not been explicitly discussed in class. Pupils reported that when there had been homophobic difficulties in the school there had been an assembly on it.

LGB young people felt that racism had reduced at schools due to a focus on racist bullying and that young people were excluded for this type of bullying. Again the physical setting was mentioned by school and youth club respondents. The open design of the school building was said to reduce the hidden spaces for bullying. Pupils commented that because everyone was under one roof there were fewer spaces to be beaten up. In addition, staff made use of the openness of the building to be available for young people. For example, there is a large cafeteria in the centre of the building and staff take their breaks in this space alongside young people.

One LGB young person spoke of PSHE lessons that focused on the role of the bystander.

> I remember at one of them there was a poster and a picture of someone laughing but instead of having teeth they had a fist and it was if you laugh along with a bully you are a bully. They did a lot about that but then there was only a set few people in the school who were bullies but it was made worse by everyone laughing along. So they tried to cancel out everyone laughing to single out the bully.
> (LGB Young Person)

Another LGB young person spoke of his school having 'zero tolerance 'for bullying. However, he did not consider this was effective.

LGB young people commented on how helpful it was to discuss how to manage bullying with LGB youth group staff. However, they did not want liaison with schools except in cases of danger.

> It is like a little privacy over here. If you said something here and there is that link between school you don't know if they would tell the school and then the people at school are not as friendly as the people here and the people at school would judge you.
> (LGB Young Person)

4.3 Understanding Sexualities

One other theme highlighted by respondents with regard to building a supportive context in schools related to improving understanding of sexualities.

Understanding Sexualities: Recognition of different sexualities

School staff respondents were aware of a number of LGB pupils at the school. In a conversation with staff prior to the interviews, staff had said Year 11 LGB pupils had told them there was a group of LGB pupils in the school who all supported each other. They had asked staff if they could hold a Pride Event at the school. The EP was aware of LGB people in the local area commenting on the annual Pride event referred to earlier. He assumed there would be LGB pupils in local schools although particular LGB young people had not been discussed with him. The LGB youth worker highlighted the close liaison with the school that took part in the current study as well as one other.

Pupils were aware of LGB pupils at the school. However, one Year 10 pupil wondered if there may be more LGB pupils who were afraid to come out.

Neither school staff nor Year 10 and 12s were aware of LGB young people in Key Stage 3. Pupils did not think that young people at this age can know if they are LGB.

I: What about when you were younger? When you were in Year 7, or 8, year
9-   did you notice any bullying of pupils?
P: We didn't have anyone with different sexuality
P:I don't think you can know at that age.
(Y10 pupil)

However, Year 8 pupils mentioned that one girl in their year had self-identified as a lesbian.

Understanding Sexualities: Normalised

In contrast to LGB young people's views, staff respondents spoke of more acceptance for LGB people in the local area and in wider society and how this had had a positive impact on LGB young people's acceptance at school.

> I think that the last five to ten years there has been a change in perception of sexuality. In society generally it is much more mainstream could be one word, but it is much more of a norm that is accepted. I think homophobia has definitely decreased (Head of Humanities).

Staff respondents considered that school staff modelling how to accept LGB pupils was helpful. Furthermore, the presence of LGB staff who had self-identified to pupils was recognised as being helpful to normalise different sexualities, as well as participation at school social events by LGB staff and their partners.

> I know that there are students who are gay or confused or however you want to put it in Year 10 and 11. I know that they found that as a

positive role model and built relationships with those people in a very positive way.

(Head of Humanities).

The youth worker considered she was a positive role model because she was a lesbian. However, staff did say that it was up to each member of staff to decide whether they communicated their sexuality to young people.

School staff's views on LGB pupils' experience were mixed. One interviewee said school was a positive experience for these pupils and that it was almost 'trendy' to be a lesbian. She knew of a group of LGB pupils who sat in the communal area at break times who seemed content. Other school staff felt that young LGB had managed at school with support after experiencing confusion and some difficulties.

Older pupils felt it was a positive experience to be LGB at school and that there was not any bullying of LGB young people. As stated earlier, Year 12 pupils emphasised that all young people accepted each other regardless of their sexuality.

I: Is there bullying in the school of young people because of their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay?

P1: Like I said I come from an all boys' school and in this generation it (being LGB) is actually common.

P2: No one cares.

P1: Like I said, this generation does not care. Everyone gets on the same. (Year 12 pupils)

They said that a young person who communicates their sexuality is the same person as they were before. Year 12 pupils spoke of a friend who had spoken to her friends about her sexuality in Year 11 and found support from them. However, Year 10 and Year 12 pupils later indicated that not all pupils accept all LGB people. LGB young people who were part of high status peer groups were considered to be more accepted at school and thus had a positive experience. In addition, it was considered easier for girls to be out.

Furthermore, both pupils and LGB young people felt older pupils were more accepting of LGB people than younger pupils.

LGB young people agreed that older pupils were more accepting of LGB pupils because they were more mature.

> One of my best friends is a lesbian and nobody in her year knows but people above her year know and they accept it because they are more mature. They treat her the same, whereas the lower years don't.
> (LGB YP).

As stated earlier one young LGB person had become accepted throughout his time at school and had then loved his time there. In contrast, all LGB young people felt accepted at the LGB youth group; they felt they could be themselves there. They said that knowing people at the youth club had helped them to feel good about themselves. They described themselves as being 'all oddballs together' at the youth group and this facilitated a sense of belonging.

Understanding Sexualities: Not Necessarily Normalised

Although some LGB pupils were reported to have a positive experience at school, others were described as having struggled. As stated earlier one staff respondent considered it was a confusing and isolating time for LGB pupils wherever they are. Despite the view that acceptance had improved both locally and in society this staff respondent still felt that attitudes outside school had a negative impact on young LGB people.

All pupils considered it was hard to be LGB when younger. Year 8 pupils stated it was hard to be LGB at school because of being bullied. They spoke of a Year 8 girl's experience.

> She might be (bothered) deep down but she puts on a brave face

and says 'just go away'. There is no point.
(Year 8 pupil)

Some pupils considered it was harder for boys. One LGB young person had observed that girls' sexuality was accepted at a boys school and boys sexuality at a girls school but not vice versa.

Although one LGB young person had been accepted eventually at school the others had found it hard. At school they felt they were the 'oddballs'. 'Coming out' had been a difficult process for them.

As stated earlier, LGB young people felt LGB people were not accepted locally.

When you come out you can't go back. If you haven't then you are always safe. But once you have done it there is no turning back.
(LGB Young Person)

Talking about Sexualities: Lessons

One school staff respondent stated that different sexualities were taught about in Year10. As stated earlier discrimination of LGB people was part of schemes of work on discrimination of different groups. At the LGB youth group the LGB youth worker taught sexual health both formally in teaching sessions and informally in conversations relating to LGB young people's relationships. Discussions with LGB young people were also reported to focus on how to keep safe in the local area. This included advice on being aware of their surroundings and to inform friends where they were going when they met someone from an internet chat room.

A barrier to effective teaching on sexualities was perceived to be related to staff curiculum knowledge of PSHEE generally . The subject was taught by form tutors which was thought beneficial because they knew pupils. However, it was also felt form tutors may lack confidence and expertise in the subject.

A further forum for sexuality to be discussed in lessons at the school was through performing arts in which the school specialised. For example, the community youth worker said that some 'masculine' older boys had explored their sexuality through performing arts.

Some pupils' stated that different sexualities were included in the SRE curriculum. Others noted that SRE mainly covered heterosexual sex and did not include nor provide support for LGB on relationships. However, there was reported to be limited teaching on relationships generally and some reported they had had little SRE.

One LGB young person considered SRE had been effective in focusing on pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Other LGB young people stated there was limited SRE at their schools. None of the LGB young people reported inclusion of different sexualities in SRE. Indeed, the LGB young person who had attended the Church of England school quoted staff saying there should be no sex before marriage.

Talking about Sexualities: Talked about/not talked about

All staff respondents considered it important to view young people as individuals regardless of their sexuality because their needs are all different. There were conflicting views about the usefulness of labels. One staff respondent felt labels were not helpful; young people describe themselves as they wish and do not necessarily identify with the label 'gay, lesbian or bisexual'. However, the LGB youth worker recognised that young people who attended the LGB youth group did identify as LGB because of the nature of the group. She had discussed the concept with them and had felt it was helpful for young people to understand how they may want to both define themselves or be defined by others. Neither the pupils nor the LGB young people referred to the concept of labels.

Pupils reported a range of contrasting views on how to respond to a friend who 'came out'. While it was considered to be hurtful to say someone was gay if they were suspected of being so, it was also considered that a LGB person who was not 'out' was lying to their friends. In contrast to LGB young people's views referred to above, it was not viewed as bullying to say someone is 'gay'; it was viewed as prompting a friend to 'come out'. While Year 12 pupils considered that a LGB person was the same after they 'came out', Year 10s felt that friends needed to get used to this change. A final understanding of LGB young people referred to the personality of the LGB young person. It was considered if the person was easy to get on with, they would be more comfortable 'coming out'.

At the LGB youth group young people felt they could talk to like-minded people and be themselves. They considered that at school their peers are scared of other young people's negative views and of being excluded by their friends.

4.4 Future

Towards the end of interviews and focus group discussion respondents were asked what support in the future could promote wellbeing for all young people and LGB young people in particular.

Recognising Needs: Groups (including those with different sexualities)

One staff respondent felt that there needed to be employment opportunities for local young people. He stated currently young people had to leave the area if they had aspirations for a successful career. He considered that limited opportunities had a negative impact on young people's wellbeing.

Year 8 and 10 pupils stated there was little to do in the local area after school and would like more activities available that young people could access. Older pupils felt that acceptance beyond school would help support wellbeing of LGB young people; equality in legislation would help acceptance and media

storylines representing positive experiences for LGB young people would help LGB young people be more comfortable with themselves. They felt it would be good to have a youth club for young people who are LGB as well as a group in school for young people to develop LGB young people's confidence.

In contrast to earlier comments indicating there was no need for particular support for LGB pupils, pupils suggested a number of ways that LGB pupils could be supported in the future. With regards to support for LGB young people in school, pupils considered there should be more discussion with LGB pupils. This should include eliciting LGB pupils' views on the use of the word 'gay'. In addition, pupils considered the opportunity for LGB pupils to have conversations with other LGB young people and adults was mentioned as being helpful; they could hear how other LGB people had managed. This could enable LGB pupils to feel calm about the process and to encourage them to discuss their sexuality. Pupils also considered schools should have a role in supporting LGB through the process of 'coming out' by stating they will support them. Some parents, it was considered, would be in agreement with this although others would be against this.

LGB young people did not accept that a LGB person had changed after 'coming out'. Rather, they agreed with Year 12 pupils that a LGB person was the same after 'coming out'.

> I was saying they should just accept you for who you are because basically you are still the same person. Nothing has changed about me so if you don't like it, then you don't like it, and then you have to deal with it. It is like getting inside each person's head and change their view of you.
> (LGB Young Person)

Recognising Needs: Individuals (including those with different sexualities)

All Staff felt that appropriate support should involve supporting the whole child to promote their wellbeing. The focus should not just be on academic results

but on acknowledging the achievements of all, encouraging young people to enjoy learning and being part of the community. All respondents were very clear that schools should accept LGB young people. Furthermore, it was felt that the commonalities between LGB young people and heterosexual young people must be acknowledged.

> The one thing is that at the end of the day it doesn't really matter whether you are LGB-T or any of the other issues that we face in society - at the end of the day we are all part of the human race (LGB Youth Worker).

School staff considered that treating LGB young people differently would be counterproductive. However, it was also recognised that LGB young people had some different needs and support should be responsive to those. Suggestions included more provision outside school and the need for LGB young people to be able to discuss romantic and sexual relationships with LGB adults.

Pupils agreed with staff that acceptance of young people who are LGB is catering for their individual needs. LGB young people also highlighted the need to feel accepted in order to feel safe and be themselves.

Helping young people to learn more about sexualities: The curriculum

There were contrasting views as to whether LGB matters should be incorporated into the curriculum. Some staff felt sexuality should be incorporated into the school curriculum not as an 'add on' but throughout.

> We are now doing Black History month, one it is tokenistic and two it builds walls sometimes between a group of people who are white and why make it Black History month, what is the relevance to us? Whereas if you do it within normal lessons, say in English if you are looking at Oscar Wilde and you talk about that or talk about him first

and then say and he was gay or saying this person was gay and they are 'what'. Politicians in politics and that kind of thing. I think that is a much better way of doing it– planning things in as part of... Exactly, like when we do discrimination – right we are now going to do homophobia. What is discrimination? And do lessons on different types of discrimination. Start with race and they get that and understand it much easier and then you can start looking at age and sexuality and 'oh' is that discrimination as well? That I think works better.
(Head of Humanities)

In contrast to staff, LGB young people did not think incorporating sexuality into the curriculum would be appropriate.

> I: You smiled when I asked you about poetry and stories, do you think say for example in English if you did stories around a young couple, two boys or two girls together or?
>
> LGB YP: I think that would just kick up a fuss to be honest.
>
> > LGB YP: It is like on that TV programme, the white school and the black school and the football team was majority white and had three black people on it, so all the people in the black school said 'why is it that the white people are on the football team?' they'd say 'oh, why is it always a gay person in this story'. It is a small majority of the world are gay, so why is it that it's brought up all the time? That's what another person who is not gay and that there are so few people that are like this, so why do we have to learn about it. I think that is what they would think.
>
> (LGB Young People)

LGB young people felt a consistent approach to anti bullying work in PHSE would be effective and that if anti-bullying work were done properly it would work. Schools should teach acceptance and that homophobic bullying was wrong; this should be taught in Year 7. This would enable LGB young people to feel safe at school. This should help young people feel that discussions of LGB matters is not a taboo subject.

SRE was mentioned by the non-school staff and one Year 8 pupil. Staff felt that SRE should reflect the diversity of society and include emotional development needs, respecting one's own and others' bodies, how to maintain good health and encouraging the development of a personal moral code. The Year 8 pupil considered the school should teach about relationships.

> We are going to have a whole school meet/assembly thing and we will have a Powerpoint of people getting on well and then people having an argument and have photos to see why you would do that and just say about all the positive things that happen.
>
> (Year 8 Pupil)

Responding to discrimination

The EP and LGB Youth Worker believed a reduction in homophobic bullying would lead to a greater sense of belonging at school by LGB young people. Bullying, they considered, should not be laughed off as harmless and there was a need to consider the views of the victim. Both Youth Worker Respondents felt that homophobic actions by teachers must be responded to effectively so as to eliminate it. Staff considered the response to homophobic bullying should be as for racism.

Pupils also drew parallels between tackling homophobia and tackling racism. They considered that homophobic bullying needs to be responded to seriously and exclusion for this type of bullying would communicate pupils how serious it was.

