



**University College London, Institute Of Education**

**Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and  
Adolescent Psychology**

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**Exploring the role a Black Supplementary School  
plays in supporting Black boys labelled with  
“challenging behaviour” at GCSE level**

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

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# ABSTRACT

This study sought to shed light on the role a Black Supplementary School (BSS) played in supporting Black boys who were performing at national average or higher at GCSE level. They had been labelled with challenging behaviour by their mainstream educational provision. This study explored the views of 5 pupils, 4 parents and 5 BSS staff regarding ways in which the BSS supported them.

The research adopted a single case study design. It employed qualitative data collection using semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data with inductive methods of inquiry. Critical Race Theory-Community Cultural Wealth (CRT-CCW) and Bioecological Process, Person, Context, Time (B-PPCT) model were used conceptually to guide the structure of the interview schedules. However, the interview schedules were flexible enough to allow participants to reveal any perspectives that they felt were significant to the research.

One overarching theme “Education is more than academia” and four themes; “Strong Sense of Belonging”, “Pupil empowerment through unique opportunities”, “Knowing and growing thy self” and “Supporting systemic strategies” developed from the data. Overall, the findings suggest that the BSS taught pupils not only academia, but aspects of racialised identity and self-knowledge. They also provided a layer of support for the pupils’ parents. The staff, parents and pupils all described a strong sense of belonging to the BSS and likened it to being part of a family.

Based on the present study’s findings, there are implications for educational psychologists and other education professionals. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be used to enhance professional practice based on a deepened understanding of the needs of this group and ways to support them.

# IMPACT STATEMENT

An essential aspect of the role of an educational psychologist (EP) is that they promote inclusivity for all Children & Young People (CYP). This has been directed by government legislation (e.g. the DfE & DoH Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (SEND CoP) (2015), the Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act (SENDA) (2001), the Equalities Act (2010)) as well as the standards of proficiency published by Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and the British Psychological Society (BPS). Thus, EPs have an imperative responsibility to help ensure that all CYP have their needs met within their educational provision. A central aspect to EPs professional practice is supporting educational settings to meet the needs of their CYP. An EP's knowledge of child development and psychology enables them to analyse, critically evaluate and synthesise information from various components of CYP's lives in order to advise provisions of how best to meet their needs. Ultimately, EPs are not only clinicians, but are advocates for CYP and play a crucial role in ensuring that they have their needs understood and met by their educational provision. This is inclusive of those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

The Bioecological Person, Process, Context, Time model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) can be useful in helping to understand how applied psychology can be used to visualise the systemic mechanisms which impact on children's development. It highlights the indispensability of a symbiotic relationship between multi-level interactions and further goes on to explore how these interactions may impact on a child at different levels. While these systems may not have a direct connection with an individual child at any given moment, they are crucial in understanding the cultures, standards and ideologies in context. These relationships directly impact on children's development as these build the framework for their perspectives on the world (Hoy, Hughes & Walkup, 2007). Thus, there is an indispensable symbiotic relationship between the systems around CYP, those working with CYP, those who care for CYP and the impact that these interactions have. Critical Race Theory-Community Cultural Wealth

(CRT-CCW) offers a useful lens through which the context of the phenomena being investigated can be understood. It acknowledges the impact of Race and power and provides a historical context with regard to why BSSs were initially introduced by the Black community in the UK.

The findings of this study suggest that for some groups, a sense of racialised identity and a sense of belonging plays an important role in pupils feeling that they are valued members of a community. Therefore, EPs play a role in supporting educational settings to meet the needs of Black pupils as well as developing strategies and interventions that may have positive impacts on this group. EPs can develop and deliver training on the benefits of having a culturally inclusive curriculum; they can encourage schools to embrace a pedagogy that is rich and diverse in the contributions that various ethnic groups have made both nationally and internationally. When working with CYP, EPs can also use Personal Construct Psychology tools to explore their sense of belonging. They then may be able to identify areas where the school can offer more support for that individual.

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Chapter overview

This research was conducted as part of a Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology. An exploratory study, it sheds light on the role a Black Supplementary School (BSS) played in supporting Black boys who had been labelled with “challenging behaviour” by staff in their mainstream school. Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the key concepts that are used throughout the research and outlines the rationale underpinning the study. Chapter 2 justifies the research aims and questions by providing a review of relevant literature in the field. It also demonstrates how this study sought to contribute to the existing body of knowledge. Chapter 3 navigates the reader through the research design, describes my epistemological position and explains the research procedures. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the findings in relation to previous literature and outlines the implications for an educational psychologists (EPs) practice. For the purposes of this study I have chosen to capitalise the word “Black” as the term will be used as a proper noun to refer to a specific group of people. Guthrie (2004) argues that despite how this may contradict prevailing academic style manuals, there is a clear justification for doing so.

## 1.2 Key terminology

**Academic achievement/ attainment:** Relates to grades or qualifications gained through an educational provision (i.e. schools, colleges and universities).

**Black boys:** Includes Black African, Black Caribbean and dual heritage/ mixed race with Black African, Black Caribbean or any other Black nationality unless stated otherwise.

**Black Supplementary School (BSS):** A place where children of Black heritage can receive extra academic support and learn about Black culture.

**Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET):** A young person aged between 16 -24 who is not in education, employment or training.

**Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH):** A category introduced in the Department for Education & Department of Health Special Educational Needs

and Disabilities Codes of Practice (SEND COP) (2015) regarding difficulties pertaining to behaviour.

**School exclusion:** Where a pupil has been excluded from school for either a fixed time or permanently.

**Social exclusion:** exclusion from the prevailing social system and its rights and privileges, typically as a result of poverty or the fact of belonging to a minority social group.

### **1.3 Abbreviations**

**BSS** - Black Supplementary School

**B-PPCT** – Bioecological- Person, Process Context, Time model

**CRT** - Critical Race Theory

**CRT-CCW** – Critical Race Theory Community Cultural Wealth

**CYP** - Children and young people

**DfE** – Department for Education

**DoH** – Department of Health

**EP** - Educational Psychologist

**EPS** - Educational Psychology Service

**NEET** - Not in Education, Employment or Training

**SEMH** - Social, Emotional and Mental Health

**SEND** - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

### **1.4 Aim of the Study**

This single case study explores the role that a particular BSS plays in supporting Black boys who had been labelled as having challenging behaviour by their mainstream school. The boys were all performing at national average or above at GCSE level and came from families where the household income was less than £40,000 per annum. The research employed qualitative data collection methods to explore how parents, pupils and BSS staff perceived the supporting role of the BSS.

A supplementary school can be defined as a provision that provides additional learning support outside of mainstream educational institutions (National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education, 2017). Evans & Gillian-Thomas (2015) state that supplementary schools are places that offer “out-of-school-hours learning”, usually taking place for a few hours on either a Saturday or Sunday. Thus, they are not a replacement for mainstream schooling; they do not take place within school hours. They tend to provide children and young people (CYP) with additional academic support as well as either cultural enrichment or religious focused activities and are usually managed by volunteers (Evans & Gillian-Thomas, 2015). As supplementary schools have a strong cultural or religious focus, they usually offer support to CYP on the basis that they identify as belonging to a particular religion or culture.

#### **1.4.1 Black Supplementary Schools**

The first BSSs were opened in the 1960s. They began to develop as a result of concerns within the Black community that the mainstream education system was failing Black children due to racial/racist inequalities (Andrews, 2014, 2018; Dove, 1993; Mirza & Reay, 2000). These BSSs were dedicated to developing children’s understanding of their cultural heritage whilst providing them with support for their academic learning. Essentially, the purpose of the BSSs was to empower Black children, by developing their racial identity and enhancing their resilience to racism (Andrews, 2016). It was hoped that these settings would encourage Black children to recognise themselves as individuals with academic potential (Bigford, 2015; Maylor et al., 2010; Mirza & Reay, 2000).

Despite BSSs being present in the UK for several decades, perhaps due to their informal nature, there is limited empirical data or literature on them. In one of the earliest publications on BSSs entitled “The Black voluntary school movement: definition, context and prospects” Chevannes & Reeves (1987) state:

“The Black voluntary school is a practical gesture, however rough and ready, in support of a broader Black political and educational ideal which has directly arisen from assessment by Afro-Caribbean’s of their social position in Britain and of the part that the existing white dominated education system plays in its perpetuation” (p.147).

Mirza and Reay (2000) completed a small-scale qualitative study investigating the subjugated knowledges and hidden histories of BSSs. They conducted observations in four London based BSSs and completed interviews BBS staff. They found evidence to suggest that BSSs are a social movement, describing them as being radical and pioneers for educational change. Thus, they are more than simply a response to the poor educational experiences of Black pupils, but rather a socio-political movement. They achieve this by creating spaces for new ideas and challenging the oppressive nature of the dominant culture. Such arguments have also been brought forward by Andrews (2013). However, the Mirza and Reay (2000) study did not explore the features of the schools that supported their pupils. Instead they sought to illuminate the hidden histories of BSSs as mechanisms of social opposition. Neither did they explore the views of the pupils but focused solely on female BSS teachers.

These discussions set the context for the current study. It seeks to explore how a BSS supports Black boys who have been labelled with challenging behaviour by their mainstream setting from the perspectives of pupil, parents and BSS staff.

#### **1.4.2 Black boys and underachievement at GCSE level**

Over the past decade the Department for Education (DfE) statistics have indicated that Black boys achieve less academically in relation to the national average at GCSE level (DfE 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017). The national average was previously five A\*-Cs up until 2017 when the grading system changed; it is now approximately five level 4s-9s. Some data suggest that poor academic achievement for Black boys in the UK at school leaving age has been

evident since the 1950's (Demie & McLean, 2015). Byfield (2008) argues that because of the amount of research reporting the academic underachievement of Black boys, they have almost become synonymous with the concept of academic underachievement. Yet defining ethnicities within studies can be challenging (Kaneshiro, Geling, Gellert & Millar, 2011; Lindsay, Pather, & Strand, 2006). For example, in previous research, the term Black boys have included boys from Black Caribbean, Black African and other Black heritage groups such as those from dual heritage/ mixed race (Bhattacharyya, Ison & Blair, 2003). However, research has suggested that there may be differences between the academic performances of the different Black groups. An illustration of this can be seen in Bhattacharyya & Blair's (2003) study. They found that Black African children performed higher at GCSE level than Black Caribbean pupils. Further, trying to define the ethnic categories of CYP of dual heritage (mixed race), is even more problematic (Aspinall, 2017). This is because some people may identify with more than one race or ethnicity. For instance, an individual may have one Black African parent and one white English but identify themselves as Black British. Literature indicates that the dual heritage population is growing and therefore methods of capturing diversity within ethnicity data needs to be further developed (Aspinall, 2017). Nevertheless, for the purpose of this study Black boys from Black African, Black Caribbean and dual heritage, with one Black African or Black Caribbean or Black British parent and one from another nationality, will be included.

Within the past two decades there has been an emerging argument that "White working class" boys are now the lowest achievers at GCSE level in comparison to other groups (Stahl, 2015; Cook 2011). This could be interpreted as suggesting that there has been a systemic shift in educational reforms and inequalities. Black children no longer being the lowest academic performers would suggest that racial inequalities within education have improved. However, Gillborn, Denmack, Rollock and Warmington (2017) argue that the evidence is misleading as the criteria that is used to identify "White working class" is significantly flawed:

“Press and political coverage frequently moves from specific data on Free School Meals (FSM) Whites (around 14% of White school students) to broader arguments about ‘working class’ Whites (a term that around 60% of British adults identify with) and almost inexorably to broad-brush pronouncements about White students as a whole. The tone of debate is captured, and inflamed, by headlines” (p.8).