LGB respondents also compared homophobic bullying to racism though there inconsistent opinions on the use of similar sanctions for homophobic bullying. Initially, it was thought, strong sanctions may have the reverse effect. However, after some discussion they revised their opinion.

I suppose start slowly and then build it up. Start off with detention or whatever and then build it up to the same procedure as racism. But if you went straight in it would have the opposite effect because they would just do it more to prove a point.

(LGB Young Person)

LGB young people also mentioned hiring more LGB teachers as a means of reducing homophobia.

I: How do you think schools could reduce or ultimately get rid of homophobia?

LGB YP: Where you could reduce it or getting close to stopping it is hiring   more gay or lesbian teachers.

(LGB Young Person)

Chapter 5-Discussion

5.1 RQ1: How have secondary schools supported the wellbeing of pupils in general and of LGB pupils in particular?

Previous research has identified a number of ways in which secondary schools have supported the wellbeing of pupils in general and of LGB pupils in particular. Many of these strategies are relevant to all pupils and some of particular relevance to LGB pupils.

Whole school approaches are widely considered to be the most effective way to promote wellbeing for all pupils (Durlak and Wells, 1997; Green et al., 2005; Merrell et al., 2006; Wells et al., 2003) as well as LGB pupils (Biddulph, 2006; Goodenow et al., 2006; Mufioz-Plaza et al., 2002).

Approaches at a whole school level found to promote wellbeing are an inclusive culture (Wells et al., 2003). These approaches aim to involve changes to the school culture and environment. This may involve changes in teachers' attitude, beliefs and behaviours (Wells et al., 2003) and include promotional rather than preventative strategies (Green et al., 2005). Similarly, studies with LGB pupils have found that the creation of a normative school environment in which young people could "feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation" supports wellbeing (Davis et al., 2009).

However, a number of studies have found that a significant number of LGB young people have experienced homophobic harassment at school (Ellis & High, 2004; Hillier et al. 1998; Mason & Palmer, 1996; Rivers, 2001; Hunt & Jensen, 2007) with percentages ranging from 30-50%. This is reflected in a theme in the research literature that LGB pupils feel psychological and physical safety are key to wellbeing at school (Orban, 2004; Davis et al., 2009).

Furthermore, experiences of homophobia are linked to higher rates of suicide and depressive symptoms amongst LGB young people homophobia (Lewis et

al., 2003), although these rates are comparable for victims of other forms of bullying (Rivers, 2006).

Schools with low levels of bullying generally have also reported low levels of homophobic bullying (Warwick, 2007). In addition, an encouraging finding is that that negative outcomes for LGB pupils can be preventable with an inclusive school climate (Goodenow et al., 2006; Mufioz-Plaza et al., 2002).

A key finding is that authority standing up for LGB pupils reduces homophobic bullying (Davis et al., 2009; Goodenow et al., 2006; Warwick, 2007). Further effective strategies found to reducing homophobic bullying are including homophobic bullying in anti-bullying policies (Goodenow et al., 2006; Mufioz-Plaza et al., 2002; Warwick, 2007), leadership from school leaders on viewing homophobic bullying as a problem (Warwick, 2007) and responding to it in a similar way to racism (Warwick, 2007). Furthermore, an inclusive school environment is also associated with lower levels of homophobic bullying (Warwick, 2007).

In addition to work at a whole school level and on reducing all forms of bullying including homophobic bullying, a further way that schools support the wellbeing of all pupils is through positive relationships. This is a recurring theme in the literature on schools (Osterman, 2000) and is echoed in studies on promoting the wellbeing of LGB pupils and young people (Goodenow et al., 2006; Crowley et al., 2007).

A further common finding in the literature on promoting wellbeing for all pupils is that work should be at a number of levels. In addition to work at a whole school level (Durlak & Wells, 1997;), work with groups and specialist support at an individual level is also considered effective (Durlak & Wells, 1997; Merrell et al., 2006;).

Previous research on supporting the wellbeing of LGB pupils also highlights the importance of support at a whole school and group level. Previous findings have found groups both at school and in the community support the

wellbeing of LGB young people. Research in the U.S.A. has highlighted how pupil led groups, open to people of all orientation aimed to reduce prejudice and harassment, are associated with a supportive climate for LGB pupils (Szalacha, 2003; Goodenow et al., 2006). In addition, previous research highlights the importance of safe spaces for LGB young people. There is robust evidence internationally for safe spaces (Davis et al., 2009). In the UK, LGB Youth Groups are considered to provide an opportunity for LGB young people to 'be themselves' amongst equals (Keogh, 1999). However, there is controversy over the value of safe spaces with some claiming that they can result in the 'othering' of particular groups (Rasmussen, 2006). In contrast to what is considered to promote wellbeing of all pupils, specialist support for individuals is not mentioned as being a supportive mechanism for LGB pupils. However, as noted earlier, support from peers and school staff as well as staff standing up for LGB pupils considered to support the needs of the individual LGB pupil.

A final theme in both the research on supporting the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular is the key role of discussion. Research into promoting wellbeing for all pupils has found that an interactive rather than a didactic mode of delivery for support programmes is most effective (Browne et al., 2004). This emphasis on an interactive approach was also found in research to reduce homophobic bullying (Warwick, 2007). Including LGB matters in the curriculum is also considered effective in promoting the wellbeing of LGB pupils (Davis et al., 2009; Mufioz-Plaza et al., 2002) and reducing homophobic bullying (Warwick, 2007).

5.2 RQ2 (i). What forms of support are perceived to be most helpful for the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular in secondary schools in a Local Authority in the South East of England by LGB young people, by pupils in schools, by school staff and by Children's Services Professionals?

(ii). How can separate youth provision support the wellbeing of LGB young people?

One of the aims of this study was to further understanding of how secondary schools and youth provision support the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular. Some of the findings of this study can be understood in terms of five important processes that were considered by participants to promote wellbeing. These were 'promoting equality', 'preventing harm', 'supporting relationships', 'meeting needs' and 'understanding sexualities'.

This study was framed by a Positive Psychology approach which aims to study strength and virtue (Seligman et al., 2009). In the current study a number of strengths were reported in terms of how secondary schools and youth provision support the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular. However, there were also a number of difficulties reported and this presents a challenge to a positive psychology framework. For example, LGB young people reported a significant level of homophobic bullying at their respective schools. Thus, it is important to consider the findings of this study both in terms of what was perceived to be helpful as well as what was perceived to be unsupportive or which compromised wellbeing.

Perhaps a useful frame to understand these findings is to view processes of promoting equality, preventing harm, supporting relationships, meeting needs and understanding sexualities as being informed by two sets of practices; the first of which, 'conviviality' has a positive influence on wellbeing and the second, 'heteronormativity' a negative influence.

'Conviviality' (Gilroy, 2004, p167) appears to have a positive influence on wellbeing. Following analysis of the data and on further reading, this term seemed a useful way of understanding participants' views on how to support the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular. 'Conviviality' is defined by Gilroy as the 'coexistence of family life, youth cultures, sexual interaction and music' (Gilroy, 2004, p167).

Gilroy (2004) also states that conviviality is described as being ' an unruly, untidy and convivial mode of interaction involving the explicit negotiation of differences'. He argues that 'conviviality' is an ordinary part of life for many in urban areas. It does not, however, deny the existence of discrimination. Rather, it points to both the forces that undermine equality as well as valuing the everyday experiences of people involved with those who are different without having to fear the difference (Gilroy, 2004).

The value of 'heteronormativity', discussed in Chapter 2, has a negative influence on wellbeing and the wellbeing of LGB young people in particular. 'Heteronormativity' is defined as existing when heterosexuality is perceived as the norm and is privileged over other sexualities and behaviours, which are deemed to be deviant (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). Heteronormativity is viewed as a 'celebration' of the socially constructed genders that highlight the difference between men and women and proscribes gender transgression (Chesir-Teran, 2003). It is considered to be 'celebrated' through the institutions and cultural practices that uphold this view (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009).

As noted in Chapter 3, this study is informed by an understanding that reality is socially constructed. Each actor constructs their own understanding of wellbeing through discussion with others. It is argued that some of these social relationships are informed by practices which are convivial and those which are heteronormative.

In schools and youth settings social relations are structured in formal and informal ways (Biddulph, 2006). Formal ways include examples such as

policies, curriculum planning and audits of pupils' needs. Informal ways include interactions between pupils and between pupils and staff. The processes of 'promoting equality', 'preventing harm', 'supporting relationships', 'meeting needs' and 'understanding sexualities' shall now be discussed with reference to examples of the formal and informal ways in which social relations were structured as reported by participants. In addition, discussion will focus on the convivial and heteronormative practices which, it is argued, informed those social relations.

Promoting Equality

Participants understanding of equality shall be discussed, followed by a summary of how equality was promoted and how this was considered to be tied into a supportive school ethos. It shall be argued that promoting equality was informed by the value of conviviality which supports wellbeing for all and LGB young people in particular.

Equality was defined as meaning that all in the school community or youth provision were equally valued. A further element of equality was that it was free from discrimination and embraced diversity. A third element of equality particularly highlighted by staff and older pupils was support for each pupils' needs in terms of academic and social and emotional skills.

With regards to LGB pupils, school staff and the EP considered there was more acceptance of LGB people in the local area and in England generally mirroring recent research of a significant shift in public policy and attitudes towards different sexualities in the last decade in the UK (Coleman, 2011, p148). Furthermore, an increasing acceptance of LGB people locally and in England generally was thought to impact on acceptance of LGB pupils at school.

Formal expressions of equality at the school included policies, the gender make-up of the Leadership Team at the school, promoting pupils' voice and the curriculum. The range of subjects and courses available to pupils, targets

set for academic, social and emotional skills as well as work set at a pupil's level was cited as enabling all to reach their potential. This would promote equality of opportunity for all pupils in line with the requirements as outlined in the Equality Act (2010).

At the school all were reported to be equally valued including LGB pupils. This was echoed in informal expressions of equality as highlighted by older pupils. Y10 and Y12 pupils considered LGB pupils were reported to be accepted at the school and Y12 pupils stated there was no homophobic bullying in the 6th Form. In addition, a number of LGB staff at the school were reported by school staff participants to have identified as LGB to staff and pupils. A further aspect of the process of equality mentioned by one staff participant was school staff's understanding of the concept of professionalism which included promoting diversity and challenging discrimination.

This whole school approach to promoting equality both through formal and informal expressions of the school ethos are consistent with the findings of previous research on wellbeing for all young people (Green et al., 2005; Durlak & Wells, 1997), research focusing on the needs of LGB young people (Davis et al., 2009; Warwick, 2007) as well as guidance to eliminate homophobic bullying (DCSF, 2007;Jennett, 2004). Consistent with previous research on promoting wellbeing for al pupils (Green et al., 2005; Durlak & Wells, 1997) the findings of this study suggest that a whole school focus that promotes the wellbeing of all also promotes the wellbeing of LGB pupils. A school culture that values all equally including LGB young people and adults as well as the presence of LGB staff who have identified as LGB to staff and pupils suggests an environment in which diverse sexualities are considered the norm. These findings provide support for the work of Davis et al. (2009) who found that a normative environment is supportive of wellbeing for LGB young people. As Wells et al. (1998) noted, the findings of this study suggest that all in the school community were engaged in promoting wellbeing and appreciated and valued the commitment to change. The commitment to equality in terms of senior leadership recruitment and availability of senior staff indicates a commitment to promoting equality at a strategic level

consistent with previous guidance and research on support for LGB young people (Biddulph, 2006; DCSF, 2007; Jennett, 2004; Warwick, 2007).

Whilst school staff and older pupils voiced opinions that the school promoted equality for all, LGB young people's experiences were more mixed. At the LGB Youth Group, they reported being accepted for who they were and being treated equally echoing previous findings on a LGB youth group setting (Crowley et al., 2007). A very powerful story was told by one LGB young person of how he had achieved acceptance at his school. He recounted how he had gained acceptance by all pupils by Year 11 by 'persuading' his group of friends and later others at his school that he was still the same person after he had 'come out'. He had considered his peers would need to accommodate their thinking if they were not comfortable with his sexuality. However, other LGB young people and the LGB youth worker did not report acceptance by all at schools. This shall be discussed in more detail in the section on preventing harm. Having said this, the LGB young people did consider they were accepted by some staff at their respective schools. When they were not treated negatively, they felt accepted. Indeed, this was a persistent theme of the LGB young people's discourse.

An ethos that promotes equality was considered by staff participants to support the wellbeing of all young people including LGB young people. As stated above school staff considered that all pupils including LGB pupils were equally valued in the school and could be themselves. The link between being equally valued and wellbeing was echoed in the narrative of the LGB young person who highlighted how he had persuaded the whole school to accept him. He reported that he had been happy eventually at school. Thus a direct connection was made between acceptance and wellbeing. This also echoes previous research that highlights the importance of social context that is not informed by heteronormative practices for the wellbeing of LGB young people.

A further link to an ethos that promotes equality was associated with the presence of LGB staff who had identified as LGB at the school. This was

considered by staff participants to help to 'normalise' different sexualities at the school and at the LGB youth group.

The findings suggest that formal and informal expressions of the ethos of the school and LGB youth group were informed by the value of conviviality. Whilst participants reported a number of ways that promote equality and hence the wellbeing of all young people including LGB young people, there was also an understanding that it was important not to deny the existence of discrimination. This is reflected in the school policies and the focus on promoting diversity and challenging discrimination. In addition, although some of the LGB young people experienced difficulties at their respective schools, they were able to report some positive experiences at school. This suggests the presence of conviviality in that they could appreciate these everyday positive exchanges in a context that was largely difficult for them.

Participants reported a number of ways that equality was promoted at secondary schools. However, at the school involved in the study there were some reports of bullying including homophobic bullying. Furthermore, at other schools in the area there were reports of significant levels of homophobic bullying. These reports present a challenge to claims of equality. The next section shall discuss how bullying was defined and responded to.

Preventing Harm

The process of preventing harm shall be introduced by a discussion of participants' definitions of bullying followed by a review of what was considered to work well and less well to combat bullying and, in particular, homophobic bullying. It shall be argued that strategies thought to work well in reducing homophobic bullying were informed by convivial practices. In contrast, it will be argued that strategies considered less effective to combat homophobic bullying were informed by heteronormative practices.
There was consensus amongst participants that there was bullying for a range of reasons. With regards to homophobic bullying varying forms were cited including spreading rumours, teaching that being LGB was wrong in a Church

of England School, negative comments on the street to LGB people in the local area. In addition, LGB young people considered media representations of LGB young people solely as victims was a form of homophobic bullying. LGB young people also described non- verbal forms of communication by school staff which signalled disapproval and which, they considered, implicitly encouraged homophobic bullying by pupils.