There has also been research that found that certain groups of Black pupils in receipt of FSM performed equally as low as White pupils in receipt of FSM. Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair (2003) conducted a quantitative study examining data from government sponsored research. They found that only 22% of Black Caribbean pupils on FSM achieved five A\*-Cs at GCSE level. This was the same percentage for White pupils on FSM; both groups were found to be the lowest achievers in the category of FSM. Nevertheless, data still indicates that Black boys are the most likely group underachieve at GCSE level when the criterion of FSM is removed. They are also most likely to experience school exclusions during their GCSE years compared to other ethnic groups (DfE, 2016; 2017; Gillborn et al., 2017). This contributes to the rationale for why the present study is focusing on Black boys at GCSE level specifically.

Some research has challenged the negative narrative surrounding the achievements of Black pupils. Demi et al. (2006) conducted research investigating the attainment of Black pupils in particular local authorities (LAs). They found that within certain UK LAs Black pupils were attaining higher than national average at GCSE level. They argue that there needs to be greater exploration of the contextual factors that enable Black pupils to succeed so that these could then be implemented into educational policies and inform effective strategies. This perspective has been echoed by other theorists who have argued that methodological and conceptual issues in research has led to an over emphasis on the negative outcomes for this group (Modood; 2003; Troyna, 1984). They state that the academic successes of this group, for the most part, have been ignored and that it has perpetuated a negative stereotype of the intellectual inabilities of Black pupils. Critical Race Theory offers some explanation as to the systematic factors that contribute to this and will be



explored further on in the chapter. The present study seeks to shed light on the support that a BSS provides Black boys who are performing at national average or above at GCSE level as the literature states there is limited research in this area. Although the present study is not investigating academic underachievement, I felt it was necessary to give some background of the discussions surrounding this as it helps to set the context of this study and provides further evidence for the rationale. The risk factors of low achievement will now be explored in the following subsection.

### **1.4.3 Risk factors associated with underachievement at GCSE level**

Black Caribbean's have been identified as group at high risk of social exclusion (Unit & Britain, 2001; Parliament Select Committee on Home Affairs, 2007). Levitas et.al (2007) define social exclusion as experiencing a lack of, or denial of resources, rights, goods and services. People who are socially excluded may be unable to participate in the type of relationships and activities that are generally available to the majority of people in that society. It affects an individual's quality of life. Examples of social exclusion have included those who were most at risk of unemployment, living in low income households, and those most vulnerable to health difficulties (ODPM, 2004).

Social exclusion can result in a person experiencing a lack of educational or employment opportunities and thus become socially isolated. Unit & Britain (2001) reported that being excluded from school was one of the risk factors for becoming socially excluded. Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is a term used to describe young people aged between 16 – 24 who are not engaged with education or employment (Powell, 2017). Siraj et al (2014) collected qualitative data from 20 NEETs via telephone calls. They found that the most significant risk factor for this sample was low educational attainment at GCSE level; 75% of the sample had not achieved the national average amount of GCSE's. Powell (2017) completed a meta-analysis on NEETs data in the UK. They found that 25% of NEETs had no qualifications and 10% did not have any GCSE's. In addition, Siraj et al (2014) found that the influence of mental health difficulties on NEET status was significant. Although Siraj et al (2014)

and Powell (2017) did not focus specifically on young Black men who were NEETs; they still offer some insight into the factors that may put this group at risk. From these findings it can be concluded that CYP who are excluded from school are at a high risk of being NEET. Thus, since Black boys have the highest rates of school exclusions, they are very vulnerable both within and out of the education system. They are at high risk of experiencing school exclusions and also at a high risk of low academic attainment at GCSE level, therefore at a high risk of becoming NEET. Data indicates that the outcomes for Black boys after school exclusions are concerning; there is a positive correlation with the disproportionate number of Black boys who are excluded from school, the disproportionate number of Black men diagnosed with Mental Health problems and the disproportionate number of Black men in the criminal justice system within the UK (Baker, 2017; Daniel et al., 2003; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Ministry Of Justice, 2017). Therefore, Black boys who are academically performing at national average at GCSE level are still vulnerable because they are at high risk of experiencing school exclusions due to behavioural issues. This will be described in greater detail in the following subsection.

#### **1.4.4 Challenging behaviour**

Advancements in research on child development and psychology have helped to raise awareness of the link between behaviour, emotions and mental health. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) introduced the category of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties and stated that it can manifest itself in many observable ways including displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. The term “SEMH difficulties” replaced the former term “Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties”. This was done to acknowledge that the behaviours of certain CYP may indicate underlying mental health difficulties. A CYP can be described as having SEMH needs if they have difficulties with; social and emotional functioning; their ability to regulate self and behaviour or are experiencing mental health difficulties. In this way, behaviour can be seen as the communication of a child’s needs or mental state (DfE, 2016).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2001) defines mental health as a state of wellbeing. They suggested that mental wellbeing enables people to function at their optimum levels (WHO, 2001). This includes having the capacity to work productively and fruitfully. Therefore, experiences of mental health difficulties can have negative repercussions on a person's everyday life. In 2012, the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer: "Our Children Deserve Better" highlighted some of the mental health concerns with CYP (Murphy & Fonagy, 2012). They reported that the most significant impact of mental health challenges included disruptions to education and negative impacts on social relationships.

Despite attempts to raise awareness of the link between behaviour and SEMH there is some ambiguity about whether there is a difference between challenging behaviour and SEMH and how this difference can be identified. Yet, if a child's behaviour is thought to be significantly impacting on their learning, EPs can be instrumental in identifying effective strategies that can support their needs (DfE, 2016). As part of the assessment an EP may use various psychological tools to give an in-depth understanding of their SEMH and learning needs. However, there is currently no clear indication of how many of the CYP who have been excluded for behavioural concerns have been referred to an EP. Therefore, it may be that some of these CYP are facing exclusions because schools are not meeting their needs. The next section will explore the risk factors for children labelled with challenging behaviour and emphasises why EP intervention should be prioritised for this group.

#### **1.4.5 Risk factors for children labelled with challenging behaviour**

Government statistics have highlighted Black boys to be at the highest group at risk of school exclusions when compared to any other ethnicity or gender (DfE, 2011; 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017). The Department for Education's (DfE) statistics on Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions in England (2014; 2015; 2016; 2017) identified "persistent disruptive behaviour" as the most common reason for school exclusions. Yet, the actual legislative definition of what exactly

constitutes “persistent disruptive behaviour” is vague and extremely subjective. DfE’s “Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England statutory guidance” (2017) states that Head teachers have the legal authority to exclude pupils:

“... in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school...” (p.10).

This definition means that “disruptive behaviour” may look very different from school to school. The statistics currently available indicate that CYP who are Black and/ or have behavioural needs are extremely vulnerable and at a high risk of experiencing school exclusions. Gillborn & Denmack (2018) found that more than one in three Black Caribbean students experienced at least one exclusion in the last three years of secondary school (GCSE years). Research has indicated that school exclusions can be an indicator for poorer long-term outcomes (Daniels & Cole, 2010). CYP who have been excluded from school are at a higher risk of; becoming offenders, suffering from low self-esteem, engaging in delinquent activities in the community, becoming NEET and experiencing social isolation compared to pupils who have not been excluded (Daniels & Cole, 2010; Leone et al, 2003; Parsons, Hayden, Godfrey, Howlett & Martin, 2001). Furthermore, the fact that behavioural issues are the most frequent cause for school exclusions is concerning. This is because, as illustrated in the previous subsection, behaviour can be considered as a form of communication and indicative of SEMH needs. Legislation indicates that schools have a duty of care to children presenting with SEMH needs (DfE & DoH Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Codes of Practice, 2015; DfE Exclusion from maintained schools’ academies and pupil referral units in England, 2017). Therefore, it could be argued that by excluding a CYP for behavioural issues without first seeking support from professionals, such as EPs, is a neglect of responsibilities. This has been echoed in the DfE “Timpson review of school exclusion” (2019). The report argues that schools should be accountable for the educational outcomes of their pupils including those that they exclude. It also raises concerns over the current exclusion legislation and questions why there is a disproportionate number of certain

groups being excluded for behavioural issues without the identification of underlying SEMH needs. EPs are mentioned throughout the report as being well placed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge of effective evidence-based practice for this group. It states EPs can do this by conducting case study research and developing models for working with other professionals and educational agencies. This provides further evidence for the rationale of the present study.

There has been research that suggests for vulnerable groups at risk of exclusion and/or low academic achievement, supportive factors can help to improve academic outcomes. These include things such as experiencing high teacher expectations and, specifically for Black pupils, attending BSSs (Bigford, 2015; Daniels & Cole, 2010; Gordon, Bridglall & Meroe, 2005; Maylor et al., 2010; Parsons, Hayden, Godfrey, Howlett & Martin, 2001; Robinson, 2013; Stone, 2013). Both will be explored further in Chapter 2.

This study will focus on Black boys who have been labelled within their mainstream school setting as having challenging behaviour. It will seek to shed light on the perspectives of pupils, parents and BSS on the role the BSS plays in supporting them. The next subsection will look at a theory offering insight into the educational experiences of Black boys from a racialised perspective. This perspective is useful due to history behind why BSSs began emerging in the UK, as discussed earlier in the chapter. Hence it gives context to the experiences of racism that are embedded within the systems and ideologies of a culture.

### **1.5 Critical Race Theory as a conceptual theory**

Institutional racism is often described as being covert and not easily identifiable because it is embedded within society; it is a systemic form of racism (Gillborn, 2008). Thus, it is a phenomenon that happens within institutions and politics as opposed to individual acts of racism from one person to another. The concept of 'institutional racism' initially emerged in the context of radical political struggle and the "Black Power" movement in the United States in the 1960s; it was later

adopted in Britain (Scott, 2015). The educational experiences of Black boys in the UK share some similarities with the USA. In the USA, the school exclusion rate of Black boys has consistently remained significantly disproportionate to white boys (Harper, 2009; Losen & Martinez, 2013). Some theorists have suggested that implicit feelings of prejudice have the potential to manifest themselves in adverse ways, such as racist demeanours (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). For example, Hyland (2005) completed ethnographic research in the USA. She looked at the roles adopted by four White teachers, pre- and post-attending an anti-racism seminar. Her findings suggest that the teaching practices of all four participants could be described as sustaining racist practices and ideologies prior to attending the seminar. This was thought to be because of core beliefs and behaviours they held about African Americans that they were unaware of. She also found that culturally related teaching was viewed as radical and was therefore not embedded into core teaching pedagogy. She argues that education professions have a duty to challenge the cultures of schools so that culturally relevant teaching is normalised.

Wellman (1993) explains institutional racism as a structural conflict that seeks to maintain ideological and structural inequality between the “superior race” (whites) and the “subordinate race” (Blacks). Sociologists Carmichael and Hamilton (1967) were the first to coin the term institutional racism. They describe it as systemic influences of racial discrimination, inequality, exploitation and domination in organisations or institutions. Thus, this form of racism is less obvious as it is not demonstrated by individuals committing overt acts, but rather is encompassed within covert acts at a community level. Since then, the concept of institutional racism has been developed to give intrinsic details about how racist ideologies and discriminatory practices have become embedded in taken-for-granted laws, policies and norms that systematically place certain groups at a disadvantage whilst others benefit from it (Clair & Denis, 2015). This has included investigating the social processes whereby race, racism, and racial inequalities are constructed and challenged at micro, meso, and macro levels in relation to ecology theory. An ecology theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) will be explained in greater detail in the following subsection. Clair & Denis (2015) suggest that contemporary concepts of institutional racism

identifies that macro structural processes, as opposed to individual acts, provide more meaningful explanations of racial inequality in the modern era.

Ideas of racism being intrinsically embedded in certain societies and cultures have been brought forward with concepts such as Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Bell Jr, 1976). CRT explains that racism is a normal part of some societies and the concept of modern racism is not always easily recognisable (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Therefore, subconsciously, professionals, which could include teachers and EPs, may indeed uphold implicit racist perceptions towards certain ethnic groups. As described in the Hyland (2005) study, these implicit racist ideologies are not always overtly identifiable. Although CRT was originally developed based on the legal experiences of Black people in America, and then later expanded to education, there is an argument that it is also relatable to the education system within the UK (Gillborn, 2008; Warmington, 2012). Gillborn (2008) argues that education policies are designed to maintain racial division and discrimination. Thus, the racial inequalities found within education are because of systemic influences. CRT argues that UK education policy is not designed to eliminate race inequality but to sustain it at manageable levels and therefore it is very likely that institutional racism has precipitated the continuous academic underachievement of Black boys at GCSE level. Gillborn (2008) states that this has been perpetuated through government legislation:

“... Essentially, race equality in education has continued to persist because social and educational policy has never seriously prioritised its eradication. Rather, policymakers have paid most attention to social control, assimilation and pandering to the feelings and fears of White people. Most shockingly of all, in key respects the contemporary situation is as bad, and in some cases worse, than anything that has gone before...” (p.86).

CRT can be used as a lens to explore the role of BSSs in the Black community particularly because they started emerging due to Black CYPs experiences of racism within mainstream schools. By highlighting the significance of racism within a social, historical and economic context, CRT considers race to be a socially constructed phenomenon (Gillborn, 2015). CRT explains that racial differences and inequalities serve a purpose to those in power and is embedded

within our society (Gillborn, 2015). Thus, the poor academic achievements of Black boys at GCSE level may be due to the impact of racist ideologies in the UK. Yet some theorists highlight the fact that the application of CRT to education is in its infancy and that it requires a thorough review of the legal literature upon which it was originally based (Ladson-Billing, 1998). Without a deepened understanding of the legal underpinnings of CRT, its application to education may struggle to become established within educational literature. However, the use of CRT in education matters is emerging and it requires a more robust evidence base (Gillborn, 2015; Ladson-Billings, & Tate, 2016). CRT is a lens that sheds light on how negative implicit racial beliefs upheld by a dominant race could contribute to the consistently poor academic achievements of people from minority races. It illustrates how features of the educational system place Black pupils at a disadvantage. However, CRT Community Cultural Wealth (CRT-CCW) focuses on how “marginalised” communities can use Community Cultural Wealth to empower themselves. This will be explored further in Chapter 2.

### **1.6 Bioecological Process, Person, Context, Time model as a conceptual framework**

Ecological theory was developed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979. This theory stated that there were certain systems around a child and that these impacted on their development. There have been several revised versions of the theory since its inception. The most recent version is the B-PPCT model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). It assumes that human development is influenced heavily by various levels of environmental factors as well as individual differences. The systems within this model are as follows;

- **The Individual Level:** This refers to the descriptive factors about an individual such as their age, gender and race.
- **The Microsystem:** This refers to people or institutions in the individual's immediate surroundings with whom they regularly interact such as family, peers, school. In this system the most proximal processes take place.



Proximal processes are a crucial concept within the model. They are described as reciprocal interactions that occur regularly in the microsystem. However, there is some argument that the concept needs to be further developed as it does not fully explain the criteria for what a proximal process is as opposed to a distal process (Griffore & Phenice, 2016).

- **The Mesosystem:** This refers to the relationship between those in the individual's microsystem. An example could be the interaction between a child's family and school staff.
- **The Macrosystem:** This refers to the attitudes and ideologies of the culture within which the individual lives. This includes government legislation.
- **Chronosystem:** This refers to the impact the environmental and transitional phases have on the individual over time.

This theory demonstrates the interplay between individuals and their environment and the impact that these interactions have on an individual's development. It also sheds light on how the "Process" (interactions with others/ objects/ environment), "Person" (genetic and biological aspects of a person), "Context" (the environment of conditions an individual is in) and "Time", the extent to which activities occur consistently in the developing person's environment). There has been research that has found that the B-PPCT model can be particularly useful when exploring the systems around a child, particularly vulnerable children (Burns, Warmbold-Brann & Zaslofsky (2015). Burns, Warmbold-Brann, & Zaslofsky (2015) argue that the theory helps to look at multiple perspectives that impact on a child and how they present in school e.g. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and behavioural concerns. The psychology that underpins the B-PPCT model does not look at the child from the perspective of a deficit "within child" model; it considers the systems that surround the child.

Griffore & Phenice (2016) state that Bronfenbrenner did not regard the B-PPCT model as a theoretical model or a research design, but rather a framework which could be used to classify phenomena and define key properties. Within the present study, the model will be used as a guiding conceptual framework to shed light on the psychological processes that underpin the findings. By using the B-PPCT model it is hoped that this exploratory study will illuminate what the systemic features of attending a BSS are.

Although the B-PPCT model is extremely useful in understanding the systems around the child and how these impact on them, it does not fully acknowledge the role of race and power in the systems. As this study seeks to shed light on the experiences of Black boys, their families and staff of a BSS, B-PPCT as a conceptual framework will be used alongside CRT as a conceptual theory. Incorporating CRT will help to make sense of the process of racialisation and marginalisation, considering the subjective educational experiences of Black people in the UK.

### **1.7 Personal reflectivity**

This research was sparked by my previous experiences attending various BSSs during my own youth. I found them to be places of warmth and celebrative of Blackness and being Black. Since then I have held many roles in education including working as a learning support assistant (LSA) in various educational provisions in London. During this time, most of my duties involved supporting boys with “challenging behaviour”; enabling them to access their learning. For many, the behavioural issues became a barrier to the amount of academic progress they were able to make. A passion then grew within me to explore and understand the most effective ways in which their academic achievements could be supported.

Whilst working as an LSA I observed that most of the pupils I supported were not considered to have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), but rather difficulties in managing their behaviour. However, since beginning a Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology, I have

gained more understanding of the psychological mechanisms involved with behaviour and how this relates to SEND. Currently, as a trainee educational psychologist in a London borough, I have continued to encounter professionals who regard challenging behaviour as a “within child” issue. Yet, I believe educational psychologists can be instrumental in promoting awareness around the psychological mechanisms that enable children to learn. They also have a duty of care to ensure that all children’s needs are understood and met accordingly.

I identify as a Black British woman of African Caribbean descent. I have grown up in a London borough with one of the highest African and Caribbean populations in the UK. During recent years I been involved in several community discussions pertaining to the poor academic achievements and outcomes for young Black boys in the community. Yet, during my own experience of education I have witnessed Black boys who have excelled academically. Although this has also been observed in some research, it is not typically the most common narrative (Byfield, 2008; Robinson, 2013). Thus, I was interested in finding out what helps Black boys to succeed academically as opposed to repeatedly reporting on the failings of this group. In January 2018 I attended a conference at the University College London Institute of Education entitled “Raising the Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils”. Some of the speakers, including Dr Feyisa Demie “Head of Research and Adviser for School- Self- evaluation” for a London borough, highlighted the need for more research investigating the roles that BSSs played in supporting the academic attainment of Black children. This heightened my passion and made me further consider the potential value the research would have for various education professionals.

### **1.8 Relevance to Educational Psychology**

The present study is relevant to the field of Educational Psychology as it aims to offer insight into the “voice of the child” by eliciting the views of Black boys who have been labelled with challenging behaviour. They attend a BSS and are performing at national average or higher at GCSE level. Ascertaining the “voice

of the child” has become an important focus within the domain of Educational Psychology (DfES, 2001; Harding & Atkinson, 2009; DfE & DoH SEND COP, 2015). This study also seeks to elicit the voice of the parents and BSS staff to gain their perspectives on the role the BSS plays in supporting pupils. This study endeavours to offer insight into how Black boys labelled with challenging behaviour can be supported at GCSE level. As discussed earlier in the chapter, challenging behaviour can be indicative of SEMH needs. EPs are well placed to work with schools to ensure that CYP are having their SEMH needs met. Their expertise on CYP development and psychology enables them to use tools such as consultations, assessments, interventions and research to facilitate this. They are also well placed to promote awareness about SEMH and question negative “within child” narratives about their “challenging behaviour”. Thus, EP involvement with this group could potentially reduce the amount of exclusions for this vulnerable group. The fact that this has been highlighted in the recent DfE “Timpson review of school exclusion” is promising as it contributes to bringing further awareness about the profession.

The present study is also relevant to the field of Educational Psychology as it seeks to illustrate the need for EPs to have raised awareness of institutional racism and how this can affect Black children within the educational system. By using B-PPCT alongside CRT-CCW as frameworks, the research will explore the ecology of racism within the UK education system. It is imperative that EPs understand the mechanisms of systemic racism and are aware of ways in which it can be identified. This will, hopefully, help them to begin working with schools to challenge some of the racist ideologies that are embedded within education and legislation.

### **1.8 Chapter summary**

Historically, the poor academic achievements of Black pupils within the UK at GCSE level has been a cause for concern. Black people, particularly males, are more likely to experience both school and social exclusions than any other ethnic group. BSSs began to emerge within the Black community in the 60’s to

offer extra academic support to Black children as well as educating them on cultural identity. This was a response to institutional racism within mainstream educational settings. CRT can be used as a conceptual theory to shed light on the experiences of Black pupils in the UK. It also gives historical context to the emergence and importance of BSSs within the Black community. B-PPCT can be used as a conceptual framework to help to examine the ecological systems of BSSs and the interplay between them. This study aims to look at the role a BSS plays in supporting Black pupils who have been labelled by staff in their mainstream setting as having “challenging behaviour” but who are performing at national average or above at GCSE level. However, because of their behavioural needs, data indicate that they are still at risk of school exclusions and therefore not gaining GCSE’s. Thus, this chapter has provided a rationale for the present study. The next chapter will look in greater detail at the literature pertaining to the attainment of Black boys, BSSs and support for children with challenging behaviour.

# CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Chapter overview

In order to conduct research that was authentic and valuable to the field, it was important to firstly carry out a review of the literature Black boys, BSSs, academic achievement at GCSE level and challenging behaviour. This helped to identify gaps in the research whilst also prevented replicating previous studies. The literature review also helped to identify what the current understanding of the phenomena was, thus informing the study. The search for literature relating to this study was conducted using various databases including PsycINFO, Google Scholar, ProQuest Education, British Education Index (EBSCO), and Taylor and Francis. The search terms included "Black boys", "academic attainment", "academic achievement", "high achieving" "Social, Emotional and Mental Health", "Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties", "Black supplementary schools", "Black Saturday schools" and "challenging behaviour". I also found relevant literature in the reference lists of some of the articles within the databases. Thus, this chapter aims to provide the reader with a brief but informative insight into key existing research within the domain. This will include both theoretical and empirical data. Due to the limited published literature in the specified research area, unpublished articles, doctoral theses and independent reports will also be included. The chapter will also seek to present an argument as to how the present study will add to the existing body of knowledge and how it relates to the profession of Educational Psychology. The chapter will close with the research aims of the study and the research questions.