However, the most prevalent form of homophobic bullying cited involved the use of the word 'gay' or 'lesbian'. Having said that, there were differing views as to whether this was always bullying. Perspectives ranged from defining these interactions as 'banter' to defining them as bullying. Many older pupils considered this type of name-calling was 'banter' and fun. Younger pupils, on the other hand, did question the fairness of the one sided nature of this type of interaction. School staff considered it was a 'judgement call' and depended on the context of the interaction. Furthermore, they did not consider this language was as clear cut as racist terms. In contrast, the EP, LGB Youth Worker and LGB young people were clear that it was bullying and were emphatic that the use of the word 'gay' was very damaging. LGB young people went further, considering the persistent use of the word could lead to suicide. This understanding of the potential consequences of homophobic bullying echoes the findings of a number of researchers (Lewis et al., 2003; Rivers, 2006; Rivers & Noret, 2008; Szymanski, Chung & Balsam, 2001).

Perhaps a useful way of understanding participants' differing views on the use of the word 'lesbian' or 'gay' is to draw on the literature on teasing. In a review of research on teasing, Keltner, Capps, Kring and Young (2001) wrote that teasing represents pro-social and anti-social behaviour in the same exchange. According to Boxer & Bordes-Conte (1997) teasing is a 'bond, nip or a bite' depending on the context. However, Keltner et al. (2001) wrote that individuals of high status are more likely to tease because of the face saving potential. It has been highlighted in the academic literature that individuals often tease others who have violated accepted social norms and its purpose is to encourage avoidance of these norm violations (Keltner et al., 2001). According to this view, the presence of 'banter' involving the word 'gay' can

compromise wellbeing because those perceived as having high status 'tease' others to encourage avoidance of violations of heteronormativity.

The LGB young people's, EP and LGB Youth Worker' discourse indicated they were aware of the potential for this type of teasing to 'bite' and how it was informed by heteronormative practices. With regards to the Year 8 pupils questioning the fairness of this type of name calling, it could be that the process of reflecting on the needs of LGB pupils had led to an understanding of the potential for this type of behaviour to 'bite'. Older pupils and school staff, on the other hand, did not appear to be aware of banter's potential to 'nip' or 'bite'.

Previous research on reducing homophobic bullying (Warwick, 2007), promoting the wellbeing of LGB pupils (Davis et al., 2009) as well as guidance on reducing homophobic bullying (Jennett, 2004) has highlighted the importance of senior leaders viewing this type of bullying as a problem. In addition, in line with the Equality Act (2010), schools have a statutory duty to demonstrate how their services, policies and programmes affect persons of relevant characteristics including sexual orientation. This duty includes eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations. It is argued that senior school leaders' capacity to be aware of the incidence of discrimination against LGB pupils in the form of homophobic bullying is compromised, if conversations are not premised on an understanding of the heteronormative practices that can inform both formal and informal relations in school. Rather, it is likely some or much homophobic bullying will be ignored (Epstein et al., 2003, p. 132-133), if the heteronormative practices informing 'banter' are not acknowledged. As noted above, LGB young people, the EP and LGB Youth Worker were aware of what informed such relations. It is argued that a definition of homophobic bullying has to incorporate the perspectives of those on the receiving end of such language. It is encouraging that Y8 pupils began to question the fairness of this 'banter'. Conversations at a broader school level may facilitate such a shift to a more empathetic understanding.

As well as varying views of which types of interactions constituted homophobic bullying, there were also varying views as to the incidence of this type of bullying. With regards to bullying generally, school staff noted that the pupil council had reported school as being largely safe. Nevertheless, the pupil council had acknowledged that there was some bullying. With regards to homophobic bullying LGB young people reported significant levels at their respective schools. These reports are consistent with previous research findings of high levels of this type of bullying (Hunt & Jensen, 2007; Rivers, 2001). The EP, LGB Youth Worker and younger pupils also cited homophobic bullying as an issue. It is interesting to note that older pupils initially did not report any homophobic bullying in their year. However, when asked to reflect on the school experience from the perspective of a LGB pupil, they reported difficulties particularly for younger pupils and those considered of a 'low' social status in the peer hierarchy. Echoing younger pupils' change in perspective, it is relevant to note that when asked to view the school experience from the standpoint of a LGB pupil, older pupils developed an insight into the difficulties experienced. With regards to school staff, two school staff participants were not aware of homophobic bullying, although the other staff member was aware.

Thus, whilst at an informal level at the school, there was some awareness of homophobic bullying, it does not appear there was a formal system in place at the school to monitor and respond to it. As referred to earlier, some authors have written that wrote that homophobia can be ignored or not noticed as a problem (Epstein et al., 2003, p. 132-133). It could be argued that this was the case at a formal level. As noted earlier, previous research and guidance highlights that psychological and physical safety at school is a key component of wellbeing for LGB pupils. An inconsistent awareness of the nature and incidence of homophobic bullying at a formal level of a school compromises both psychological and physical safety and hence compromises the wellbeing of LGB pupils.

As noted earlier, a number of difficulties were reported by participants, which present a challenge to the Positive Psychology approach framing this study. It

is considered that a number of processes associated with preventing harm were informed by heteronormative practices. These are the significant levels of homophobic bullying as reported by LGB young people at their respective schools, some homophobic bullying at the school taking part in the study as well as the understanding surrounding 'banter' by school staff and some pupils and the apparent 'silence' over awareness of the incidence of homophobic bullying at a strategic level at the school.

Despite varied awareness of the understanding and incidence of homophobic bullying, a number of actions were reported that took place at the level of the school and Children's Services that were considered effective in preventing harm. These shall be discussed in terms of immediate and preventative responses.

Immediate responses to bullying largely focused on the use of discussion; encouraging and modelling pro-social skills, empathy, forgiveness and taking responsibility. At the LGB youth group, highlighting the importance of equality in daily interactions was considered to be effective in reducing bullying. This emphasis placed on discussion is consistent with previous research on promoting wellbeing (Biddulph, 2006; Browne et al., 2004) and reducing homophobic bullying (Warwick, 2007).

Preventative strategies cited at both the school and the LGB Youth Group to prevent harm also focused on the use of discussion. At the school, PSHEE schemes of work around discrimination and stereotyping as well as assemblies to reduce homophobic bullying were reported as helpful. It is of note that participants referred to elements of PSHEE as helping to prevent harm and yet at the time of writing PSHEE is a non-statutory part of the curriculum (QCA, 2007).

At the LGB Youth Group, there were discussions to support LGB young people to find ways of managing difficulties at school. Conversations with LGB Young People about bullying at school supported them to consider whom they could speak to at school about it. It is important to note that LGB Young

People did not want communication with school staff about their concerns. Rather, they appeared to prefer the safety and separateness of the LGB Youth Group. LGB young people's views on this shall be discussed later.

Further preventative strategies at the school echo findings from previous research findings that whole school approaches (Merrell et al., 2006;Wells et al., 2003) and modifying the school environment (Durlak & Wells, 1997) are effective strategies in promoting wellbeing. At the school these further strategies involved the use of and design of the physical setting. The open physical setting was described as helping to limit opportunities for bullying. Staff availability at break times and sharing of communal space was a formal school strategy to enhance pupil safety. Indeed one of the staff commented on the use of the communal café area by a group of LGB pupils. It may be that this use of communal space by staff acted to reduce homophobic bullying. It may be that LGB pupils' use of this communal space suggests an informal 'safe space' within the school environment where teachers were available.

It is argued that these immediate and preventative actions relating to discussion and the design and use of the physical setting are informed by convivial practices which do not deny the existence of discrimination. Rather, they 'point to both the forces that undermine equality as well as valuing the everyday experiences of people involved with those who are different without having to fear the difference' (Gilroy, 2004).

However, whilst a number of both immediate and preventative actions were considered to prevent harm, there were also a number of actions considered ineffective. Year 8 pupils reported that homophobic bullying was responded to but it did not reduce the bullying. Furthermore, older pupils did comment later in the interviews that they thought LGB pupils may not always tell staff about homophobic bullying. In addition, LGB Young People reported that most staff at their respective schools did not respond to complaints about teachers' nonverbal bullying behaviours and homophobic bullying by pupils. LGB young people interpreted this lack of response as being due to those teachers'

prejudices. It is considered relevant to note, however, that older pupils at the school reported that some teachers did not respond to any forms of bullying. Finally, whilst staff considered homophobic bullying was treated as seriously as racism, pupils and LGB Young People did not agree with this. They considered treating homophobia as seriously as racism would reduce it, echoing previous findings (Warwick, 2007).

Whilst, as previously noted, there were some actions both at an informal and formal level at the school to prevent harm, it is considered that the actions considered ineffective in reducing homophobic bullying were informed by heteronormative practices at a number of levels. They appear to indicate that there were not formal systems at the school in terms of how homophobic bullying was defined and in terms of recording and responding to this type of bullying. Furthermore, these actions suggest there was not a strategic understanding amongst senior leaders of the inequalities and potential harm associated with homophobic bullying. It is relevant that pupils did not consider homophobic bullying was treated as seriously as racism which further indicates a 'silence' over this issue at a senior level.

At the other schools in the area, the 'silence' over complaints of homophobic bullying suggest that these teachers' interactions may have been informed by heteronormative practices that perceive heterosexuality as the norm and is privileged over other sexualities and behaviours, which are deemed to be deviant (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). However, it may be that these teachers did not respond to bullying complaints generally.

Supporting Relationships

Whilst it was found that LGB young people had experienced difficulties as a result of homophobic bullying, the support and camaraderie of relationships was highlighted by all as promoting wellbeing. As noted earlier, this echoes a recurring theme in the literature on schools regarding the importance of positive relationships between all in the school community (Osterman, 2000)

and findings that positive adult-child relationships are a key factor that promotes emotional wellbeing (Browne et al., 2004).

All pupils and LGB Young People considered trust, honesty and being able to confide in someone as important features of good relationships. All older pupils and LGB Young People highlighted 'fun' as being important in relationships. Pupils commented on the value of friendships with peers as a source of feeling good about themselves and as a way of learning to manage relationships. They considered they learnt about relationships from family, staff and peers. Older pupils also mentioned learning about relationships from their friends' and their own experiences. LGB young people also learnt from their own, their family, LGB youth group staff and their friends' experiences. Thus, there was consensus amongst pupils and LGB young people over what constituted a good relationship and many similarities regarding who they learnt about relationships from. As noted earlier one of the components of wellbeing as defined in this study is 'psychological wellbeing' (Keyes, 2009). This includes the ability to form trusting warm relationships with others (Keyes, 2009). The findings of this study indicate the similarities in both pupils and LGB young people's understanding and experience which is in line with Keyes' definition. Previous research has indicated that both heterosexual and LGB young people had many worries and concerns in common (Rivers & Noret, 2008). The findings of this study go beyond what LGB young people and heterosexual young people consider compromises wellbeing to a shared understanding of what supports it. Having said that, LGB young people did not mention learning about relationships from school staff. It is argued that this represents an inequality.

Formal ways in which relationships were supported were through an emphasis on promoting supportive relationships both at the school and the LGB youth group through everyday interactions with pupils and young people and the strategic use of the shared space. A further formal way in which supportive relationships were promoted at the school was the modelling by staff of interaction skills such as being welcoming, approachable, working collaboratively, consistency and not belittling pupils. In addition, staff modelled

acceptance of LGB pupils. This is consistent with guidance recommending that staff should model the behaviours of respect, understanding and self-awareness they want pupils to demonstrate with LGB pupils (Jennett, 2004).

Furthermore, staff were aware of the individual nature of interaction and the importance of encouraging a young person to be able to identify which member of staff may be helpful for them. School staff considered the emphasis on trusting relationships was important for all pupils including LGB pupils. Robinson (2010) proposed that schools need to consider carefully how they support young people at the point of transition of identifying themselves as LGB. Previous guidance (DCSF, 2007; Jennett, 2004) outline how staff should give support and respect to a pupil who 'comes out', give reassurance that there are many other LGB people in the world, and ensure them the information will be treated as confidential unless there is a safeguarding concern. A further recommendation in guidance to reduce homophobia is to create a supportive atmosphere in tutor groups in which diversity is accepted and pupils can trust their tutor (Jennett, 2004). However, it also advocates that all staff take responsibility for the welfare of pupils and should not to abdicate this role to a school counsellor (Jennett, 2004). Thus, guidance goes beyond the importance of supportive relationships at the point when a LGB pupil wants to 'come out', rather it emphasises the value of trusting relationships with pupils throughout their time in school. This is consistent with the views of school staff in the present study. However, school staff considered a flexible approach was needed that took account of who pupils felt they could trust rather than appointing particular people LGB pupils should talk to such as a tutor. As noted earlier, studies in the U.S.A. on school factors that promote the wellbeing of LGB pupils found that pupils considered having a member of staff they could speak to (Goodenow et al., 2006) and those in authority standing up for them (Davis et al., 2009) was associated with physical safety and wellbeing. The findings of this study go beyond the focus on safety and highlights the role of staff as being a support both to prevent safety and to give emotional support more generally. It is argued that this focus on relationships is informed by convivial practices that 'value the

everyday experiences of people involved with those who are different' (Gilroy, 2004).

In addition, staff considered there were benefits for LGB pupils when staff identified as LGB. However, this was considered a personal choice for staff. Guidance on reducing homophobia (Jennett, 2004) highlights the importance of creating an ethos in which LGB staff can be open about their sexuality such as for example, being able to bring their partner to a school social event. LGB staff at the school in this study were reported to have brought partners to school social events. This suggests that LGB staff considered they were accepted and equally valued at the school. Thus, as well as supporting positive relationships between staff and pupils, it is argued that it is helpful to support positive relationships between staff such that LGB staff feel comfortable with being open about their sexuality. It is argued that a school ethos that enables LGB staff to be open about their sexuality both in formal and informal contexts reflects convivial practices.

In addition to formal ways that convivial practices informed positive relationships, participants also reported informal ways that relationships were supported. As stated above older pupils and LGB young people considered 'fun' was important to good relationships. Older pupils described this element as being a factor in their interactions with some staff. LGB young people also commented on how teachers would make learning fun and one LGB young person described how he 'would end up having a natter and a good old gossip' with one teacher. At the LGB youth group 'fun' was a feature of their interactions with youth group staff. Both LGB young people and older pupils did highlight how this element of 'fun' was within the boundaries of a professional relationship and staff were clear about the need to pass on any safeguarding concerns. Thus the older pupils and LGB young people considered 'fun' within professional boundaries to be an important element of their interactions with staff. This goes beyond the focus of previous research and guidance that focuses on trusting relationships and staff who will stand up for LGB pupils.

As well as convivial practices informing relationships with staff, pupils also reported how these practices informed their relationships with peers including LGB peers. Older pupils mentioned LGB friends for whom school was a positive experience at school. These friends had found support from friends when they 'came out'. In addition, there appeared to be LGB friendship groups at the school who supported each other. At the LGB youth group, LGB Young People felt a sense of belonging with peers and staff and reported being able to be themselves. Both older pupils and LGB young people emphasised the fun they had at their respective settings. In addition, as noted earlier, one LGB young had enjoyed his time there with friends at school once he was accepted by all as an equal.