## 2.2 The academic achievements of Black boys at GCSE level

The current review sheds light on some of the highly complex and multifaceted factors that contribute to the academic outcomes for Black boys, as identified by

previous research. It must also be noted that much of the literature investigating the academic achievements of Black boys has come from the USA (Edwards, Franklin & Holland, 2003; Harper, 2009; Noguera, 2003; Noguera, 2009; Prager, 2011). Additionally, a predominant amount of the literature has focused on exploring the causation of the academic under achievements for this group. Demie & McLean (2015) report that concerns over the educational experience of Black boys can be dated as far back as the 1950's. In 1971, Coard published a text titled "How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System". This was one of the first publications suggesting that institutional racism was to blame for the failings of Black pupils in the UK. He argued that this was evidenced in the disproportionate number of West Indian pupils who were placed in "educationally subnormal" (ESN) schools. These placements were judged upon low IQ scores. He stated that the IQ assessments were one of the tools that was used to discriminate against Black pupils as they were culturally biased. Being placed in an ESN school meant that they were the victims of teacher's low expectations of them. As a result, they were unable to perform well academically. However, not only have poor academic achievements at GCSE level been a cause for concern, but there have been disproportionately high rates of school exclusions in contrast to other ethnic groups (DfE SFR, 2017; Gazeley, Marrable, Brown & Boddy, 2013). The following subsection will focus on literature pertaining to the Black pupils and high academic achievement.

### **2.2.1 The high academic achievements of Black boys at GCSE level**

Research looking into the factors that contribute to the high achievements of Black boys at GCSE level is sparse (Byfield, 2008; Harper, 2009; Robinson, 2013). Nevertheless, the findings that have emerged from the small pool of research highlight some important factors which are central to this study. This includes pupils having support from adults who had high academic expectations of them, high levels of engagement between parents and school, parents having access to support, and pupil's having a sense of racial identity, (Bigford,

2015; Demie, 2005; Demie & McLean, 2018; Robinson, 2013; Tomlin & Olusola; 2007; Osei, 2017).

Tomlin and Olusola (2007) conducted a UK based study examining factors that contributed to the high attainment of primary and secondary aged Black pupils who had been highlighted as being “Gifted and Talented” due to their high academic performances. This study used a mixed method design. The qualitative aspect of the research consisted of structured interviews with a variety of teaching staff from 4 different schools. They held eight different focus groups, each consisting of three male and three female high attaining pupils. A focus group with was also held with three parent governors from one of the Primary schools. The quantitative aspect involved the analysis of key stage 2 SATs grades and the children’s predicted GCSE grades. All pupils within the study were predicted GCSE results that were higher than national average. They found that high teacher expectations were an important factor in pupils’ academic attainments across all the schools. This involved teachers explicitly communicating their high expectations to the pupils and encouraging them to have high expectations of themselves. They also found that high levels of parental involvement and schools working in partnership with parents positively contributed to high academic attainment. This was achieved by inviting parents to work alongside teachers on various activities. Although this research did not include the data collected from parents, the staff reported that parents often fed back to them that they valued the presence of a teacher-parent partnership. Cork (2007) argued that supporting parents of Black pupils was an important aspect of the pupil reaching academic success. However, the Tomlin and Olusola (2007) study gives limited details about the type of engagement strategies schools used to facilitate the parent-school partnership. Also, it was not clear whether the pupils themselves felt that positive parent school relationships supported their learning. Thus, more research is needed to triangulate the views of high attaining Black boys, their parents and school staff.



### **2.3 Racialised Identity**

Much of the research looking into the high academic achievement of Black pupils has found that aspects of identity play a role in their success (Bigford, 2015; Demie & McLean, 2018; Robinson, 2013; Rogers, Scott & Way, 2015; Osei, 2017). Yet the concept of identity, what it is and how it is acquired, remains a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. Jaspal (2013) explains that identity is malleable and heavily influenced by both external and internal factors. They describe that changes in society impact one's concept of self. Further, they suggest that changes in an individual's life can have an impact on their own psychological concept of self, thus impacting on their identity. Jaspal (2013) emphasised that identity is a diverse and complex social psychological construct.

Robinson (2013) used qualitative methods to explore the subjective experiences of 7 high attaining Black boys aged 14 -15. She used an experience-centred narrative methodology to explore the participants' educational experiences. All the participants attended the same secondary school within Greater London and had achieved above national average Key Stage 3 Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) levels in Mathematics, English and Science. Data analysis found evidence to suggest that a contributing factor to their academic attainments were a sense of racialised identity and self-efficacy. Although the participants felt that there were negative racial stereotypes held by others towards them regarding their academic abilities, they used this as motivation to "prove them wrong". Robinson (2013) described the participants as having various contributing factors in their construction of identity. For example, the participants felt their identity as a high achiever sometimes conflicted with the identity they held when in social settings. Thus, they felt that they had different identities and that these had different uses depending on the context of the environment. These findings support the theory of multiple identities which will be explored in the next subsection on intersectionality.

Bigford (2015) researched the developed and maintained identities of high achieving Black pupils. They defined identity as something that was not fixed but rather influenced by internal and external mechanisms including external

relationships with others and opinions held by the wider society and internal perspectives of self. With identity being a malleable concept, adults could help young people develop a positive Black identity. The qualitative study interpreted data from 47 pupils attending either university, sixth form, college or secondary school. A sample of 8 pupils attended a BSS; 5 boys and 3 girls in GCSE years 10 & 11. They also interviewed 1 parent and held a focus group with 5 other parents of a pupils attending the BSS along with 3 BSS teachers. They used interpretative methods to analyse the data. One of the key findings was that the participants who attended a BSS felt that it had had a positive influence on their academic abilities. The pupils also reported on the BSS`s role in helping them to develop cultural self-awareness and self-efficacy. Additionally, they felt that the things they learned from the BSS assisted their mainstream school success. However, this study did not explore the aspects of the BSS that were most beneficial to pupils at GCSE level. This makes it difficult to ascertain from the study what were the most effective strategies employed by the BSSs to support pupils at GCSE level. Nevertheless, the study does attempt to shed light on the role of BSSs in supporting Black pupils to succeed in education.

### **2.3.1 Intersectionality theory**

Intersectionality theory is a framework that defines identity as not being a singular concept, but multiple demographic categories (Bright, Malinsky & Thompson; 2016). These categories include things such as race, gender and education. The theory examines the overlap between the categories and attempts to explain how it relates to discrimination. It holds the assumption that people are usually disadvantaged because of more than one aspect of their identity e.g. their race and gender. Intersectionality theory recognises that multiple identities co-exist, often creating a complex convergence of oppression. Rogers, Scott & Way (2015) suggested that although concepts such as racial and gender identity may be related, they are still completely distinct identity constructs. In their mixed method longitudinal study, they investigated the intersections of racial and gender identity amongst adolescent Black males (aged 13 – 16) and examined any changes over time. They found that there

was a positive correlation between the value of race identity and gender identity. They also found that higher levels of racial identity predicted greater academic engagement over time. However, this study did not examine what contributed to pupils having higher levels of racial identity. Nevertheless, the impact of racial identity is reflected in much of the research investigating the high academic achievements of Black boys. Therefore, intersectionality can be used as a lens to help understand the complexities of identity and discrimination that is perpetuated by historical and political contexts. For example, in the UK, a White woman might experience gender discrimination due to males having the dominant position in society. However, a Black man might experience greater social discrimination than a White woman due to his race.

#### **2.4 Supporting Black boys with challenging behaviour**

It must be noted that there is an extremely limited amount of empirical evidence investigating effective ways of supporting Black boys with challenging behaviour. The current lack of research into this area highlights a strong need for more studies to be conducted in this domain. Further, Black boys with SEMH difficulties need to be given a voice. Studies seeking to elicit the voice of CYP labelled with challenging behaviour in the UK is sparse. Government policies and legislations have given guidelines on how children who are struggling with managing their behaviour can be supported in education. This will now be discussed.

In 2008, the Target Mental Health in Schools (TAMHS) project was launched (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008). It encouraged that professional agencies should work together to improve the mental wellbeing for CYP. Eight years later, the DfE (2016) “Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools” guidance highlighted the importance of promoting positive mental health in CYP through educational settings. It identified nine key points which all focused on the role schools had to play in promoting mental wellbeing for CYP. This included working collaboratively with CYP, their families and other

professionals. The DfE & DoH (2015) published statutory duties for professionals working with children and young people (CYP). Consolidating the Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Act (2001), the Equalities Act (2010) and the Children and Families Act (2014), the DfE & DoH SEND COP (2015) outlined an extensive paradigm to facilitate the application of specified regulations and legislations. This legislation introduced the category of SEMH. It described that a CYP experiencing severe difficulties with managing their behaviour, emotions or mental health, could be in an indicator of SEND. The DfE Mental Health and Behaviour in schools: Departmental advice for school staff (2016) offered guidance on how schools could promote the mental health and well-being for CYP. Such SEMH difficulties have the potential to seriously disrupt CYP's access to learning (Goodman & Scott, 2012; WHO, 2001).

Dogra, Parkin, Warner-Gale & Frake (2017) suggest that in order to effectively manage challenging behaviour, first the causes and motives of aggression need to be identified. They state:

“... The management of aggression involves enabling young people to understand their problem. It includes the use of cognitive-behavioural techniques, which enable the young person to self-monitor their behaviour and to understand difficult situations. A method called self-instruction or self-talk (an internal dialogue which is used as a coping strategy to decrease the experience of anger arousal and to enhance the ability to manage an angry situation) is utilised to help them get through the difficulty. Usually the young person will benefit from learning problem-solving techniques and methods of relaxation. The management plan within the home or school environment should focus on using a consistent approach, with defined boundaries and rules, which reward appropriate behaviour and encourage the young person's responsibility and autonomy...” (p.152)

These guidelines and advice are useful to mainstream settings. However, the literature does not offer any insight into the role that the BSSs can play in supporting this group, which provides further rationale for the present research. This study will explore how a BSS supports Black boys who have been labelled by their mainstream provisions as having challenging behaviour from the perspective of pupils, parents and BSS staff.

### **2.4.1 Sense of school belonging**

School belonging is a psychological concept that has emerged in educational research over the past few decades (Kapoor & Tomar, 2016). It incorporates aspects of cognition, socialisation, emotions and behaviours in relation to feelings of connectedness to a place, culture or others. Essentially, sense of belonging illustrates how schools can be defined as a community is thought to influence how CYP engage in learning and academic progression (Faircloth, 2011). For example, Kapoor & Tomar (2016) investigated the relationship between students' psychological sense of school membership in relation to their resilience, self-efficacy and leadership skills. Results were collected from 200 young males and females aged between 14-17, from two different schools. The different variables were measured using scaling tools. They found that there was a high correlation between participants' scores on school membership and resilience, self-efficacy and self-management. It has further been found that if CYP have a sense of identification with their school, they are more likely to develop healthier attitudes with themselves as well as with others. Goodenow & Grady (1993) described school belonging as relating to a "complex web of social and personal relationships". School belonging has been found to have influences on academic motivation, levels of engagement and levels of participation (Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Kapoor & Tomar, 2016). It is thought that it can be particularly useful when working with groups of CYP who are at risk of school exclusion. Siegel (2018) developed the framework "A Relationship-Based Approach to inclusion". They argue that positive relationships within the school environment are crucial to the success of CYP, particularly those who struggle to manage their behaviour. For schools to be able to support CYP, they need to have a community culture that actively facilitates strong connections with pupils, promotes inclusion, treats CYP with respect and ensures that they feel valued.

Wandsworth Schools and Community Psychology Service (2018) explored CYPs understanding of what made them feel included in school. They collected data from 38 participants ranging from aged 3 to 16 from five different schools. All children were on the SEND register. They found that there were four key

themes that emerged as being important to supporting children's sense of belonging: Relationships, School Environment, Teaching and Learning and Extra Curricular activities. They found that children felt a stronger sense of belonging when there was a close liaison between home and school. They valued school trips and having clear rules and routines. However, this study did not focus specifically on Black pupils or those labelled with challenging behaviour.