Pupils largely considered relationships at school were good in terms of their definitions of good relationships. They also referred to relationships that LGB pupils had that constituted good relationships with staff and peers. At the LGB youth group LGB Young People also considered relationships were good in terms of trust, honesty and fun. At their respective school one LGB young person mentioned good relationships with peers at school once his sexuality was accepted and another LGB young person described a relationship with a member of staff that was consistent with the definition of a good relationship.

It is argued that those social relations described above represent four types of friendship experience for LGB pupils; acceptance by all the student body, support from a close circle of friends who were heterosexual or both LGB and heterosexual, support from a close circle of LGB friends and support from LGB friends at the LGB youth group. Furthermore, each of these types of experience could be understood as being informed by convivial practices. It is argued that the first of these would be the most supportive of wellbeing. Indeed, the LGB young person highlighted how he had been happy eventually when he had been accepted. Whilst the other types of friendship experience implicitly assume the pupils and young people may not be accepted by others outside of their friendship group, it is argued that these experiences can still support wellbeing. In line with the definition of conviviality given earlier, convivial practices do not deny the existence of discrimination.

With respect to the current study there appeared to be conviviality for some LGB young people at the school. Furthermore, LGB young people had found convivial ways of enjoying their youth with friends at the youth group despite negative experiences elsewhere.

Meeting Needs

Participants reports regarding the awareness of needs and support to meet those needs shall now be discussed with regards to the convivial and heteronormative practices that are considered to inform the process of meeting needs.

Formal ways informed by convivial practices included awareness of a range of needs such as ASD, BESD and sexual health needs and systems in place to support those needs. In addition, there was awareness of the need to respond to each pupil as an individual and take family circumstances into account. It was widely agreed that this awareness and set of systems promoted wellbeing. This indicates there were strategic discussions regarding the needs of pupils with different needs.

With regards to LGB pupils in particular, there seemed to be a strategic understanding of the need for pupils' sexuality to be considered part of the norm by all the school as reported by school staff participants. This focus on the need for whole school commitment to an inclusive environment is consistent with the findings of research on wellbeing of all pupils (Wells et al., 2003) on the wellbeing of LGB pupils (Biddulph, 2006) and in guidance and research on reducing homophobia (DCSF, 2007; Jennett, 2004; Warwick, 2007). In addition, there was a formal awareness of the needs of LGB pupils at the level of the PCT and Children's Services who had collaborated to establish the LGB Youth Group. These formal ways of meeting the needs of LGB pupils were, it is argued, informed by convivial practices that incorporate an understanding of LGB pupils' needs because they 'value the everyday experiences of people involved with those who are different without having to fear the difference' (Gilroy, 2004).

At an informal level there was awareness of the difficulties experienced by LGB pupils as reported by younger pupils, the EP and the LGB Youth Worker. In addition, older pupils and one school staff participant reported some awareness of the difficulties experienced by LGB pupils. It is interesting to note that older pupils initially considered LGB pupils were treated 'the same'. However, once they were asked to consider the school experience from the perspective of a LGB pupil they reflected that some LGB pupils had difficulties at school. As noted earlier, these difficulties were reported to be most prominent for younger pupils and those of a low social status in the peer hierarchy. It is argued that these informal ways in which the needs of LGB pupils were understood were informed by convivial practices that acknowledge inequalities in social relations. The shift in perspective by older pupils may be understood as a further example of a move from an understanding informed by heteronormative practices to one informed by convivial practices.

There were also formal support systems for groups of LGB pupils including a group in school, the LGB youth group and some signposting of the group to LGB pupils by the school in the study and one other local school. The importance of group work has also been highlighted in previous research on supporting the wellbeing of all pupils (Merrell et al., 2006) and LGB pupils in particular (Szalacha, 2003; Goodenow et al., 2006). In addition, there was strategic support for individual LGB pupils such as the response given to all pupils experiencing difficulty and counselling. In terms of future support older pupils suggested mentors for LGB pupils. This focus on support at the level of the whole school, group and individual is consistent with the recommendations by previous researchers on promoting wellbeing for all pupils (Merrell et al., 2006)

Whilst there were a number of ways in which wellbeing was promoted for LGB pupil, there were also a number of formal and informal ways that would compromise wellbeing in terms of meeting the needs of LGB pupils. Two of the school staff participants were not aware of difficulties experienced by LGB pupils and none of the staff were aware of LGB pupils in younger years.

Furthermore, older pupils did not consider a young person could be LGB in younger years. This indicates there was not a formal and informal awareness of the needs of all LGB pupils. Furthermore, it was reported by two school staff participants that LGB pupils were treated equally at the school and thus there was no need to put support systems in place. This echoes research findings that UK public services fail to recognise LGB young people as a vulnerable group (Scott et al., 2004). The discourse of 'sameness', according to Ellis (2001), is an expression of a heterocentric worldview which does not acknowledge the political, social and legal inequalities that exist for LGB people. It is argued in this study that the expression of 'sameness' as reported by school participants could be understood as being informed by heteronormative practices (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson 2009) which do not acknowledge the inequalities that may exist for LGB pupils and can be used to avoid addressing the issues of equality (Ellis, 2001).

Indeed, one school staff participant considered it would be counterproductive to put support in place for LGB pupils. This understanding of the needs and unsystematic approach to supporting the wellbeing of LGB pupils would also, it is argued, be inconsistent with the Public Duty as outlined in the Equality Act (2010) that states that 'A public duty must in the exercise of its function have due regard to the need to take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (sexuality).'

Understanding Sexualities

There are a range of narratives around sexuality and this range was reflected in the discourse of participants in the present study. School staff and older pupils' discourse on how sexuality is not nor should be an issue could be interpreted as reflecting a 'postgay' narrative (Savin-Williams, 2005). This narrative states that sexual identity labels are not relevant to contemporary young people. However, when asked what could support the wellbeing of LGB pupils these same participants later proposed a number of strategies. This could be considered to be inconsistent with a postgay narrative.

Other participants' discourse that identified difficulties followed by acceptance and positive experiences could be interpreted as the ' struggle and success' narrative (Cohler & Hammack, 2007). Experiences which marginalise and stigmatise some LGB young people were also reported by most participants in the current study; most particularly younger pupils, LGB young people, the EP and the LGB Youth Worker. These could be understood as reflecting an understanding that schools and the world beyond schools are heteronormative environments (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009).

School staff described the school as one with a large number of 'vulnerable' pupils. Staff reported a number of systems in place to respond to the needs of these pupils. Much of this support was at an individual level and established in response to difficulties. For example, one staff participant spoke of support given to LGB pupils when they had experienced difficulties with their sexuality. A further narrative relating to LGB pupils may be one of 'vulnerability' which places difficulties within the young person rather than the environment. Finally, there was also a certain degree of silence with regards to understanding LGB pupils experience and wellbeing. As Epstein and Johnson (1998) noted there is a silence around sexuality in schools. As will be discussed later there appeared to be degree of silence over the sexuality of all pupils at the school and this may be reflected in the silence around some LGB pupils.

An understanding of the various discourses around sexual diversity could support schools in fulfilling the requirements of the Public Duty in the Equality Act (2010). The postgay discourse assumes that there are no longer difficulties for LGB pupils. However, the findings of this study indicate that LGB pupils are still experiencing difficulty at school. The narrative of 'struggle and survive' may more accurately describe the experience of LGB pupils at the school. However, it may focus attention on support systems to respond to LGB pupils once they are experiencing difficulties rather than focus on a school ethos that includes diversity of sexualities. Whilst school staff and older pupils stated that LGB pupils were accepted at school, it will be argued in the following sections that this does not appear to reflect strategic planning. In

order to ensure that schools are promoting equality for all pupils there is a need to be aware of the needs of LGB pupils in order to establish support and to evaluate that support. However, an emphasis on the postgay narrative and the degree of silence around this topic questions the level of awareness of and strategic support for LGB pupils.

 Older pupils' discourse reflects the confusion on this topic.   They spoke of their response to friends 'coming out' to them. Pupils considered that, on the one hand it was considered inappropriate to say anything to a friend if he or she was 'suspected' of being gay because this would hurt their feelings. This suggests a certain amount of empathy for the needs of LGB young people at this time. However, it could also suggest a heteronormative assumption, which privileges heterosexuality and perceives other sexualities as deviant. In contrast to the view that a friend should not discuss sexuality with a friend 'suspected' of being gay, Year 10 pupils also considered that saying someone is gay is not bullying. Rather, they considered this to be 'prompting'. The seemingly contradictory responses appear to reflect the range of narratives around LGB sexuality and could reflect limited understanding of sexuality development as described in Chapter 2. For example, the notion of 'prompting' a friend to 'come out' may assume that the friend has self-identified as LGB. It may well be that the friend does not view themselves in this way. In contrast to the school pupils' perspectives, the LGB young people considered that telling someone they were gay was 'unhelpful'. They considered this could lead someone to thinking they were gay. This suggests that the LGB young people in the current study had a more sophisticated understanding of sexuality development than the school pupils.

There was reported to be some formal teaching and discussion around LGB people at the school and in depth discussion at the LGB youth group. There were some explicit opportunities arranged at both the school and the LGB Youth Group to discuss sexuality. The use of labels 'gay, lesbian and bisexual' were reported to be unhelpful by one staff respondent who considered that young people choose to define themselves as they wish. However, the LGB youth worker had found the discussion around labels to be

useful for young people to understand these terms and choose how they wanted to identify themselves.

Pupils suggested a number of strategies that could be put in place in future to promote the wellbeing of LGB pupils. They highlighted how school should communicate to young people that it is' ok to be gay'. This echoes recommendations in guidance to reduce homophobic bullying (DCSF, 2007; Jennett, 2004). Pupils also proposed asking LGB young people about their experience at school and what would be helpful. Butcher (2010) reviews a number of strategies involving pupil participation to promote health and wellbeing. One such strategy was to explore pupils' views which informs teaching and learning (Butcher 2010). Further strategies suggested by pupils in the current study were mentors for LGB pupils and groups within school, also recommended by Butcher (2010).

Pupils' responses on the topic of discussion around sexualities suggests that there is a significant amount of thought and conversation on this subject matter and they gave a wide range of suggestions for developing support within school. Coleman (2009) wrote that young people's views have not been sufficiently included in designing programmes to promote wellbeing. These groups of young people certainly had a lot to say which could contribute to planning such support.

As noted above, there appeared to be a degree of silence over the sexuality of all pupils, particularly with regards to relationships. Reports on the teaching of SRE were inconsistent generally. Some found it useful in learning about STIs and pregnancy, whilst others reported little SRE. There were inconsistent reports of whether different sexualities were included in SRE with some saying it was included in the curriculum and others stating it was not. Pupils and LGB Young People did not recall learning about relationships in SRE lessons. One LGB young person quoted her school teachers as saying there should be "no sex before marriage". One school staff participant questioned the quality of teaching in SRE because it was taught by staff who were not specialists in the area, although it was felt important for form tutors

to teach the subject because they knew the pupils. SRE Draft guidance produced by NICE (2010) stated that SRE should promote respect and awareness in different sexual practices and orientation, should be taught in a safe and supportive environment and is best taught when teachers are specialists in the area. Whilst it appeared the school had aimed to teach PHSE in a safe and supportive environment, they had not arranged specialist teachers. It appeared from this study that SRE was inconsistently taught and did not consistently include awareness of different sexual practices and orientation. Following the SRE guidance would enable schools to show how their programmes are effecting in relation to sexual orientation. Suggestions by the EP and LGB Youth Worker for future support in SRE were that it should include understanding that society is diverse and include emotional development needs and respecting one's own and others' bodies. In addition, it should include how to maintain good health, encouraging the development of a personal moral code and develop good relationships. These are all consistent with the SRE Draft Guidance (NICE, 2010).

In terms of future support, some staff considered LGB people and issues should be incorporated into all curriculum areas. This is consistent with previous guidance and research (Hunt & Jensen, 2007; Warwick, 2007). LGB Young People considered pupils should be taught that homophobia is wrong from Year 7. However, LGB Young People did not consider different sexualities should be integrated into the curriculum. They considered this might lead to negative reactions by heterosexual pupils.

RQ3. What might be the implications of these findings for improving support for all pupils and LGB pupils in particular in secondary schools in a Local Authority in the South East of England?

The findings of the present study contribute towards a better understanding of what is perceived to be appropriate support for the wellbeing of all young people and LGB young people in particular both at secondary school and in youth setting provision. The specific findings have the potential to enhance EPs' support of schools and youth setting provision that takes account of the

preventative and evidence based ethos underpinning their work. The EP role in this area of work could be to facilitate an understanding of how the processes of promoting equality, preventing harm, supporting relationships, meeting needs and understanding sexualities can promote the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils and young people in particular. In Chapter 2 it was proposed that a positive psychology frame could be a useful EP approach to facilitate competence and capacity in schools and other agencies in order to promote the wellbeing of all pupils as well as LGB pupils. In the current study a number of strengths were reported in terms of how secondary schools and youth provision support the wellbeing. However, there were also a number of difficulties reported and this presents a challenge to a positive psychology framework.

It is argued that a more useful frame would be to facilitate an understanding of how the processes of promoting equality, preventing harm, supporting relationships, meeting needs and understanding sexualities can be informed by convivial or heteronormative practices. The EP role could facilitate a shared understanding amongst Children Services professionals that those processes informed by convivial practices promote wellbeing and those informed by heteronormative practices challenge it.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the EP's core roles are consultation, intervention, assessment, research and training operating at the level of the child, the group (class, family) and organisation (school, LA) (Seed, 2002). The findings of this study can enhance how EPs support the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular through work at the level of the individual young person, group and organisation. However, as noted earlier work at an organisational level is considered most helpful because a normative school environment that values all pupils including LGB pupils is considered most effective in supporting wellbeing. Thus, discussion of the EP role shall focus largely on work at the level of the organisation. However, work at other levels shall also be discussed.

In schools and youth settings social relations are structured in formal and informal ways (Biddulph, 2006). It is thus argued that the role of the EP is to facilitate an understanding of those formal and informal ways in which wellbeing can be supported or compromised. Furthermore, the EP can work with schools and other agencies to develop processes in which convivial practices can be promoted and heteronormative practices can be challenged.

An important finding of this study is that the voice of the pupil and young person should be heard. Awareness of and commitment to hearing young people's voice has increased recently (Butcher, 2010, p. 120). However, findings from this study and previous research indicate that more could be done to hear the voice of LGB pupils. EPs could encourage schools and other agencies to consult with LGB pupils and young people. The interview schedule used in the current study could be a useful frame for these conversations because it facilitates reflection of how emotional, psychological and social wellbeing can be promoted as well as how it may be challenged.