Roffrey (2017) put forward a framework for supporting CYP with their Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) called ASPIRE. An acronym for Agency, Safety, Positivity, Inclusion, Respect and Equity, the ASPIRE framework offered schools practical guidance for how well-being could be promoted throughout various levels of the schools' systems. With the underpinnings of the framework deriving from the principles of positive psychology, the emphasis is on enabling CYP to explore strategies that they find most effective and empowering. The principles of this framework also illustrate that schools are not just places where CYP develop academic skills. Rather, they are places where CYP can learn about social and emotional well-being. Such arguments have also been echoed by Black-Hawkins, Florian and Rouse (2016). They argue that raising the achievements of pupils is important, however, it is also important that vulnerable groups, such as those at risk of exclusion, are also safeguarded through the principles of inclusion. They suggest that the heavy emphasis placed on academic achievement contradicts principles of inclusion and therefore puts certain CYP, such as those with SEND, at risk. They also identify various other types of achievement such as social and emotional. They employed case study methodologies to explore how different schools had successfully implemented inclusive practices. They found that the school staff embraced CYP with difficulties and did not perceive them as negatively impacting on other CYP's learning. This enabled the school to develop a culture which enabled all CYP to be able to learn and develop in various ways. They treated CYP as individuals and endeavoured to find strategies that would be most supportive of their learning needs. However, this study did not just focus on Black boys. Also, they did not include BSSs in their study.

### **2.4.2 Critical Race Theory- Community Cultural Wealth**

Gray, Hope and Matthews (2018) state that having a sense of racial identity can be related to one's sense of belonging. They argue that a curriculum that provides CYP to learn about their cultural heritage can provide them with opportunities to form strong peer relationships with individuals who are also from that cultural group. Yasso (2005) developed the theory of CRT-CCW, demonstrating that "Communities of Colour" can provide a deepened support for themselves when they experience being the "marginalised" culture. She states that the community can provide an array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts. In CRT-CCW these terms are described as being "cultural capital". Yasso (2005) stated that cultural capital can be nurtured through "cultural wealth" which includes:

**Aspirational capital-** the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future and remain resilient when faced with challenges

**Linguistic capital-** social skills that are attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/ or style; emphasises the value of verbal communication in relation to racialised cultural history and language.

**Familial capital-** a sense of community history, memory and cultural intuition

**Social capital** – networks of people and community resources

**Navigational capital** – the skill to manoeuvre through social institutions

**Resistant capital** - knowledge and skills that are fostered through oppositional behaviour that challenges inequality.

Liou, Martinez and Rotheram-Fuller (2016) conducted a one-year ethnographic case study that focused on how CCW could be used to support High School students who were facing various academic challenges. The study took place within a small High school that had a reputation for being one of the most effective small schools in educating low-income students of colour. All student participants in the study qualified for free and reduced lunch. In total, 72 pupils and 12 teachers were interviewed. Data from interviews with the pupils identified the value of positive teacher-pupil relationships and highlighted the

navigational and informational capital that they felt was necessary to achieve their educational aspirations. Although informational capital was not in Yasso's model of CRT-CCW, they demonstrated that it had also had justification for being its own strand of capital. The pupils tied many of their goals and needs for navigational and informational capital to the mentorship relationships they had experienced with their teachers in their small school. They also found that the pupils felt that the teachers they benefitted from the most were those who did not just manage the classroom and cover lesson plans, but teachers who they felt cared about them. Teachers were able to demonstrate this by helping them to navigate through school and supporting them to identify and meet their aspirational goals. However, this study was based in the USA and it did not collect data from parents or explore how the school supported its pupils' parents. The following subsection will introduce literature on how BSSs have supported Black boys in the UK.

## **2.6 The role of BSSs in supporting Black boys**

Andrew (2014) argued that due to institutional racism, Black pupils were not given the necessary support to learn in mainstream educational schools, hence the emergence of BSSs as a socio-political movement as discussed in Chapter 1. Yet, even though these schools began to emerge more than five decades ago, Read, Said & Davies (2017) note that such schools have not been fully embraced, supported and promoted by governments. Instead, they have been regarded with much scepticism and suspicion. This could be because although there are theories that suggest that BSSs harness key attributes that could be imperative in supporting Black pupils with their learning, there is very little empirical research that investigates the methods they employ to do this. Thus, there is currently not enough empirical research that sought to explore the impact BSSs have on the CYP who attend them. Further, there is a lack of understanding as to what takes places in BSSs. Despite the limited amount of literature in this area, what has surfaced thus far contributes to the present study.



Mirza (2008) suggests that BSSs help pupils to develop a positive sense of identity around being a Black person. She describes BSSs as being “sacred Black spaces”, absent from any dominant white ideologies. Hence, there is a lack of White (Eurocentric) bias in the BSSs which is present everywhere else in mainstream education. Maylor et al. (2010) conducted a mixed method study investigating the impact of supplementary schools on pupils` academic improvements. It included supplementary schools from different minority ethnic communities. Part of the study involved 12 case studies of supplementary schools in England and sought to shed light on the factors which supplementary school staff, pupils, parents, community groups and local authorities identified as benefiting the children who attend supplementary schools. Additionally, they wanted to understand the pupils` perspective of the impact the supplementary school had on their mainstream academic attainments. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to collect data from staff, pupils and parents. A total of 274 participants contributed to the qualitative data collection: 55 supplementary school staff, 112 pupils and 74 parents. Key findings were that the supplementary schools helped to facilitate positive identity reinforcement and increased understanding of cultural backgrounds. The quantitative data derived from surveys in which 1,136 supplementary schools, from various ethnic communities, participated. Results from the survey found that 60% served Black African and Caribbean pupils, 85% provided cultural teaching, 64% operated on a Saturday and that 75% provided support for GCSE's. Although this study was not specifically looking at BSSs, the findings suggest that there are quite a few BSSs in the UK and that they offer pupils more than just academic support.

When reviewing the literature, it was void of any discussions on how BSSs could support Black boys specifically. Neither were there any discussions of how BSSs could support pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health or those labelled as having challenging behaviour. In addition, there was also very little research that triangulated data from the students, families and school to identify what methods/ systems seem to be most beneficial.

## **2.7 Motivation for the study**

Previous research indicates that Black boys have been underachieving at GCSE level for several decades. They are at high risk of social and educational exclusion. CRT argues that institutional racism plays a crucial role in their experiences of educational inequalities. BSSs began to be set up in the 60s as a response to concerns that mainstream provisions were failing Black children. There have been limited empirical studies exploring the features of BSSs and the role they play in supporting Black children. However, findings that emerge from a small pool of data indicate that racialised learning and academic support are a key feature. Research exploring how BSSs can be used to support particularly vulnerable groups, such as those labelled with challenging behaviour, is limited. Furthermore, research into BSSs has not focused on how they support Black boys specifically. The aim of the present study was to understand and illuminate the role a BSS played in supporting Black boys who have been labelled with challenging behaviours from the perspectives of pupils, parents and supplementary school staff. Specifically, it sought to gain insight into the current practices of a BSS for supporting pupils that were performing at national average or higher at GCSE level.

It was hoped that the exploratory nature of the study would shed light on strategies that help this group to succeed academically. EPs will then be able to use these as tools to support their schools and to promote good practice. Central to the role of the EP is helping schools and families to understand the needs of CYP. This becomes even more imperative when working with vulnerable groups who are at risk of both educational and social exclusion. Using B-PPCT as a conceptual framework and CRT-CCW as a conceptual theory, this study aims to provide details on the psychological underpinnings of the BSS. EPs will then be able to use this when helping schools to design and implement interventions for this group.

### **2.7.1 Context of the BSS within the present study**

For the purpose of this research, a single case study methodology will be employed. It will explore the features of a particular BSS that has been given the pseudonym "Risley High". Risley High opened as a registered charity in

2002 offering specialist support for Black boys who had been labelled with challenging behaviour by their mainstream school and were considered at risk of educational and social exclusion. Since opening, the criterion for the pupils they support had expanded. At the time of the present study, they were accepting both male and female pupils ranging from age 8 – 18. They were receiving referrals from local mainstream schools, other agencies and self-referrals. They ran their programmes on Saturdays, weekday evenings and school holidays. The curriculum they followed was based on seven core principles; Confidence and Capacity, Health and Well-being, Identity, History and Family, Self-expression and Leadership, Self-management and Service. They had approximately 300 children on their roll. Information pertaining to the local context of Risley High will be illustrated in Chapter 3.

Risley High provided scholarship and bursary opportunities for academically able pupils to attend private and state boarding schools if their household income was less than £40,000 per annum. This included the boys that they supported who had been labelled as having challenging behaviour. As a result, the school has previously received a lot of media attention over the years pertaining to the academic achievements and the future career achievements of the pupils they supported. For example, in May 2018, a renowned national newspaper printed an article about pupils who had previously attended Risley High and as a result received scholarships to attend one of the most prestigious boarding schools in the country. Ten years after finishing private school and moving on from Risley High to go on to Higher Education, the article explored how the experience had shaped their lives. The article reported that the young men, who were all degree holders and in reputable professions, felt that they would not have achieved the academic and professional success they had, had it not been for attending of Risley High.

Over the years, Risley High has commissioned universities to conduct independent evaluations for them. They then used these reports for their own purposes; they are not published documents. Previous independent evaluations of Risley High have found that it positively impacts on the pupils` academic performance. For example, in October 2014 an evaluative study used a mix method design to investigate the impact that Risley High had on Educational

attainment and School engagement. They collated data for 150 randomly selected participants using pupils` case files, direct observations, performance indicators, one to one interviews with pupils and focus groups with pupils. They found that across all indicators, pupils had either improved or maintained high academic performance. They also found that Risley High had a positive impact on school engagement. However, previously evaluations have not given insight into the features of Risley High that contribute to these outcomes.

Essentially, Risley High was approached to take part in the research because of its historic focus and specialism in supporting Black boys with challenging behaviour. This was the only BSS that was found to deliver specialised support for this vulnerable group. It is therefore important to understand more about their teaching practices.

Previous evaluations of the school have not shed light on this. Additionally, the principles of the curriculum focused on various aspects of identity. Yet, previous evaluations have not explored how this is implemented into teaching pedagogy nor have they sought to ascertain what pupils, parent or staff felt were the most beneficial features of attending the school. The literature suggests that parent involvement can have positive effects of the outcomes of Black pupils. Therefore, it is felt that there needs to be more insight into the parental perspectives of Risley High. This sets the rationale for the present studies research questions.

### **2.7.2 Research Questions**

**RQ1:** How do pupils, parents and staff feel the school supports pupils` SEMH and educational development?

**RQ2:** What are the perspectives of pupils, parents and staff on how the school helps to develop their pupil`s sense of identity?

**RQ 3:** How do pupils, parents and staff feel the school facilitates parental involvement and parental support?

**RQ 4:** What do pupils, parents and staff recognise as the most beneficial features of the school?

## **2.8 Chapter summary**

This review of the literature aimed to justify the need for the present study. Existing knowledge on the academic attainment of Black boys and BSSs indicates that relationships and parental engagement is central to them performing well academically. It also highlighted that having a sense of racialised identity can have a positive impact on Black pupils. However, the literature is void of any discussion of how BSSs can support boys with challenging behaviour specifically. In this regard, devoting research attention to exploring the role that a BSS plays in supporting this group from the perspective of pupils, parents and staff, will provide crucial insights for educational provisions, educators and EPs. The following chapter describes and provides justification for the methodology that was used to gather, organise and interpret the data for this study.

# CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

## **3.1 Chapter Overview**

In this chapter the methodological approach adopted for the research will be described. The chapter will begin by outlining my role as the researcher. It will then go on to describe the epistemological and ontological position I upheld. The chapter will then elucidate the ethical considerations, the research design, procedures and methods of data analysis. To close, my reflections in relation to the study will be highlighted.