Work at local community level-joined up services and contributing to specialised youth services

Findings of this study indicate that separate youth provision is highly supportive of the wellbeing and safety of LGB young people. This is consistent with similar research carried out in the U.S.A. (Davis et al., 2009), in the UK (Crowley et al., 2007) and is advocated in guidance to reduce homophobic bullying (Jennett, 2004; DCSF, 2007). The findings of this study indicate there is still a need for separate safe spaces away from school for LGB young people which provides a space where LGB young people can feel accepted by all and be free from intimidation. In addition, it provides a space where they can explore options on how to manage difficulties at school, openly discuss their desires, identity and relationships within the boundaries of professional relationships with staff and where they can learn about safe sex. EPs could work with schools and Local Authorities to be an advocate for the establishment of youth setting provision so that LGB young people have a separate safe space in their local area.

Raise awareness of LGB issues among professionals-advocacy role

EPs are well placed to work across a range of agencies working with young people (Monsen & Bayley, 2007, p.414). EPs can work with those agencies and LGB young people to facilitate an understanding of the positive influence on wellbeing of convivial practices and the negative influence of heteronormative practices. The findings of this study highlight the importance of discussion at a strategic level regarding the needs of LGB young people. The findings also suggest the importance of exploring the views of LGB young people regarding what they would find supportive. EPs can be an advocate for such discussions. To facilitate planning support EPs can promote awareness of services, information and support available in the local area. Furthermore, EPs can facilitate an understanding that a school ethos informed by convivial practices can play a key role in supporting wellbeing for all pupils and LGB pupils in particular. EPs can also communicate how their clients wellbeing may be compromised if they attend a school whose ethos is informed by heteronormative practices. Finally, EPs can advocate for the role of LGB youth groups as 'safe spaces' which may be helpful for their LGB clients.

Supporting positive school ethos

EP work at this level shall be discussed in terms of the processes of promoting equality, preventing harm, supporting relationships, meeting needs and understanding sexualities and how they can be informed in both formal and informal ways by convivial and heteronormative practices. EPs could work with senior leaders in schools to develop a positive schools ethos. This work could be supplemented with professional development training as well as individual or group consultations with staff.

The findings of this study indicate that a normative school environment promotes wellbeing. This is an environment in which staff are willing to stand up for LGB young people and in which staff and pupils are open-minded and value LGB young people. This involves a commitment to change by all in the

school community. EPs could facilitate conversations at a strategic level to review and plan change at a whole school level.

An important finding of this study was that homophobic bullying is still a prevalent feature of the school experience, although bullying for a range of reasons is also prevalent. EPs could work with senior managers to develop a shared understanding of how homophobic bullying is defined, based on a clear understanding of heteronormative practices. Participants in this study reported that homophobic bullying was largely verbal although the use of non-verbal communication by teachers was also described by LGB young people. However, some pupils considered these verbal interactions were 'banter'. Consistent with previous research (Hunt & Jensen, 2007), name calling using the word 'gay' or 'lesbian' was considered harmful by LGB Young People. It is considered that staff responses to this type of interaction need to incorporate an understanding of the potential for these interactions to 'bite' (Keltner et al., 2001) and the inequalities of power that some may experience associated with this type of language.

EP work would also include developing an understanding of the potential negative impact of persistent homophobic bullying such as depression and suicide. Findings from this study and previous research (Hunt & Jensen, 2007) indicate that homophobia can be ignored by school staff. In contrast, LGB young people need those in authority to stand up for them to ensure physical and psychological wellbeing (Davis et al., 2009). In order to promote convivial interactions school staff need to respond to all homophobic bullying incidents. EPs could promote the importance of strategic level actions by senior leaders such that they are aware of the incidence of all forms of homophobic bullying by all in the school community.

The current study found that an emphasis on developing pro-social skills was viewed as helpful to combat bullying. Formal strategies to reduce bullying at an immediate level involved responding to incidents fairly and to facilitating the development of empathy, forgiveness and taking responsibility. A further response was to question whether the pupil had treated the other equally.

Preventative strategies considered effective in preventing harm was through PSHEE. Further preventative strategies to reduce bullying cited in this study were the strategic use of shared space by staff and pupils and the open design of school building to reduce the opportunity for bullying incidents.

EPs could advocate that senior managers establish practices that involve school staff responding to all homophobic incidents by having conversations such as described above and develop PSHEE schemes of work to reduce discrimination. EPs could also promote the shared use of school spaces as a strategic means of preventing bullying. Furthermore, if they were involved in the planning stage of the design of a new school building, they could advocate an open design to reduce hidden spaces.

Furthermore, as noted by participants in the current study and in previous research (Warwick, 2007), it is considered that homophobia should be responded to as seriously as racism. EPs could support the prevention of harm is to work with schools to develop their systems to reduce homophobic bullying in line with systems to reduce racism.

Positive relationships between all in the school community is a recurring theme in the literature on schools (Osterman, 2000). This theme was echoed by all participants in the current study. Whilst the importance of positive relationships may be understood by schools that EPs work with, there are other findings from this study that senior managers may be less familiar with in terms of supporting relationships. Guidance on supporting LGB young people (Hunt & Jensen, 2007; DCSF, 2007) and findings from this study highlight the importance of trusting relationships for LGB pupils particularly at the point of transition of identifying themselves as LGB. Indeed all pupils and young people in this study highlighted the importance of having staff they could confide in. Furthermore, LGB young people did mention school staff they could confide in despite heteronormative experiences elsewhere at school. School participants referred to the tutor group system as providing an opportunity for pupils to develop a trusting relationship with a member of staff. However, it was also highlighted that some pupils have a better relationship

with some staff rather than others. EPs could advocate for senior managers to set up systems whereby form tutors or Heads of Year area aware of which staff pupils consider they can confide in. Thus, pupils can discuss matters relating to sexuality or other matters with a trusted adult.

All pupils and LGB young people had consistent understanding of what defines a good relationship and they all considered they learnt about relationships from their friends and family. However, whilst pupils also mentioned learning from school staff about relationships, LGB young people did not. If this is a wider finding, this represents an inequality for LGB young people. EPs could advocate that senior leaders explore whether LGB pupils consider they can learn about relationships from school staff and explore how they can facilitate this learning opportunity for LGB pupils.

A further role for the EP in supporting a positive ethos is to facilitate awareness of the needs of LGB pupils and to plan strategic support at a whole school, group and individual level. Participants in this study reported awareness of a range of needs such as pupils with ASD and BESD. However, with regards to LGB pupils, two of the school staff participants and older pupils in this study used a discourse that all pupils are the 'same' including LGB pupils and were all treated the 'same'. The discourse of 'sameness', according to Ellis (2001), is an expression of a heterocentric worldview which does not acknowledge the political, social and legal inequalities that exist for LGB people. It is argued in this study that this expression of 'sameness' is informed by a heteronormative worldview (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009) and can be used to avoid addressing the issues of equality for LGB people (Ellis, 2001). An EP can support senior managers to develop strategic awareness of the needs of LGB pupils. If a discourse of 'sameness' is utilised, the EP could challenge this by questioning how they thought life was for LGB young people in the school and whether there was any bullying of young people because of their sexuality or because they were LGB and how this was dealt with. These questions could encourage senior managers to reflect on the experience of school from the perspective of a LGB pupil. This could facilitate an understanding of the needs

of LGB pupils which acknowledges the inequalities in daily life that LGB pupils can be exposed to.

In the current study, pupils and LGB young people reported that the experience for LGB pupils was more difficult for younger pupils and for those of a low social status within the peer hierarchy. EPs could further facilitate awareness of the needs of LGB pupils by asking about LGB pupils experience at different ages and in different friendship groups.

Whilst there is previous research evidence that support at a whole school level promotes wellbeing for all pupils (Durlak & Wells, 1997; Wells et al., 2003, Green et al., 2005; Merrell et al., 2006) and LGB pupils (Davis et al., 2009), it is also considered there is a need for support at a group and individual level (Durlak & Wells; Merrell et al., 2006) for all pupils and at a group level for LGB pupils (Goodenow et al., 2006). Participants in this study reported a range of support for pupils with needs such as ASD and BESD. However, support for LGB pupils did not appear to be based on strategic awareness and support to promote wellbeing. As noted above, it is argued this is informed by heteronormative practices. Having said that, there were some practices that were informed by conviviality. These practices echo findings from previous research and guidance recommendations. These include the establishment of the LGB youth group by the PCT and the local Children's Services, the convivial friendships between pupils of diverse sexualities and the flexible response to LGB pupils' needs when they had difficulties. A further example was the ' Brothers and Sisters' group in the school with discussions relating to gender and sexuality. This was considered to encourage pupils to view diverse sexualities as normalised. In addition, pupils suggested groups for LGB pupils, mentoring and LGB role models. EPs could advocate that senior managers in schools establish a plan to meet the needs of pupils using such strategies just described.

Finally, EPs could work with senior managers to reflect on the various discourses surrounding sexuality in the school and how these can inform processes aimed to promote wellbeing. Findings from this and previous

research indicate there a number of different discourses surrounding sexuality. These include the 'post gay' narrative (Savin-Williams, 2005, p222), the ' struggle and success' narrative (Cohler & Hammack, 2007), liberalism (Ellis, 2001) and the heteronormative discourse (Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009).

Previous research (Biddulph, 2006; Davis et al., 2009; Warwick, 2007) and guidance to reduce homophobia recommends that incorporation of LGB topics into the curriculum promotes wellbeing. In this study only one staff participant proposed this. Furthermore, LGB young people were wary of a negative response by pupils if LGB topics were taught throughout the curriculum. EPs could advocate for integration but to consult with LGB pupils and to plan the introduction of LGB topics carefully and sensitively to avoid a potential heteronormative response.

A further way in which EPs can promote a more convivial understanding of diverse sexualities is through promoting SRE. Findings from this study and previous research (Goodenow et al., 2006; Biddulph, 2006) and guidance (NICE, 2010) indicate that SRE should promote respect and awareness of different practices in sex and relationships. It is argued in this study that all pupils should be offered a formal SRE curriculum in which they can learn about the similarities as well as the differences in sexual and romantic relationships.

A further role for the EP could be to conduct training for staff on LGB development as discussed earlier. This could facilitate understanding of the myriad of ways that pupils and young people may self-identify as well as understanding the three aspects of sexuality; attractions, behaviour and identity. This training could also explore the importance of the social context for the wellbeing of LGB young people and how heteronormative practices can compromise wellbeing. In addition, recommendations from guidance to reduce homophobic bullying (Jennett, 2004; DCSF, 2007) are consistent with many of the findings from this and previous studies. The EP could promote the use of this guidance as well as the SRE Draft Guidance (NICE, 2010) to schools. Finally, EPs could utilise their research skills by supporting schools in

evaluating the impact of changes to the school ethos with regards to promoting wellbeing.

Supporting Individual Pupils

With regards to individual casework, it may be relevant to ask if responses to a pupil's sexuality may be influencing their wellbeing; school staff could be asked if concerns around behaviour, learning, self-acceptance and emotional difficulties may relate to sexual orientation (Monsen & Bayley, 2001, p. 420).

In line with the key conclusions of this study that the informal and formal expressions of a school's ethos can both support and compromise the wellbeing of LGB pupils, it may be more appropriate for an EP to engage in consultations with school staff around individual case work rather than with the pupil themselves. Furthermore, the findings of this study and previous research and guidance indicate that it is important for LGB pupils to have trusted adults in school in whom they can confide. The EP could carry out consultations with a trusted adult to involve facilitating an understanding of heteronormative practices that may be challenging the pupil's wellbeing and the convivial practices that support it. The EP could also encourage the staff member to explore the pupil's views on the convivial as well as heteronormative practices at school. For example, the staff member could explore if the pupil feels safe at school and how any bullying is responded to. The staff member could also ask how the pupil found his or her interactions with friends and peers in relation to his or her sexuality. Further questions could relate to the pupil's own understanding of sexuality development with particular reference to the concepts of desires, behaviour and identification. Offers of support may be needed such as conversations with the trusted adult. Further systems of support may include a group such as the 'Brothers and Sisters' referred to by participants in this study, individual mentoring or a LGB youth group in the local area.

The way EPs are employed is changing. In the future fewer EPs are thought to be employed directly by the LA, whereas more services will be commissioned by LAs, schools, community based organisations and parents (DfE, 2011). An increasing number of EPSs are moving to a Traded Services Models in order to generate income to maintain staff. These involve EPSs offering a wide range of services from additional EP involvement to trading all psychological support. Currently, schools are reported to be the main commissioners of traded services (DfE, 2011).

The findings of this study indicate an important role for EPs in supporting the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB pupils in particular. Work could be framed as supporting schools and Children Services to plan the services, policies and programmes that meet the needs of LGB young people as stated in The Equality Act (2010). This work could be commissioned directly through an EP's work with schools or through a traded services route.

5.3 Limitations

There were a number of limitations to the present study. These relate to the range of participants, the relevance of the Positive Psychology framework, the understanding of wellbeing and the way the researchers approach to the study may have been influenced by heteronormativity.

A key limitation of the study was that it did not include the voices of LGB young people at the school. In terms of rigour the inclusion of LGB voices at the school would have enhanced a triangulated perspective of the construction of reality presented in Chapters 3 and 4. It would have been relevant to explore the consistencies and contradictions in LGB pupils' perspectives alongside those of other pupils and school staff. However, the inclusion of LGB young people from other secondary schools in the bounded system in which the study was located facilitated a broader understanding of support in secondary schools.

As stated in Chapters 1 and 2, the study was underpinned by a Positive Psychology approach (Seligman et al., 2009). This is the study of strength and weakness rather of deficit. Much of the previous research in this area has focused on the detrimental impact of the experiences of LGB young people on their mental health. However, this focus has been questioned as presenting LGB young people as objects of pathos (Rasmussen, 2006). It has been argued that the focus should be on changing the social context rather than on individual difficulties (Coyle, 1998). A Positive Psychology framework was considered useful because it enables the exploration of well functioning organisations that promote strengths rather than difficulties. Whilst this framework did enable an exploration of what was perceived to be helpful, it was still important to acknowledge the difficulties experienced by LGB young people. Thus, it is important to be flexible in the use of Positive Psychology because those negative experiences still need to be documented.

The definition of wellbeing used in the current study incorporated emotional, psychological and social aspects. While there is a growing consensus of this definition there are still a number of terms and definitions used in the academic literature (Coleman, 2009). One of the difficulties in defining wellbeing is that it related to an individual's subjective experience. This was not explored in the current study. Rather, the perceptions of appropriate support for wellbeing was explored via questions related to emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It is likely that young people have their own definitions of wellbeing. While some aspects may map onto the definition as used here, others may differ.