## **3.2 The role of the researcher**

The researcher's position plays a fundamental part in research. Similarly, the actual role of the researcher is also an important consideration in any study (Fox, Martin and Green, 2008). It was, therefore, important for me to acknowledge that I designed and conducted it as part of my professional development. Fox, Martin and Green describe this as the position of a practitioner researcher. Developed from Knowles's (1970) distinguishing features of how practitioners learn, they elaborated on the benefit of conducting research as a practitioner. For the most part, a researcher practitioner will be able to implement the key research skills developed and the research findings into their practice (Fox, Martin and Green, 2008). The current research was undertaken within the context of Educational Psychology and attempted to combine a scientific understanding of behaviour with the recognition of individual differences. The findings of this study will inform my own practice and will contribute to the knowledge base in the domain.

## **3.3 Researcher's epistemological and ontological position**

An imperative aspect to research is to ensure that the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher is clearly defined. Ontology is concerned with the nature of knowledge, and the way in which reality is constructed, also

referred to as world view philosophies. In contrast, epistemology is concerned with perspectives of knowledge within reality. Within the social sciences, there are three distinct research paradigms that can be applied for qualitative studies and these differ in their ontological and epistemological approach; phenomenological, social constructionist and realist orientations (Creswell, 2007; Matthews, 2003; Willig, 2001).

This study subscribed to a critical realist epistemology within a constructionist ontology. Critical realism is an approach that is underpinned with realism principles but assumes that the data a researcher collects does not necessarily reflect what is really taking place in the world (Willig, 2001). This epistemology holds the position that the knowledge produced within the context of this research is inherently subjective. It is, therefore, paramount that the researcher acknowledges that an individual's beliefs and personal experiences influence the way reality is interpreted and perceived. This is especially the case when exploring aspects of the social realm (Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000). Thus, a critical realist approach to knowledge production claims that interpretation is an ineluctable process in accessing the underlying structures that generate the manifestations that constitute the data. This approach assumes that what is happening in reality can be revealed through the data but only to a certain degree (Willig, 2001). Essentially, the approach claims that knowledge can only ever be partially accessed because of social factors that influence subjectivity and the concept of a fixed "real" world. Therefore, researchers are required to interpret data to gain insight into the deeper mechanisms beyond what has been relayed (Willig, 2001).

Critical realism is concurrent with the philosophical underpinnings of Educational Psychology. Research conducted within the field of Educational Psychology is usually interested in exploring and understanding an individual's experiences and how they make sense of reality. The current study subscribed to a critical realist epistemology as the reality of the parents', pupils' and staff's perspectives on Risley High were viewed as being real to them. This position views knowledge as being context dependant. It was suited to the present research as it used a single case study design to explore a unique BSS that had a specialism in supporting Black boys labelled with challenging behaviour.

Essentially, any knowledge obtained can only be deemed “true” within the perimeters of a specific context (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thus, there is an assumption that there is no specific single method that can allow access to ‘the truth’. Therefore, the knowledge that is accessed can only be valid within the boundaries of the context (Tebes, 2005).

The present was context bound to Risley High as it was a single case study. Although this position has a realist dimension, contending that there is such a phenomenon as reality, the research that is produced is only an interpretation of this reality (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Madill et al, 2000; Smith, 2015). The perspective claims that such factors influence the research process and differences are inevitable when the context changes.

As qualitative research is dependent on the words people use to shed light on their understandings of a certain “real” world phenomenon, mediation must take place between researcher and participant. In this way reality is “constructed”. The present study adopted a constructionist ontology. I was able use the parents’, pupils’ and staff’s narrative of their constructions of reality to shed light on the research questions. The participants knowledge of language and use of words; my interpretations of participants data; cultural meanings that influence both the researcher and participant as well as the personal experiences of both (Madill et al, 2000). Consequently, the same phenomenon has the potential to generate multifarious perspectives and insights depending on the participant, the researcher and the context. Thus, within the present study, semi-structured interviews were used in this research to allow participants to use their own words and relay their own individualised accounts about their experiences within the context of the phenomena being explored. This process facilitated data collection through my interactions with participants. Therefore, the present research adopted a critical realist epistemological stance with a constructionist ontology so that it could make discoveries about underlying structures of Risley High and the logic of discursive accounts that were embedded in the social practices of Risley High; thus befitting of the research aims (Madill et al, 2000).



### **3.4 Research design**

The present study aimed to explore the subjective individually constructed views and experiences of pupils, parents and staff of Risley High; a BSS providing support for Black boys with challenging behaviour at GCSE level. As described in Chapter 2, Risley High was chosen because it was the only BSS found to have a specialism in supporting Black boys with challenging behaviour. Further, previous evaluations had found that CYP who had attended had positive academic outcomes. It must be noted that the term “challenging behaviour” has been used within this research because this is the term that the BSSs uses and what they often receive on referral forms from the pupils mainstream setting. They type of behaviour that is described as “challenging behaviour” includes being disruptive in class and being argumentative with adults. However, as described in Chapter 1, behaviours such as these can be an indication on SEMH needs and therefore this is not a term that I would use as an EP. However, for the sake of the research I felt it was necessary to use the term that Risley High used as this was the label that had been attached to their pupils.

A single case study design was employed. This gave an idiographic perspective on the phenomenon being researched meaning that it shed light on the practices of this unique BSS. (Willig, 2013). Another reason for applying a single case study approach was that it enabled the phenomena to be explored within a holistic context. This meant that it could be researched with consideration given to the various dimensions of the context. Adopting a single case study design allowed for data collection from a variety of sources in order to gain deeper insight and understanding of the area of investigation. Willig (2013) refers to this as triangulation. The present study collected data from parents, pupils and staff. Triangulating the data from these various participants strengthened the analytical claims and gave a richer picture of the phenomena being investigated (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

A criticism of single case studies is that they are vulnerable because they require you to “put all your eggs in one basket” (Yin, 2017). He suggests that multi case studies are a more valuable approach because they allow for more

analytical conclusions to be made and strengthens the generalisability of the findings. Nevertheless, holistic single case studies enable the researcher to explore the case whilst considering the various influences of perspectives (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Baxter & Jack (2008) argue that the ability to look at sub-units that are situated within a larger case can be substantially rich and illuminating. Therefore, a single case study approach to this research was most beneficial considering the context of the phenomena being investigated. Another criticism of single case studies is that the findings they produce are not generalisable. Yet Yardley (2016) argues that findings from small scale qualitative studies can offer insight into different aspects of a phenomenon and therefore can be generalised. Thus, this study sought to shed light on some of the good practices that Risley High used to support a vulnerable group of CYP. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the current existing knowledge base in this domain.

This research adopted a qualitative methodology to answer the research questions. Qualitative research is concerned with trying to shed light on the meaning of phenomena from the participant's perspectives. This includes how people experience the world and make sense of it (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The concern lies with the 'texture' and 'quality' of experience. The aim of this research was to describe and shed light on individuals' experiences and events. Contrastingly, quantitative research places value on detachment and impartiality (Willig, 2008; 2013). Qualitative research tied in well with the study's research aims as it sought to understand the perceived support a BSS gave from the perspectives of the pupils, parents, BSS staff. Willig (2013) refers to this form of research design as "real world" research and is flexible. Considering the exploratory nature of the present studies research questions it was felt that a flexible research design would be most applicable. When reviewing the existing literature on BSSs, it was devoid of any details on how they supported Black boys with challenging behaviour. Therefore, it was felt that qualitative methods would allow participants to give detailed and complex accounts about their perspectives on Risley High (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

There are various qualitative data collection methods including qualitative surveys, focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Qualitative surveys

require participants to write their response to open-ended questions about a topic. Although this may have suited the purposes of the present study, qualitative surveys are thought to exclude participants who may want to contribute to the study but may not feel confident in their literacy skills (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Focus groups were also considered as data collection method. Focus groups allow the researcher to collect data from multiple participants simultaneously (Braun & Clarke, 2013). A practical requirement of focus groups is that the researcher must coordinate the participants' schedules so that they are all able to be present at the same time. This would have proven to be problematic with Risley High pupils as, as they only attended the provision on Saturdays and had differing timetables. Risley High staff also had conflicting availability and it was felt that this would be the case for parents also. Therefore, the use of focus groups would prove logistically difficult. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to meet the participants individually at a time that is most suitable to them. The interviews are guided by an interview schedule. However, the interview is a flexible process and allows for the possibility of unanticipated issues to arise as well as increasing the likelihood of the data being rich and detailed (Braun & Clarke, 2013). A drawback of semi-structured interviews is that they can be time consuming for the researcher to organise and conduct. However, I chose to carry out semi-structured interviews with Risley High pupils', parents' and staff as it seemed the most appropriate method when considering the context variables. When conducting semi-structured interviews for data collection there are various methods that can be used to analyse the data. These will be explored in the following subsection.

#### **3.4.1 A critical comparison of Thematic Analysis with other qualitative analysis methods**

There were three qualitative methodologies that were considered in light of the research questions: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) Grounded Theory (GT) and Thematic Analysis (TA). Upon reviewing the principles and purposes of the three, it was felt that TA would be the most appropriate method

to use. The following subsections will critically compare TA firstly to IPA and secondly to GT.

#### **3.4.1.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

IPA is a qualitative data analysis method that can be used to understand the way in which participants make sense of their lived experiences. So, in relation to the present study it could be used to explore the lived experience of pupils' perspectives in relation to attending Risley High or exploring staff's perspective of working at Risley High. The phenomenological aspect means that it can be used to explore events from the participants' points of view. The interpretative aspect allows the research to use their data to shed light on their accounts by adopting a high level of interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013; Smith, 2015; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). A distinct feature of IPA is that analysis usually focuses on a homogeneous perspective; it is not commonly used to look for themes across data sets of multiple perspectives. Therefore, it could not look for themes across the data sets of pupils, parent and Risley High staff which were the perspectives being sought in the present study. Contrastingly, TA could be used to identify themes across data sets with different participant groups. IPA is also most suitable to studies with a small sample size, approximately 3-6 for interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006). However, TA is suitable for relatively large sample sizes such as the present study which sought to collect data from 15 participants in total. When considering the research questions and aims, it was evident that IPA would not be an appropriate analysis method to use for the present study.

#### **3.4.1.2 Grounded Theory**

GT is not an analysis method; it is a research methodology. Developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), it focuses on theory building and development. Following this methodology requires the researcher to generate theory during the data collection process; a theoretical framework is not predetermined (Corbin, 2017). Thus, GT is distinct in that it provides an exploratory framework

for understanding the phenomenon under investigation, paying close attention to the social processes involved. The categories that emerge from the data sets are then integrated and used to produce a theory. This is different from TA which enables the researcher to identify themes and relate the findings to already existing literature. Additionally, although there are different versions of GT and the original methodology has been developed further, theory building remains an essential element. Therefore, GT was not appropriate for the present study as it was not concerned with developing a theory based on the data collected.

### **3.4.1.3 Thematic Analysis**

After reviewing the distinct features of IPA, GT and TA, it was evident that neither IPA nor GT were suited to the present study's research questions due to the factors discussed in the two previous subsections. As this was an exploratory study, I felt it was important to be able to identify thematic patterns across the entire data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TA is suited to exploratory studies that involve analysing qualitative data from differing participant groups. TA has become an increasingly popular method of qualitative analysis in social science, including psychology (Smith, 2015). Braun & Clarke (2006) have made significant contributions to developing the theoretical and methodological applications of TA. They have produced clear and concise guidelines on how researchers should approach the coding and the development of themes (Howitt, 2010; Smith, 2015). Braun & Clarke (2013) outline a thorough procedure of how to identify, analyse and report themes across entire data sets. Within the present study, TA was employed within a critical realist epistemology and a constructionist ontology. Particularly within qualitative research, it is imperative that the theoretical stance of the research is explicitly stated. Thus, the researcher must be transparent on the assumptions that they make about what the data represents for the analysis to be of optimum quality.

## **3.5 Research procedures**

In order to produce a piece of research that was ethical, robust and scientifically sound, there were various procedures that I had to consider and prepare for. These will be outlined in the following subsections.

### **3.5.1 Black Supplementary School sampling**

Risley High was based in a London Borough. Statistics from the Mayor of London: London Datastore (2018) indicated that the borough had a population of approximately 353,24. The ethnic demographic of the borough is comprised of 13% White British and 72.6% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), one

of the highest concentrations of BAME populations nationally. According to the London's Poverty Profile (2018), the borough had one of the youngest populations in the country. Their statistics also report that 32% of the borough's residents fell within the "low paid" category and that 6% of the population who were at working age were unemployed. They also reported that there was a 13%-point gap in GCSE attainment between disadvantaged pupils and those not facing disadvantage; 42% of disadvantaged pupils did not attain national average GCSE grades. Further, they reported that within the borough 36% of 19-year olds did not have A-level qualifications.

Risley High was invited to take part in the study because of their specialism in supporting Black boys labelled with "challenging behaviour". It was the only BSS that was found to have this specialism. Table 1 illustrates some of the main similarities and differences of Risley High to other BSSs.

<b>Table 1:</b> The similarities and difference between Risley High and other "typical" BSS's	
Similarities with Risley High and other BSSs include-	Differences with Risley High and other BSSs include-
They have a racialised curriculum that focuses on Black culture. This includes teaching pupils about African History and the contributions that Black people have made towards science, technology, civil rights etc.	They provide scholarship opportunities for pupils to attend boarding school.
BSS staff are predominantly Black.	They are a registered charity. Most BSSs do not have registered charity status.
They offer pupils academic support.	They are funded by donations from sponsors and supporters; they do not receive any government funding. Most BSS's are reliant on government funding.
They take place on Saturday's.	They specialise in supporting Black boys who have been labelled with "challenging behaviour" or are at risk of being excluded due to behavioural issues.
They teach pupils about racism and how it has impacted/ impacts on the Black people globally i.e. apartheid, the	The staff are paid for their time- most BSSs rely on volunteers.

transatlantic slave trade, the lynching of Emmett Till.	
Classes are typically smaller than mainstream school classes in terms of adult to pupil ratio.	They organise work experience for pupils
They teach children Black cultural arts i.e. African dancing, African drumming, Caribbean steel pans.	They receive referrals directly from schools.
They create safe spaces for Black children and their parents to discuss their education and any challenges that they are encountering in their mainstream setting.	

Although Risley High had some features that were quite unique, they still had many of the key features of a BSS and therefore I felt it would offer some insight into their underpinning mechanisms. The schools' Founder and Director was approached about the study. He confirmed that he would like the school to be included in the research. Once ethical approval had been granted, he signed a form consenting to Risley High's participation. The BSS then invited their students, parents and staff to take part in the research by placing advertisements around the school premises.

### **3.5.2 Participant sampling**

There are currently no statistical methods for calculating how many participants are required for a qualitative study; there are only some guidelines. Following Willig & Roger's (2017) recommendations it was hoped that a total of 15 participants would be able to be recruited for the study; 5 pupils, 5 parents and 5 members of BSS staff. However, following the pilot study, amendments were made to the interview schedule and it was not possible to recruit another parent within the allocated timeframe. Therefore, a total of 14 participants' data was analysed. It was hoped that the homogeneity of the sample groups would



ensure that meaningful themes emerged from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Table 1 shows the inclusion criteria for each group of participants.

<b>Table 2:</b> Inclusion criteria and number of participants required for each participant group.		
<b>Participant groups</b>	<b>Inclusion criteria</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>
<b><u>Pupils</u></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They identify as a black boy from African or Caribbean descent.</li> <li>2. They are aged 16 or 17 years old.</li> <li>3. They have at least 12 months experience of attending the supplementary school.</li> <li>4. They are either predicted or have gained five level 4s/ A*- Cs or above at GCSE level.</li> <li>5. They have, at some point in their school education, been identified as having challenging behaviour/ behavioural difficulties/ SEMH needs.</li> <li>6. They do not have any other known SEND difficulties or disabilities.</li> <li>7. They can speak English.</li> </ol>	<i>A total 5 participants for data collection. 1 participant will take part in a pilot study. Pilot study data can be included in data if no changes to interview schedule required, otherwise another participant will be recruited.</i>
<b><u>Parents</u></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They identify as having a black son.</li> <li>2. They have at least 12 months experience of their son attending the supplementary school.</li> <li>3. Their son is either predicted or has recently gained five level 4s/ A*-Cs or above at GCSE level.</li> <li>4. Their son, at some point in their school education was/ has been identified as having challenging behaviour/ behavioural difficulties/ SEMH needs.</li> <li>5. Their son does not have any other known SEND difficulties or disabilities.</li> <li>6. They can speak English.</li> </ol>	<i>A total 5 participants for data collection. 1 participant will take part in a pilot study. Pilot study data can be included in data if no changes to interview schedule required, otherwise another participant will be recruited.</i>
<b><u>Staff</u></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. They have at least 12 months experience of supporting children in the supplementary school.</li> <li>2. They can speak English.</li> </ol>	<i>A total 5 participants for data collection. 1 participant will take part in a pilot study. Pilot study data can be included in data if no changes to interview schedule required, otherwise another participant will be recruited.</i>

Advertisements were placed within Risley High. All the participants volunteered to be a part of the research through one of the staff members, who then

contacted me. A total of five pupils (3 x Black African, 1 x Black African, 1 x Black Mixed), five staff members (4 x Black Caribbean, 1 x White British) and four parents (2 x Black Caribbean, 1 X Black Caribbean, 1 x Black African) were interviewed and had their data analysed. This excludes the participants who were interviewed during the pilot study.

### **3.6 Methods**

#### **3.6.1 Data collection**

Pilot interview schedules were developed for each group of participants using Rubin and Rubin's (2012) recommendations for eliciting depth, detail, vividness, nuance and richness. The B-PPCT model and CRT-CCW influenced the interviews schedule and helped to guide the topics within the schedule. There were pertinent factors that took priority because of existing literature. For example, the importance of identity and relationships emerged as key concepts when reviewing the existing literature. Yet, the openness of semi-structured interviews allowed for participants to unfold their own unique perspectives. I also designed the semi-structured interview schedules so that they were not leading (see Appendix 6).

The schedule was piloted on one participant from each of the participant groups to ensure that the questioning allowed for quality data to emerge. Subsequent to the pilot interviews, the interview schedules were slightly amended. For example, the pupil pilot interview schedule had a question "What ways do you feel Risley High staff support you and is this different to the staff in your mainstream school?". This question was removed from the main interview schedule as after the pilot interview I determined that it was too leading. For further examples of changes made to the interview schedules please refer to Appendices 6 and 7. Therefore, the data collected from the pilot studies was not included in the analysis.

The pilot interview process also enabled me to determine that the semi-structured interview schedule permitted the right balance between researcher and interviewer dynamics. Thus, I endeavoured to understand what the interviewee disclosed through their discourse by listening intently (Smith, 2015;

Willig, 2001, 2013). Yet still, I guided the interviews and was aware of practical aspects, such as time and the research questions. Thomas & O’Kane (1998) highlight the importance of building a rapport with research participants prior to interviewing. Although their research was based upon working with children, it is a principal that can be applied to all research involving interviews. It was, therefore, important that I sought to engage the trust and the confidence of the young people and the adults participating in the study (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998). Prior to interviews, I spent time in Risley High and attended some of their parents and supporters’ evenings, including a theatrical production. Thus, the participants were somewhat familiar with me prior to the interviews. I also displayed sensitivity to context and was able to engage participants through adopting a sensitive approach to the subject matters being questioned.

The data was collected by conducting semi-structured interviews with the participating pupils, parents and staff. I held face to face interviews as I felt that they would be the most suitable for data collection. Some researchers suggest that this interview method aids the facilitation of rich and detailed data collection (Tisdall, Davis & Gallagher, 2009). The interview schedules (post pilot study) consisted of approximately 20 questions and the interview schedule for each group had slight variations (see Appendices 7, 8 & 9).

The pupils were interviewed first over two separate days. The staff members were then interviewed all on the same day. The last to be interviewed were the parents and took place over 3 days. The interviews ranged between 30 minutes and 1 hour 25 minutes. Braun & Clarke (2013), Tracy (2010) and Yardley (2000) offer guidance on how to engage in rigorous qualitative research proficiently. I carefully considered the suggested methodological protocol. The use of semi- structured interviews within this study allowed me to be inquisitive when the participants mentioned something that was of relevance to the research. In addition, the interview schedules were carefully designed and included open-ended questions which allowed the participants to interpret the questions and respond in accordance with their own understanding. They were also in control of how much or how little they wanted to share. Therefore, the data generated from the interviews were not evoked solely from the semi-structured interview questions. As I made a conscious choice not to bring any

previous knowledge or assumptions to the interview process, the participants were able to steer their narrative in ways that felt most pertinent to their experiences.

A critique of using semi structured interviews to collect data is that it can be challenging to analyse the data if it is too rich or there is too much diversity between perspectives (Tisdall, Davis & Gallagher, 2009). However, an advantage of this method is that it gives participants the space to articulate their views and experiences in a safe space (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998).

All the interviews were conducted at Risley High, although parents and staff were given the option of completing their interview in a different location. Thomas & O’Kane (1998) suggest that where an interview takes place can affect the interview process. Although they were addressing interview procedures with children, it is thought that these considerations could be applied to adults as well. I felt that staff and parents may feel more relaxed and open about discussing Risley High away from its premises, therefore, they were given the option of attending my professional work office to complete the interviews; however, they all stated a preference for being interviewed at Risley High. A member of staff was on hand in case any of the participants became distressed. The pupils were given the option of having a member of teaching staff present at their interview, however all of them stated they wanted to be interviewed on their own.

The racial similarity between myself and the participants may have minimised cultural barriers that may be experienced when the researcher’s ethnicity differs from the participant group. This is because the participants may have perceived us to have racialised shared experiences (Mizock, Harkins & Morant, 2011).

I was able to engage with things that may be significant to the experience of that ethnic group and the participants were able to speak freely without feeling judged. This included participants feeling comfortable to speak openly about their experiences of attending or working in a BSS and why they felt having a Black community was important. All the participants appeared comfortable with the interview schedule, they answered all the questions and seemed very engaged in the process. I was mindful to address the power imbalance between

myself and the participants by positioning them as the “experts” of being able to recount their life experiences. Kvale (2007) refers to this as respondent bias. I was further able to explore the importance of learning about racialised identity due to an enhanced knowledge and understanding of the cultural relevance.

### **3.6.2 Transcribing**

Transcribing data collected is an integral process of qualitative data. The researcher must make informed decisions regarding how speech and sounds will be translated and transcribed (Kvale, 1996; Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). I transcribed all the data using orthographic methods. This method of transcribing places importance on producing a thorough record of the words spoken; I included non-semantic sounds such as “hmm”, “erm” and laughs but were not deemed as important (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Once a data set had been transcribed, I checked against the recordings to ensure accuracy as directed in the Braun and Clarke (2006) guidelines for good TA. I then adhered to an intelligent verbatim style to provide some legibility where necessary. This included inserting full stops and comas. The identification of each speaker was clearly marked with “R1” for researcher and “P1”, “P2”, “P3” etc. for participants. Once all the interviews were transcribed, the participants were then given pseudonyms. Any identifying details were altered to protect confidentiality.