A final limitation was the possible ways that the researcher's approach to the study, the way the data was collected, analysed and finally written up may have been influenced by heteronormativity. Whilst conducting the study, the researcher shifted in her thinking from a liberal view on support for LGB young people which focuses on treating LGB pupils the 'same' as other pupils to an understanding of the heteronormative assumptions underpinning this viewpoint. It was later understood that this viewpoint does not take into account the inequalities that exist for LGB pupils. The researcher's earlier

liberal viewpoint may have influenced the research process. It is relevant to note also that this shift in the researcher's thinking echoes some of the shifts in pupil participants' thinking, as noted earlier. It is considered that this shift to a more empathetic understanding of the inequalities that exist for LGB pupils is an important one for other heterosexual EPs to engage in order to more effectively support the wellbeing of LGB pupils and young people.

In addition to the external constraints on the study as described in Chapter 3, there may also have been constraints influenced by the researcher's own thinking. The researcher may have overly concerned about the potential risks to LGB pupils, if she had interviewed LGB pupil participants in the school. It may be that this concern was informed by a view of LGB young people as martyr target victim (Rofes 2004).

Braun (2000) argues that heterosexual researchers can collude with heterosexism through 'omission' which she defines as the 'lack of challenge to heterosexist talk' and commission defined as the 'explicit assumption of heterosexist norms'. The current study has used the term heteronormativity rather than heterosexism and thus discussion of the researcher's 'ommissions' and 'commissions' shall be discussed with reference to heteronormativity. It is acknowledged that the interviewer engaged in 'omission' at some points whilst conducting the interviews. One example of these omissions was when the researcher did not challenge the school staff participant who stated that school should not put specific support in place for LGB pupils because of the potential negative response by other pupils. A further omission was not to challenge school staff over limited strategic awareness of LGB pupils' needs. A final example of omission was that the researcher did not challenge school pupils over their understanding of the use of 'gay' as 'banter'. It is acknowledged that the researcher should have asked participants what LGB pupils' views would have been on these issues. This may have facilitated a more empathetic view of LGB pupils that take into account inequalities they may be experiencing. During the analysis of data and the writing up potential ommissions and commissions were discussed in supervision and with lesbian and gay friends. However, it is acknowledged

132

that these expressions of heterormativity may have influenced these stages of the research process.

5.4 Future Research

One of the limitations of this study was the limited range of perspectives at the school because LGB pupils were not interviewed. A triangulated perspective including LGB, heterosexual pupils and staff at the same school could explore the complexities and consistencies in the informal and formal practices that constitute the beliefs, norms and customs of a school. Bearing in mind the external constraints placed on how this study was conducted, it is proposed that future researchers may consider gaining assurances from senior executives in the local authority so that all perspectives can be included.
As stated in Chapter 2 there is little research exploring effective practice in terms of the wellbeing of LGB young people. This study was carried out in an area with high levels of deprivation in the South East of England. Areas with different demographics may highlight different practices and understandings around sexuality. Future research in different areas would further understanding relating to support for LGB pupils in these contexts.

Furthermore, findings of the current study suggest that experience of 'coming out' may vary according to a number of factors relating to sense of agency, age or perceived social group. Previous research has found that there is more homophobia directed at younger pupils at secondary school (Warwick, 2007) Further research would be beneficial to investigate how staff and peer support facilitate wellbeing for younger LGB pupils and those in different social groups.

Finally, it has been argued that a number of discourses appeared to inform the formal and informal expressions of the culture and ethos of the school and LGB Youth Group. It would be beneficial for future research to investigate those discourses in settings that are considered to promote wellbeing and how to effectively challenge those that compromise it.

Conclusion

This study has played an active part in building on previous research and has contributed to a social science of positive institutions and settings. It has outlined how processes of promoting equality, preventing harm, supporting relationships, meeting needs and understanding sexualities can support the wellbeing of all pupils and LGB young people in particular in school and youth settings.

Based on an understanding that reality is socially constructed this study assumes that each actor constructs their own understanding of wellbeing through discussion with others. In schools and youth settings social relations are structured in formal and informal ways (Biddulph, 2006). It is argued that some of these social relations are informed by 'Conviviality' and others by 'Heteronormativity'. 'Conviviality' is defined by Gilroy as the 'coexistence of family life, youth cultures, sexual interaction and music' (Gilroy, 2004, p167). It points to both the forces that undermine equality as well as valuing the everyday experiences of people involved with those who are different without having to fear the difference (Gilroy, 2004,). 'Heteronormativity' is defined as existing when heterosexuality is perceived as the norm and is privileged over other sexualities and behaviours, which are deemed to be deviant (Chesir-Teran, 2003; Wilkinson & Pearson, 2009). Social relations informed by convivial practices are considered to promote wellbeing and those relations informed by heteronormative practices are considered compromise wellbeing.

This study has added to the body of work highlighting the difficulties experienced by LGB young people as well as ways in which homophobia or heteronormativity can be challenged. Sadly, there is still a need for such studies. However, this study has also shifted the conversation beyond a focus on safety for LGB young people to one focusing on all forms of wellbeing for all young people and LGB young people in particular.

A model of EP practice was proposed for work with schools and other agencies in supporting wellbeing. This EP involvement could facilitate an

understanding of the informal and formal processes informed by both convivial and heteronormative practices at a school, youth setting or LA. Furthermore, EPs could work with schools to develop ways in which convivial practices can be celebrated and promoted and heteronormative ones challenged.

References

Acheson, D. (1998). *Independent enquiry into inequalities in health.*
Department of Health, London: The Stationary Office

Akin-Little, K.A., Little, S.G. & Delligatti, N. (2003). A Preventative Model of
School Consultation: Incorporating perspectives from Positive Psychology.
Psychology in the Schools. 41(1), 155-162.

Biddulph, M. (2006). Sexuality Equality in Schools. Why Every Gay, Lesbian
and Bisexual Child Matters. *Pastoral Care*, 24(2), 15-21.

Bilodeau, B.L. & Renn, K.A. (2005). 'Analysis of LGBT identity development
models and implications for practice'. In R.L. Sanlo (Ed.) *Sexual Orientation
and Gender Identity: New Directions for Student Services.* 111, 25-40.

Boxer, D. & Bordes-Conte, F. (1997). From bonding to biting: Conversational
joking and identity display. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 27, 275-294.

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic
Analysis and Code Development.* London: Sage Publications

Bradford, J., Ryan, C., Honnold, J. & Rothblum, E. (2001). Expanding the
research infrastructure for lesbian health. *American Journal of Public Health*,
91 (7), 1029-1032.

Braun, V. (2000). Heterosexism in focus group research: Collusion and
challenge. *Feminism and Psychology,* 10(1), 133-140.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology.
Qualitative Research in Psychology, (3), 77-101.

British Psychological Society (2009). *Code of Ethics and Conduct Guidance* .
Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society.

Browne, G., Gafni, A., Roberts, J., Byrne, C. & Majumdar, B. (2004).
Effectiveness/ efficient mental health programs for school aged children: A
synthesis of reviews. *Social Science and Medicine*, 58, 1367-1384.

Burr, V. (2003). *Social Constructionism* (2nd Ed.). London: Routledge

Butcher, J. (2010). 'Children and Young People as Parners in Health and
Well-being'. In Aggleton,P. (ed) *Promoting Health and Well-being through
Schools.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.*
New York: Routledge.

Carolan, F. & Redmond, S. (2003). *The needs of young people in Northern Ireland who identify as lesbian, gay and bisexual, and, or transgender.* Belfast: Department of Education.

Cass, V. (1979). Homosexual Identity Formation: A Theoretical Model. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 4, 210-235.

Charmaz, K. (2006). Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practice Guide through Qualitative Analysis. London: SAGE

Chesir-Teran, D. (2003). Conceptualizing and Assessing Heterosexism in High Schools: A Setting-Level Approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 3/4, 267-279.

Clarke, V., Ellis, S.J., Peel, E. & Riggs, D.W. (2010). *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Psychology: An Introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Cohen, L. & Mannion, L. & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education* (6th Ed.). Oxford: Routledge

Cohler, B.J. & Hammack, P.L. (2007). The Psychological World of the Gay Teenager:Social Change,Narrative and "Normality". *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 36, 47-59.

Coleman, J. (2009). Well-being in Schools: Empirical Measure or Politician's Dream? *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(3), 281-292.

Coleman, J. (2011). *The Nature of Adolescence* (4th ed). Hove: Routledge.

Counterpoint Research (2008). *Childhood Wellbeing Qualitative Research Study.* London: DCSF.

Coyle, A. (1998). 'Developing Lesbian and Gay identity in Adolescence' in *Teenage Sexuality: Health, Risks & Education.* J. Coleman & D. Roker (eds.) Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Press, p 163-187.

Cresswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design Choosing among Five Approaches* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.

Crowley, C., Harre, H., & Lunt, I. (2007). Safe Spaces and Sense of Identity :Views and experiences of lesbian gay and bisexual young people. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy,* 11(1), 127-143.

D'Augelli, A. R. (1994). Identity development and sexual orientation: Towards a model of lesbian, gay and bisexual development. In E.J. Trickett, R.J. Watts & D. Birman (Eds.), *Human diversity: Perspectives of people in context.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

D'Augelli, A. R., Herschberger, S.L. & Pilkington, N.W. (2001). Suicidality Patterns and Sexual Orientation Factors among Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth. *Suicide and Life-threatening Behaviour*, 319(3), 250-264.

Davis, S.D., Saltzburg, S. & Locke, R.L. (2009). Supporting the emotional and psychological well being of sexual minority youth: Youth ideas for action. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 31, 1030-1041.

DCSF (2007). Homophobic Bullying. Safe to Learn: Embedding Anti-Bullying Work in Schools. London: DCSF

DCSF (2009a). Local Authority Measures for National Indicators supported by the TellUs3 Survey. London: DCSF

DfE (2011). *Developing sustainable arrangements for the Initial Training of Educational Psychologists.* Retrieved from https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/RSG/AllRsgPublications/Page11/DFE-10035-2011

DfES (2004). *Every Child Matters. Next Steps.* London: DfES.

DH (2005). *National Healthy Schools Status: A Guide for Schools.* London: DH

Diamond, L.M. (2005). I'm straight but I kissed a girl: the trouble with American media representations of female-female sexuality. *Feminism and Psychology* 15(1), 104-110.

Douglas, N., Warwick, I., Kemp, S. & Whitty G. (1997). *Playing it Safe. Responses of Secondary School Teachers to Lesbian and Gay Pupils, Bullying, HIV and AIDS education and Section 28.* London: Terence Higgins Trust.

Durlak, J.A., & Wells, A.M. (1997). Primary prevention mental health programs forchildren and adolescents: a meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology,* 25(2), 115-152.

Ellis, S.J. (2001). Doing being liberal: implicit prejudice in focus group talk about lesbians and gay human rights issues. *Lesbian and Gay Psychology,* Review 2(2), 43-49.

Ellis, S.J. (1999). Lesbian and gay issues are human rights issues: the need for a human rights approach to lesbian and gay psychology. *British Psychological Society Section Newsletter,* 3, 9-14.

Ellis, V. & High, S. (2004). Something more to tell you: lesbian or bisexual young people's experience of secondary schooling. *British Educational Research Journal* 30 (2), 213-225.

Elze, D. (2005). Research with sexual minority youths: where do we go from here? *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services.* 18(2), 73-79.

Epstein, D., & Johnson, R. (1998). *Schooling and Sexualities.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Epstein, D., Hewitt, R., Leonard, D., Mauthner, M. & Watkins, C. (2003). Avoiding the issue. Homophobia, school policies and identities in secondary schools. In C. Vincent (ed) *Social justice, education and identity.* London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Epstein, D., Hewitt, R., Leonard, D., Mauthner, M. & Watkins, C. (2007) Silencing Policies or How (not) to make your school homophobic, in van Dijk, L. and van Driel, B. (Eds) *Challenging Homophobia: Teaching about Sexual Diversity.* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books

Farrell, P., Woods,K., Lewis,S., Rooney, S.,Squires, G. & O'Connor, M. (2006). *A Review of the Functions and Contributionof Educational Psychologists in England and Wales in the Light of ' Every Child Matters: Change for Children'.* Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Gersch, I. (2009). A positive future for Educational Psychology. If the profession gets it right. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 25(1), 9-19.*

Gilroy, P. (2004). *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Goleman, D. (1996). *Emotional Intelligence.* London: Bloomsbury.

Goodenow, C, Szalacha, L. & Westheimer, K. (2006). School support groups, other school factors and the safety of sexual minority adolescents. *Psychology in the Schools,* 43(5), 573-589.

Green, J., Howes, F., Waters, E., Maher, E. & Oberkind, F. (2005). Promoting the social and emotional health of primary school aged children: Reviewing the evidence base for school based interventions. *International Journal of Health Promotion,* 7 (2), 30-36.

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y. (1989). Judging the quality of fourth generation evaluation. In E.G. Guba & Y. Lincoln, *Fourth generation evaluation* (pp228-251). Newbury Park, CA: Sage publications.

Gunn, V. (2010). *Academic Development Discussion Briefing: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Perspectives and Learning at University.* University of Glasgow

Hegarty, P. (2003). Pointing to a crisis? What finger length ratios tell us about the construction of sexuality. *Radical Statistics,* 83, 16-30.

Hillier, L., Warr, D. & Haste, B. (1996). *The Rural Mural: Sexuality and Diversity in Rural Youth.* Carlton National Centre in HIV Social Research: La Trobe University

Hillier, L., Dempsey, D., Harrison L., Beale, L., Matthews, L. & Rosenthal, D. (1998). *Writing themselves in: A national report on the sexuality, health and well-being of same sex attracted people.* Melbourne, Australia, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

Imich, A., Bayley, S. & Farley, K. (2001). Equalities and gay and lesbian young people: implications for Educational Psychologists. *Educational Psychology in Practice,* 17(4), 375-384.

Hunt, R., & Jensen, J. (2007). *The School Report: The Experiences of Young Gay People in Britain's Schools.* London: Stonewall.

Jennett, M. (2004). *Stand Up for Us.* London: Health Development Agency.

Keogh, P. (1999). *Group Outings: Young Gay Men's Experience of Coming Out at Outzone.* Enfield and Haringey Health Authority.

Keltner, D., Capps, L., Kring, A.M. & Young, R.C. (2001). Just teasing: a conceptual analysis and empirical review. *Psychological Bulletin,* 127(2), 229-248.

Keyes, C. (2009). The nature and importance of positive mental health in America's adolescents. in R.Gilman, E.,S. Huebner, & M.J. Furlong (eds.) *Positive Psychology in Schools.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Kitzinger, C. (1987). *The social constructionism of lesbianism.* London: Sage.

Lasser, J., Tharinger, D.J. & Cloth, A. (2006). Gay lesbian & bisexual youth. In G.G. Bear, K.M. Minke & A. Thomas, *Children's Needs III Development, Problems and Alternatives* (pp.419-430). Bethseda, Maryland: National Association of School Psychologists.

Lewis, R.L. Derlega, V.J., Grifen, J.L. & Krowinski, A.C. (2003). Stressors for gay men and lesbians Life stress gay related stress stigma consciousness and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology.* 22 (6), 716-729.

Lindsay, J., Smith, A.M.A. & Rosenthal, D.A. (1997). *Secondary Students HIV /AIDS and Sexual Health.* Melbourne: Centre for the Study of Transmissible Diseases: La Trobe University

McManus, S. (2003). *Sexual orientation research: phase 1. A review of methodological approaches. Scottish Executive Social Research.*

Mason, A. & Palmer, A. (1996). *Queer Bashing.* London: Stonewall.

Maxwell, C., Yankah, E., Warwick, I., Hill, V., Mehmedbegovic, D. & Aggleton, P. (2007). *The emotional wellbeing and mental health of young Londoners: a focused review of evidence.* London: Government Office for London.

Maxwell, C., Aggleton, P., Warwick, I., Yankah, E., Hill, V. & Mehmedbegovic, D. (2008). Supporting children's emotional wellbeing and mental health in England: a review. *Health Education,* 108 (4), 272-286.

McDermott, E. (2010). *Researching and monitoring adolescence and sexual orientation. Asking the right questions at the right time.* Equality and Human Rights Commission.

McIntrye, E. (2009). Teacher discourse on lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils in Scottish schools. *Educational Psychology in Practice,* 25(4), 301-314.

Merrell, K. W., Ervin, R. A., & Gimpel, G. A. (2006). *School psychology for the 21st century: Foundations and practices.* New York: Guilford.

Mertens, D.M. (2010). *Research methods in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative & qualitative approaches.* London: Sage publications.

Mitchell, K., Wellings, K., & Elam, G. (1998). *NATSAL II. Survey design & implementation report of the qualitative stage.* National Centre for Social Research and London School of Tropical Medicine

Monsen, J. & Bayley, S. (2007). Educational Psychology Practice with LGB Youth in Schools: Individual and Institutional Interventions. In V. Clarke & E. Peel (Eds). *Out in Psychology: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Perspectives* (p409-425). U.S.A./UK/Australia: Wiley.

Moore, J. (2005). Recognising and questioning the epistemological basis of Educational Psychology practice. *Educational Psychology in Practice,* 21(2), 103-116.

Mufioz-Plaza, C., Quinn, S.C. & Rounds, K.A. (2002). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students perceived social support in the high school environment. *High School Journal,* 85(4) 52-63.

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2009). *Promoting Young People's Social and Emotional Wellbeing in Secondary Education. Public Health Guidance 20.* Available online at: www.nice.org.uk (Accessed 10 April 2010).

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2010). *Public Health Draft Guidance: School, College and Community Based Personal, Social and Health and Economic Education focusing on Sex, Relationships and Alcohol Education.* Available online at: www.nice.org.uk (Accessed 10 April 2010).

Orban, L.A. (2004). Protective Factors and psychological well-being in lesbian, gay and bisexual youth: an ecological framework'. *Dissertation Abstracts International: Section B: The Sciences and Engineering,* (64 7-B) 3537.

Osterman, K. (2000). Pupils' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of Educational Research*, 70(3) 323-367.

Paul, J.P. Catania, J.P. Pollack, L. Moskowtiz, J., Canchola, J., Mills, T., Binson, D & Stall, R. (2002). Suicide attempts amongst gay and bisexual men lifetime prevalence and antecedents. *American Journal of Public Health*, 92 (8) 1338-1345

Peel, E. (2002). Gay awareness Training: Challenging Homophobia, Liberalism and Managing Stereotypes. In A. Coyle & C. Kitzinger, *Lesbian and Gay Psychology :New Perspectives.* Blackwell: Oxford.

QCA (2007). *PSHEE: Programme of Study. Key Stages 3 and 4 (non-statutory)* London: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

Rasmussen, M.L. (2006).*Becoming Subjects. Sexualities and Secondary Schooling.* Oxon: Routledge. Oxon.

Remafedi, G., Resnick, M., Blum, R. & Harris, L. (1992). Demography of sexual orientation in adolescence. *Pediatrics*, 87, 869-875.

Remafedi, G., French, S., Story, M., Resnick, M.D., & Blum, R. (1998). The relationship between suicide risk and sexual orientation. Results of a population-based study. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88, 57-60.

Reschly, D.J. (2000). The present and future status of school psychology in the United States. *School Psychology Review*, 29(4), 507-522.

Rivers, I. (1996). Young, gay and bullied, *Young People Now, January 18-19.*

Rivers, I. (2001). The bullying of sexual minorities at school its nature and long term correlates. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 18(1), 32-46.

Rivers, I. (2006). Homophobic bullying and mental health. *Health Psychology Update*, 15, 20-24.

Rivers, I. & Noret, N. (2008). Well-being among same-sex and opposite-sex attracted youth at school. *School Psychology Review*, 37 (2), 174-187.

Robinson, K. (2010). A study of young lesbian and gay people's experience. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 26(4), 331-351.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.

Rofes, E. (2004) Martyr -Target -Victim: Interrogating narratives of persecution and suffering among queer youth. In M.L. Rasmussen E. Rofes & S. Talburt (Eds.),*Youth and Sexualities: Pleasure, subversion & insubordination in and out of schools* (pp.41-62). New York: Palgrave MacMillan

Russell, S.T. (2003). Sexual Minority Youth and Suicide Risk. American Behavioural Scientist, 46 (9) 1241- 1257.

Russell, S. & Consolacion, T. (2003) Adolescent Romance and emotional health in the United States: Beyond Binaries. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 32, 499-508.

Russell, S.T., Clarke, T.J. & Cary, J. (2009) Are teens "post-gay"? Contemporary adolescents' sexual identity labels. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence,* 38, 884- 890

Savin-Williams, R. C. & Cohen, K. M. (Eds.) (1996). *The lives of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals: Children to adults.* Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishing.

Savin-Williams, R. C. (2005*). The new gay teenager.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Scott, S., Pringle, A. & Lumsdaine, C. (2004). *Sexual Exclusion, Homophobia and Health Inequalities: A Review.* London: First.

Scottish Executive Education Department (2002). *Review of provision of Educational Psychology Services in Scotland.* Edinburgh: SEED.

Seligman, M.E.P., Ernst, R.M., Gilham, J., Reivich K. & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive education, positive psychology and positive interventions. *Oxford Review of Education,* 35(3), 293-31.

Smith, J.A., Jarman, M. & Osborn, M. (1999). Doing phenomenological analysis. In M. Murray & K. Chamberlain (Eds.), *Qualitative health psychology: Theories and methods.* London: Sage Publications.

Szalacha, L.A. (2003). Safer sexual diversity climates: Lessons learned from an evaluation of Massachusetts Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. *American Journal of Education,* 110, 58–88.

Szymanski, D.M., Chung, Y.B. & Balsam K.F. (2001). Psychosocial correlates of internalized homophobia in lesbians. *Journal of Lesbian Studies.* 7, 115-125.

*The Education and Inspections Act (*2006). Retrieved from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents

The Equality Act (2010). Retrieved from
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

The Sexual Offences Amendment Act (2000). Retrieved from
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/44/section/1

Warwick, I.F.M. (2007). *Addressing Homophobia in Three Secondary Schools in South London.* Unpublished Thesis. Institute of Education. University of London.

Weeks, J. (2007). *The World We have Won*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Weeks, J. (2010). *Sexuality* (3rd Ed.). Routledge: London.

Weinberg, M. S., Williams, C.J. & Pryor, D.W. (1994*). Dual Attraction: Understanding Bisexuality.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Wells, J., Barlow, J. & Stewart-Brown, S. (2003). A systematic review of universal approaches to mental health promotion in schools. *Health Education* 103(4), 197-220.

Wilkinson, L. & Pearson, J. (2009). School culture and the wellbeing of same sex attracted youth. *Gender & Society*, 23 (4), 542-568.

Willig, C. (2001*) Introducing qualitative research in psychology: adventures in theory and method.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Yardley, L. (2000). Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology and Health*, 15, 215-28.

Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (3rd Ed.).
London: Sage.

Appendix 1- Interview Schedule-Young People (LGB Youth Club)

Introduction

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am a trainee Educational Psychologist. Educational Psychologists work with children, young people, families and schools to help children and young people to enjoy school and do their best.

The purpose of this study is to explore how secondary schools support all young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others. This study will also particularly explore how schools support young people who are or may be lesbian, gay or bisexual to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others.

I will feed back what I have found to the Educational Psychology Service. They will use the findings to develop their work with young people, families and schools.

I would like to record the discussion on an audio recorder. After all the interviews I will then transcribe (write what people have said) them and look for common ideas. I am the only person who will be listening to the recordings of the discussions with young people. This information will be treated anonymously and confidentially. That means that I will not tell anyone that it is you that have said something unless I think that you or someone else is at risk of being harmed.

The questions are all about school. If, at any time, you want to stop talking we will stop. If you want to talk to someone afterwards about what was said during the interviews or about the study you can talk to me, to X or to any other member of staff at this youth group.

I am not looking for right answers, only for what everyone thinks.

Have you got any questions?

Ground Rules

Elicit and state ground rules for discussion: -

1. The discussion should be confidential and not discussed outside the group unless the researcher thinks you or someone else is at risk of being hurt.

2. All should listen to and respect others views involving not interrupting and giving everyone a chance to speak.

3. Any participant can withdraw from the study at any time.

4. Any participant can refuse to answer questions.

Complete Consent Forms

Background

1) How was secondary school for you?

2) What was it about school that helped you do your best?

3) What was it about school that supports you to feel good about yourself? /to be yourself / to encourage you to feel that you belong/to feel safe emotionally and physically?

4) How did school help you get on well others?

Groups within School

5) Are there particular groups that the school want to help to do better? (prompt with examples of girls or boys)

Feeling Safe

6) I'm interested in how schools help young people feel safe.
I'm interested in how your school dealt with bullying.

a) What are the reasons for being bullied in schools?

b) How was bullying dealt with at your school?

c) Was there any bullying of people because of their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay? How was it dealt with at your school?

7) If I could, I'd like to ask you about when you first realised you were attracted to someone of the same sex, if there was a particular time. Were there things that were helpful and not helpful at this time?

Relationships

Moving onto thinking about relationships I'd like to ask about how schools support young people with relationships. I think it would be useful if we brainstorm 'what makes a good relationship'.

Brainstorm of a 'good relationship'

8)Where do you learn about relationships?

i) How does school support you to develop good relationships?

Youth Group and School

9) How is X youth group for you?

i)) How does the X youth group support you to: -

- Feel safe
- Feel good about yourself
- Be yourself
- Feel that you belong
- To get on well with others

10) Do you know of any way that the X youth club link/ linked in with school to support you to feel good about yourself, to feel that you belong, to be yourself, to feel safe, to get on well with others and to learn about relationships?

Another Way of Doing Things

11) What support would be good for all young people? (to do their best, to feel safe to feel good about themselves, to be yourself, to feel that you belong, to help young people get on well with each other and to learn about relationships)

i) What support would be good for LGB young people? (prompts as above)

ii) If you were in charge what changes would you make for yourself at school, for straight young people at school, for society at large (prompts as above)

Prompts to explore how the school does and could support the above through: -
- Teaching styles and perceived links between teaching styles and inclusion
- Curriculum/displays/curriculum resources that promote inclusion
- Policies/whole school events that promote inclusion
- Staff values and knowledge/skills relating to the emotional needs of all young people

Thank you

The interview will be analysed for common themes and I will write a report sharing what I have found. I will send a copy of the report to the youth group.

Appendix 2-Interview Schedule-Pupils (School)

Introduction

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am a trainee Educational Psychologist. Educational Psychologists work with children, young people, families and schools to help children and young people to enjoy school and do their best.

The purpose of this study is to explore how schools support all young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others. Recently, there have been worries locally and elsewhere that some young people may be being bullied for being gay or lesbian. This study will also particularly explore how schools support these young people to do their best, feel good about themselves and get on well with others.

I will feed back what I have found to the Educational Psychology Service. They will use the findings to develop their work with young people, families and schools.

I would like to record the discussion on a digital recorder. After all the interviews I will then transcribe (write what people have said) them and look for common ideas. This information will be treated anonymously and confidentially. That means that I will not tell anyone that it is you that have said something unless I think that you or someone else is at risk of being harmed.

The questions are all about school and not about your own personal experiences. If, at any time, you want to stop talking we will stop. If you want to talk to someone afterwards about what was said during the interviews or about the study you can talk to me, to Ms X or to any other member of staff at school.

I am not looking for right answers, only for what everyone thinks.

Have you got any questions?

Ground Rules

Elicit and state ground rules for discussion: -

1. The discussion should be confidential and not discussed outside the group unless the researcher thinks you or someone else is at risk of being hurt.

2. All should listen to and respect others views involving not interrupting and giving everyone a chance to speak.

3. No discussion of sexual feelings or relationships.

4. Any participant can withdraw form the study at any time.

5. Any participant can refuse to answer questions.

Complete Consent Forms

Background and Whole School Experience

How is school for you?

What is it about school that helps young people do your best?

What is it about school that helps young people to be happy?

How does school help young people get on well with each other?

Groups within School

4) Are there particular **groups** that the school want to help to do better? (prompt with examples of girls or boys)

Bullying

5) I'm interested in how your school deals with bullying.

a) What are the reasons for being bullied in schools?

b) How is bullying dealt with at your school?

c) Is there any bullying of people because of their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay? How is it dealt with at your school?

Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual Young People

6) What support is there for LGB young people? (to do their best, to feel good about themselves and to help young people get on well with each other)

i) How is life for a young lesbian, a young gay man or a young bisexual person at this school?

Relationships

Moving onto thinking about relationships I'd like to ask about how schools support young people with relationships. I think it would be useful if we brainstorm 'what makes a good relationship'.

Brainstorm of 'a good relationship'

Where do you learn about relationships?

i) How does school support you to develop good relationships?

ii) How do you think a lesbian, gay or bisexual young person learn about relationships?

Another Way of Doing Things

What support would be good for all young people? (to do their best, to feel good about themselves, to help young people get on well with each other and to learn about good relationships)

i) What support would be good for LGB young people? (prompts as above)

ii) If you were in charge what changes would you make for yourself, for a young lesbian, gay or bisexual young person, for society at large (prompts as above)

Prompts to explore how the school does and could support the above through: -

- Teaching styles and perceived links between teaching styles and inclusion
- Curriculum/displays/curriculum resources that promote inclusion
- Policies/whole school events that promote inclusion
- Staff values and knowledge/skills relating to the emotional needs of all young people

Thank you

The interview will be analysed for common themes and I will write a report sharing what I have found. I will send a copy of the report to the school. Would you like me to come back next year and report back what I found?

Appendix 3-Interview Schedule- Staff (School)

Introduction

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am conducting a study exploring how secondary schools support the emotional wellbeing of young people. This study will also particularly explore how schools support the emotional wellbeing of young people who are or may be lesbian, gay or bisexual.

The study is part of my Doctoral studies at the Institute of Education. I am carrying out interviews with young people at this school who have something to say on this topic, lesbian, gay and bisexual young people from elsewhere in the district, school staff from this school and other staff from the district.

I would like to record the discussion on an audio recorder. After all the interviews I will then transcribe them and look for common ideas. I am the only person who will be listening to the recordings of the discussions with young people and a transcriber and myself will be the only ones listening to staff interviews. This information will be treated anonymously and confidentially.

Do you agree to the discussion being recorded on a digital recorder?

Background

1) I would like to start with a little background about your role in the school. What is your role in the school and how long have you been in this role and at this school?

2) What do you think emotional wellbeing means for young people at this school?

3) i) How does the school help young people to do their best?

ii) What is it about the school that supports young people to feel good about themselves/to be themselves / to encourage them to feel that they belong/to feel safe emotionally and physically?

4) How does the school help young people get on well others?

Groups within School

5) Which groups do you think struggle?
    i) What support is there for these groups?

Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual Young People

6i) What support is there for LGB young people?

ii) How do you think life is for a young lesbian, a young gay man or a young bisexual person at this school?

Bullying

7) I'm interested in how schools deal with bullying?

a) What are the reasons for being bullied in this school?

b) How is bullying dealt with at your school?

c) Is there any bullying of people because of their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay? How is it dealt with at this school?

Relationships

Moving onto thinking about relationships I'd like to ask about how schools support young people with relationships.

8)Where do you think young people learn about relationships?

i) How does the school support young people to develop good relationships?

Youth Group and School

9) Are you aware of any youth provision that particularly focuses on the needs of LGB young people locally?

i)) How does this youth provision support LGB young people to: -
- Feel safe
- Feel good about yourself
- Be yourself
- Feel that you belong
- To get on well with others

ii) Do you know of any way that the youth provision links in with school?

Another Way of Doing Things

11) What support would be good for all young people? (to do their best, to feel safe to feel good about themselves, to be yourself, to feel that you belong, to help young people get on well with each other and to learn about relationships)

i) What support would be good for LGB young people? (prompts as above)

ii) If you were in charge what changes would you make for all young people, for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people at school, for society at large (prompts as above)

Prompts to explore how the school does and could support the above through: -

- Teaching styles and perceived links between teaching styles and inclusion
- Curriculum/displays/curriculum resources that promote inclusion
- Policies/whole school events that promote inclusion
- Staff values and knowledge/skills relating to the emotional needs of all young people

Thank you

The interview will be analysed for common themes and I will write a report sharing what I have found. I will send a copy of the report to the school. Would you like me to come back next year and report back what I found?

Appendix 4-Interview Schedule Staff (Children's Service)

Introduction

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am conducting a study into how secondary schools support the wellbeing of all young people and in particular young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or questioning.

The study is part of my Doctoral studies at the Institute of Education. I am carrying out interviews with lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning young people at a youth group as well as young people from a secondary school in this district, school staff and other staff from the local district.

I would like to record the discussion on an audio recorder. After all the interviews I will then transcribe them and look for common themes. I am the only person who will be listening to the recordings of the discussions with young people and a transcriber and myself will be the only ones listening to staff interviews. This information will be treated anonymously and confidentially.

Do you agree to the discussion being recorded on a digital recorder?

Background

1) I would like to start with a little background about your role. What is your role and how long have you been in this role in the local district

2) What do you think emotional wellbeing means for young people in this district?

3)i) How do schools help young people to do their best?

ii) What was it about schools that supports young people to feel good about themselves/to be themselves / to encourage them to feel that they belong/to feel safe emotionally and physically?

4) How do schools help young people get on well others?

Groups within School

5) Which groups do you think struggle locally?

    i) What support is there for these groups?

Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB) Young People

What support is there for LGB young people locally?

How do you think life is for a young lesbian, a young gay man or a young bisexual person at schools locally?

Bullying

7) I'm interested in how schools deal with bullying?

a) What are the reasons for being bullied in the local district?

b) How is bullying dealt in schools locally?

c) Is there any bullying of people because of their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay? How is it dealt at schools in this district?

Relationships

Moving onto thinking about relationships I'd like to ask about how schools support young people with relationships.

8)Where do you think young people learn about relationships?

i) How do schools support young people to develop good relationships?

Youth Group and School

9) Are you aware of any local youth provision specifically supporting young LGB people?

i) How does this youth group support LGB young people to: -
- Feel safe
- Feel good about yourself
- Be yourself
- Feel that you belong
- To get on well with others
-

ii) How does the youth provision link in with schools to support the emotional wellbeing of young LGB people?

Another Way of Doing Things

11) What support would be good for all young people? (to do their best, to feel safe to feel good about themselves, to be yourself, to feel that you belong, to help young people get on well with each other and to learn about relationships)

i) What support would be good for LGB young people? (prompts as above)

ii) If you were in charge what changes would you make for all young people, for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people at school, for society at large (prompts as above)

Prompts to explore how the school does and could support the above through: -
- Teaching styles and perceived links between teaching styles and inclusion

- Curriculum/displays/curriculum resources that promote inclusion
- Policies/whole school events that promote inclusion
- Staff values and knowledge/skills relating to the emotional needs of all young people

Thank you

The interview will be analysed for common themes and I will write a report sharing what I have found. I will send a copy of the report to the Psychology Service. Would you like me to come back next year and report back what I found?

Appendix 5 Interview Schedule- Staff (LGB Youth Club)

Introduction

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am conducting a study into how secondary schools support the emotional wellbeing of all young people and in particular. young people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual or questioning.

The study is part of my Doctoral studies at the Institute of Education. I am carrying out interviews with young people at this youth group as well as young people from a secondary school in the district, school staff and other staff from the local Partnerships.

I would like to record the discussion on an audio recorder. After all the interviews I will then transcribe them and look for common ideas. I am the only person who will be listening to the recordings of the discussions with young people and a transcriber and myself will be the only ones listening to staff interviews. This information will be treated anonymously and confidentially.

Do you agree to the discussion being recorded on a digital recorder?

Background

1) I would like to start with a little background about your role with the youth group. What is your role with the youth group and how long have you been in this role?

2) How do you link in with schools?

3) What do you think emotional wellbeing means for young people in this district?

4)) i) How do schools help young people to do their best?

    ii) What was it about schools that supports young people to feel good about themselves/to be themselves / to encourage them to feel that they belong/to feel safe emotionally and physically?

iii) How do schools help young people get on well others?

Groups within School

5) Which groups do you think struggle locally?

    i) What support is there for these groups?

Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual Young People

6i) What support is there for LGB young people locally?

ii) How do you think life is for a young lesbian, a young gay man or a young bisexual person at schools locally?

Bullying

7) I'm interested in how schools deal with bullying?

a) What are the reasons for being bullied in this district?

b) How is bullying dealt in schools locally?

c) Is there any bullying of people because of their sexuality or for being lesbian or gay? How is it dealt at schools in this district?

Relationships

Moving onto thinking about relationships I'd like to ask about how schools support young people with relationships.

8)Where do you think young people learn about relationships?

i) How do schools support young people to develop good relationships?

Youth Group and School

9) How does this youth group support LGB young people to: -
- Feel safe
- Feel good about yourself
- Be yourself
- Feel that you belong
- To get on well with others

Another Way of Doing Things

11) What support would be good for all young people? (to do their best, to feel safe, to feel good about themselves, to be yourself, to feel that you belong, to help young people get on well with each other and to learn about relationships)

i) What support would be good for LGB young people? (prompts as above)

ii) If you were in charge what changes would you make for all young people, for lesbian, gay and bisexual young people at school, for society at large (prompts as above)

Prompts to explore how the school does and could support the above through: -

- Teaching styles and perceived links between teaching styles and inclusion
- Curriculum/displays/curriculum resources that promote inclusion
- Policies/whole school events that promote inclusion
- Staff values and knowledge/skills relating to the emotional needs of all young people

Thank you

The interview will be analysed for common themes and I will write a report sharing what I have found. I will send a copy of the report to the Youth Group. Would you like me to come back next year and report back what I found?

Appendix 6- Consent Form (LGB Young People)

To be returned to X by Y date

Project Title:

How schools support the emotional wellbeing of pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher

Judith Lemkin

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Educational Psychology Service

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information leaflet for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. ☐

3.I understand that I can refuse to answer questions. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the study. ☐

5. I agree that the interview can be recorded on an audio-recorder. ☐

6. I agree that I am over 16. ☐

. . . .

Name   Date
Signature

<u>Appendix 7-Consent Form (X School Pupils)</u>

To be returned to Ms X by Y date

Project Title:

How schools support the emotional wellbeing of pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher:

Judith Lemkin

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Educational Psychology Service

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information leaflet for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.   ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.   ☐

☐

3.I understand that I can refuse to answer questions.

3. I agree to take part in the study.   ☐

4. I agree that the interview can be recorded on an audio-recorder.   ☐

Name   Date

Signature

<u>Appendix 8-Permission Form (Headteacher at X School)</u>

To be returned to   Judith Lemkin

Project Title:

How schools support the emotional wellbeing of pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher:

Judith Lemkin
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter and leaflets ☐
for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that the participation of school pupils and staff is voluntary and ☐
they can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

3. I give permission for pupils from this school to be invited to take part in the ☐
study.
4. I agree that the interviews can be recorded on an audio-recorder. ☐

5.I agree that information leaflets have been or will be sent home to parents ☐
and carers of those pupils involved in the study

Appendix 9-Permission Form (X Youth Club)

To be returned to   Judith Lemkin

Project Title:

A Right to Be: How schools support the emotional wellbeing of gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher:

Judith Lemkin
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter and leaflets for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that the participation of young people and staff is voluntary and they can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. ☐

3. I give permission for young people who attend X Youth Club to be invited to take part in the study. ☐

4. I agree that the interviews can be recorded on an audio-recorder. ☐

5. I agree that the young people involved in the study are over 16 ☐

Appendix 10-Consent Form (School Staff)

To be returned to X by Y date

Project Title:
A Right to Be: How schools support the emotional wellbeing of gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher

Judith Lemkin
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. ☐

3. I understand that I can refuse to answer questions. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the study. ☐

5. I agree that the interview can be recorded on an audio-recorder. ☐

Appendix 11-Consent Form (Children's Service Staff)

To be returned to X by Y date

Project Title:

A Right to Be: How schools support the emotional wellbeing of gay, lesbian and bisexual pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher

Judith Lemkin
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter for the study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. ☐

☐

3.I understand that I can refuse to answer questions

4. I agree to take part in the study. ☐

5. I agree that the interview can be recorded on an audio-recorder.

☐

Appendix 12-Parent Opt In Form (X School)

To be returned Mr X

Project Title:

How schools support the emotional wellbeing of pupils.

Name, Position and Contact Address of Researcher:

Judith Lemkin

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Educational Psychology Service

Please complete and return this form if you want your son/daughter to be invited to take part in this research.

I do give permission for my son/daughter to be invited to take part in this research study

Appendix 13-Letter to Head of Youth Service

Dear Head of the Youth Service,

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am a trainee Educational Psychologist working for X Educational Psychology Service. As part of my training at the Institute of Education I am doing a research study, the purpose of which is to make a distinct contribution to the knowledge base of those working in education including school staff and Educational Psychologists. The research is being supervised by Ian Warwick and Martin Cook at the Institute of Education.

The focus for the study is an exploration of how schools support the emotional wellbeing of all young people with particular reference to lesbian, gay and bisexual young people or those who are questioning their sexuality. While there has been a significant amount of research into homophobic bullying, there has been little on what counts as effective practice (Warwick 2007). This study will explore what is viewed as being effective support for all young people and lesbian, gay or bisexual young people who are or have recently been attending a secondary school in the area. It will involve semi-structured interviews with a group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning young people who are over 16 as well as youth service staff. In addition there will be interviews with staff and groups of pupils at a secondary school as well as other professionals from the local district.

The research will go ahead only with the ethical approval of the Institute of Education and the Youth Service will be informed once this has been granted. As a trainee Educational Psychologist I have had an enhanced CRB check carried out. I can provide the copy of the check provided.

If the Youth Service is keen to be involved, I have outlined more details of the group of young people and staff I would like to interview below. Ideally I would like to interview: -

1) 6-8 lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning young people who are over 16 (45-50 minutes)

In addition, I would like to interview a Youth Worker with knowledge of working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and questioning young people and secondary schools. These interviews will take 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Yours Faithfully,
Judith Lemkin
Educational Psychology Service

Appendix 14 - Letter to Headteacher

Dear Headteacher,

My name is Judith Lemkin. I am a trainee Educational Psychologist working for X Educational Psychology Service. As part of my training at the Institute of Education I am doing a research study, the purpose of which is to make a distinct contribution to the knowledge base of those working in education including school staff and Educational Psychologists. The research is being supervised by Ian Warwick and Martin Cook at the Institute of Education.

Research Focus

The focus for the study is an exploration of how schools support the emotional wellbeing of all young people with particular reference to lesbian, gay and bisexual young people or those who are questioning their sexuality. While there has been a significant amount of research into homophobic bullying, there has been little on what counts as effective practice (Warwick 2007). This study will explore what is viewed as being effective support for all young people including those who are lesbian, gay or bisexual who are or have recently been attending a secondary school in the area. It will involve semi-structured interviews with staff and groups of pupils at a secondary school. In addition, there will be interviews with lesbian, gay or bisexual young people from elsewhere as well as other professionals from the local district. I will feed back what I have found to the Educational Psychology Service who will use the findings to develop their work with young people, families and schools.

Participants at a Secondary School

I would like to interview groups of young people who have opinions on this topic. The questions will be all about school and not about pupils' own personal experiences of feelings or relationships.

If the school is keen to be involved, I have outlined more details of the groups of young people and staff I would like to interview below. Ideally I would like to interview: -

1) 6 Y12 pupils (45-50 minutes)
2) 6 Y10 pupils (45-50 minutes)
3) 6 Y8 pupils (45-50 minutes)

In addition, I would like to interview a member of the School Senior Management/Leadership Team Staff who has responsibility for PSHE and/or Equality/Inclusion and two other staff with responsibilities for promoting emotional wellbeing. These interviews will take 45 minutes to 1 hour.

I would like to carry out the interviews in October. I can be flexible around arranging the interviews and will fit around the school and staff's timetables. I hope this is feasible.

The research will go ahead only with the ethical approval of the Institute of Education and the school will be informed once this has been granted. As a trainee Educational Psychologist I have had an enhanced CRB check carried out. I can provide the copy of the check provided.

I look forward to working with you on this project.

Yours Faithfully,

Judith Lemkin
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service