### **3.6.3 Data analysis**

It was important that the method of data analysis was compatible with the research questions, method of data collection and the epistemological underpinnings of the research project. A part of this process involves the researcher being clear and concise regarding how the analysis was conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013; Willig, 2013). Each data set was analysed using TA adopting unifying methods which means that some form of ‘thematic coding’ was achieved (Braun & Clarke, 2013). This exploratory TA approach was

adopted as it allowed for themes to emerge across all the data sets. Since there was an identified gap in the literature on the area of interest, the premise of the present study was to be explorative. Inductive analysis techniques were applied (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Swain, 2018). The research questions guided the identification of themes throughout. To maintain the authenticity and delineation, the qualitative data for pupils, parents and staff was analysed separately. Braun & Clarke (2006) provide a 6-phase step-by-step guideline on how to perform TA. They state that although the several phases involved with TA do not necessarily follow a linear sequence, must be adhered to:

### **Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data**

All the data was collected and transcribed by me. Transcribing is an integral process in qualitative research. By transcribing all the data myself I was able to immerse deeply into it. Once all the interviews were transcribed, each transcript was read several times until I felt I had an in-depth familiarity with the data. Braun & Clarke (2013) state that this process facilitates the researcher to start engaging with the data in an active, analytical and critical way. Thus, through repeatedly reading the data set, patterns and codes began to emerge. This cyclical process is referred to as data immersion (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

### **Phase 2: Generating initial codes**

After I had thoroughly familiarised myself with the data, a list of initial codes was produced. I employed complete coding methods; everything that seemed relevant to the research questions was given a code. The conceptual frameworks and theories identified in the literature review were not used as theoretical structures that the research was aiming to prove or disprove. Therefore, complete coding methods based on research questions were employed (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Thus, this research used inductive TA to explore the mechanism of Risley High in relation to the participants' data. Inductive TA refers to when analysis is not shaped by existing theory, although it is somewhat shaped by the researcher's disciplinary knowledge and epistemology (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Lists of codes were developed separately for pupils, parents and staff using the research questions as a guide to determine what was relevant. I paid equal attention to each transcript. The coding process consisted of making notes on the transcripts and highlighting the associated data items. An example of this can be seen in Appendix 10. Once all the codes were identified, they were collated along with their related data extracts and put into a table. Through the coding process I endeavoured to code all the patterns that were pertinent to the research.

### **Phase 3: Searching for themes**

This phase of the analysis required me to organise the collated codes into potential themes. I thought about the relationship between the codes and how some of them combined to form a theme. At this stage, some of the initial codes formed themes and subthemes whilst others were discarded. I kept a separate table of “miscellaneous” codes for those that seemed relevant but did not seem to fit into the main themes at this point. This phase enabled me to compose a collection of candidate themes. As this research consisted of three different participant groups, the data for each group was analysed separately. After this process I found that similar themes had emerged from all three groups. The data was then brought together and themes encapsulated the perspectives of all three groups.

### **Phase 4: Reviewing themes**

Braun & Clarke (2013) state it is paramount for the initial themes to be reviewed. During this phase I cyclically went back to the raw data and the codes. Subsequently, it shed light on the fact that some of the initial themes did not have enough evidence to support them. It was at this point that some were then broken down and combined with other themes. The codes and themes were reflected on in supervision with my research supervisors several times

### **Phase 5: Defining and naming themes**

During the analysis process theme names were continuously defined and refined. Refining entailed identifying the core elements of each theme and determining what aspect of the data it captured. This also involved reviewing

the data extracts related to the codes to ensure they represented a coherent account of what the theme was capturing. This involved not only being clear on what the theme included, but also what it did not include. The themes were discussed during research supervision and with my peers, offering a chance to reflect on themes and whether there was enough evidence to support them.

Once I had a final list of themes, I discussed themes with a Doctor of Psychology and a Professor of Sociology in separate meetings. They both had a background of conducting research exploring Black children and their educational attainments. The input of these experts provided guidance on the validation of the research findings. During this process, they informed me that they felt the themes were well illustrated.

#### **Phase 6: Producing the report**

This final phase consisted of writing up the themes in a way that conveyed the validity of the data. I provided adequate evidence for themes by supporting analytical claims with data extracts. As an illustrative lens was being used, my analytical narrative aimed to provide a rich and detailed description of each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2013). As well as the analytical claims being supported by data extracts, the results were fed back to some of the participants before they were finalised. This process is called “member checking” (Braun & Clarke, 2013). During the member checking session, participants were able to offer feedback which increased the results validity and credibility (Yardley, 2000). During this process the participants reported that they felt the themes had captured what they had shared. This provided a further level of assurances in relation to confirmability.

#### **3.6.4 Validity and rigour in data analysis**

TA has been critiqued for lacking adequate amounts of literature regarding guidelines and procedures in producing rigorous analysis (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). However, this is a critique that surrounds most qualitative data analysis methods. Furthermore, Braun & Clarke (2006; 2013) provide robust and systematic guidelines for researchers to follow. They offer a



“15 Point Checklist of Criteria for Good Thematic Analysis”. I followed the processes that they put forward meticulously and this facilitated a deepened and systematic engagement with the data. Joffe (2012) argues that one way to ascertain the reliability of the findings is to check for counter reliability between 10 – 20% of the codes with two independent coders. Considering this recommendation, raw data from the interview transcripts along with my initial codes were scrutinised by both my research supervisors to verify the interpretation of the data. Additionally, examples of data extracts illustrating analytical claims are presented throughout the results chapter. This was done to provide the readers with a sense of the analytical process and to be indicative of the validity of the overall analysis.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

The British Psychological Society (BPS, 2014) ethical guidelines and the University College London Institute of Education (UCL IOE) ethical guidelines were followed in the design and completion of the research. Firstly, I applied for a Data Protection number. When I received a data protection number (see Appendix 1) I then sought ethical approval. Ethical approval was sought and approved prior to the pilot study (See Appendix 2). These processes were in accordance with May 2018 General Data Protection Regulations. There were also various ethical considerations that I identified; including informed consent and participant vulnerability, which will be outlined in the following subsections.

#### **3.7.1 Informed consent**

The participants who showed interest in being involved in the research were provided with the research information form (see Appendix 3). This step helped to ensure that the participants fully understood the nature of the study and enabled them to give informed consent. They were also asked to complete a demographic form to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria for the study (see Appendix 4). Prior to the commencement of the interviews, I talked through

the information sheet with participants. This ensured that they grasped the nature of the research and verified their ability to give informed consent. They were then asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 5). As all the participants were aged 16 or over, they were all able to give their own informed consent (BPS, 2014).

### **3.7.2 Participant vulnerability**

This research involves young people who have experienced being labelled as having “challenging behaviour” at some time in their education. I ensured that:

- Participants were given accessible information about the study, the opportunity to ask questions, provide informed consent and were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any point.
- All the participants were made aware that any disclosures which cause safeguarding concerns would be reported to the relevant body (Risley High staff, social services, the police). This included information that indicated that they or someone else were in immediate danger or harm.
- My involvement with the participants was made clear from the start, and the relationship was ended appropriately. This meant that my role as a researcher was explained to them and that they were aware that after the interviews it would be unlikely that they would meet me again in the same context.
- Once the interviews were completed, the participant was handed over to a member of the Risley High staff in case they should want to discuss anything that they found distressing in the interview.
- Due to the nature of the research, I was mindful that some of the participants had experienced difficulties that needed to be managed with additional sensitivity.

### **3.7.3 Confidentiality and Data Protection**

The participants' names were not used within the research; they were all given pseudonyms, they were advised of this prior to commencing their interviews in the informed consent sheet (Appendix 3). The participants signed consent forms were all stored in a coded safe. Participants were informed that their information would be kept confidential, unless they made a disclosure that I deemed a safeguarding concern. Some researchers have concluded that such implications mean that confidentiality can never be guaranteed, particularly to research involving CYP (Thomas & O'kane, 1998). Thus, there is a concern that such disclosures can reduce the researcher's credibility and may result in a breakdown of trust between the researcher and the participant (Boyden and Ennew, 1997). In order to reduce the risk of this happening, the information sheet and consent form explicitly indicated that I had a safeguarding duty and therefore certain information could be disclosed (see Appendix 3) This was also explained again to participants on the day of their interview. Throughout the data collection process there were no disclosures of any safeguarding issues.

### **3.7.4 Data storage and security**

Once the consent forms had been signed and returned, they were stored in a secure, locked cupboard. Interviews were recorded using university recording equipment and stored on an encrypted memory stick. The audio recordings will be deleted in the year 2021.

### **3.8 Researchers reflexivity**

I acknowledge that my role as the researcher and the research methodologies contributed to the type of data produced. A crucial element of research is recognising how I, as the researcher, have engaged and influenced the research. This is what is termed as reflexivity. Willig (2013) notes that a researcher will, inevitably, make assumptions when trying to answer research questions. Thus, it is important that researchers attempt to illustrate their

position along with their motives (Fox, Martin and Green, 2007). Throughout the study, I considered how my identity as a Black British woman of African Caribbean descent impacted on the study. It was imperative that I was aware of the cultural and racial aspect of the research. This was because I identified as being from the same ethnicity as most of the participants.

Throughout the entire research journey, I kept a reflective research journal recording events, thoughts and milestones. This helped me be mindful about how previous knowledge may be influencing the research and shaping its development. I also kept records of discussions held with my research supervisors and used this as a reflective tool to counterbalance my personal knowledge and experience of attending a BSS myself for several years during my childhood. Additionally, I kept a research timeline where I recorded dates of key events that impacted the development of my research (see Appendix 11). This included discussions with various academics, educational psychologists and people involved with the BSS community. This assisted me in being reflective during the research journey and documenting the challenges as well as the triumphs. It also added multi perspectives which made the research extremely rigorous.

By looking critically at the data, I was able to continuously ask myself whether my analysis was data driven or being driven by my interpretations of the data. I recognised that my authority as the researcher should be handled sensitively and that I should not impose my own beliefs and preconceived ideas on the data analysis, but rather it should be data led. I gave my research supervisors examples of my codes and themes to gain feedback on whether the codes were fitting.

### **3.9 Chapter summary**

This chapter has outlined my critical realist orientation and described the research design. Given the aim of the study, qualitative research methods were employed using TA for analysis. The methodological procedures that were utilised throughout the research have been explained; the challenges that I encountered highlighted. The following chapter will illustrate the research findings.

# CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

## **4.1 Chapter Overview**

In this chapter the themes and subthemes that were developed through the analysis of the qualitative data will be presented. Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to analyse the data obtained from 14 semi-structured interviews with five pupils, five staff members and four parents. The study aimed to explore the perceptions and experiences of the pupils, parents and staff of the BSS “Risley High”. The results will be demonstrated through a thematic table and an illustration of themes using data extracts. The participants and the setting have been given pseudonyms to uphold their confidentiality. The findings will then be discussed in Chapter 5.

## **4.2 Thematic Analysis of interview data**

As described in the methodology, the themes were identified using inductive analysis methods with what felt most pertinent to the research questions. To maintain the authenticity and delineation the data for parents, pupils and staff were analysed separately. Through this process, I was able to identify that the same themes emerged from each data set. This included an overarching theme that encapsulated the concepts of all the themes and four themes with several subthemes each. Table 3 is a thematic table presenting how the overarching theme; themes and subthemes were organised. It also gives a brief description of each theme.

<b>Table 3.</b> Thematic table describing the overarching theme, themes and subthemes.	
<b>Overarching theme:</b>	<b>Education is more than academia:</b>  The overarching theme demonstrates how the ethos held within the setting is that education is a multifaceted phenomenon and requires several different approaches to delivery.
<b>Theme:</b>	<b>Subtheme</b>
<b>1. Strong Sense of Belonging:</b>  This theme looks at the importance of relationships	We're a family... forever
	The facilitation of friendships
	Team building tasks
	Fractious relationships with the mainstream setting
<b>2. Pupil empowerment through unique opportunities:</b>  This theme looks at the various different opportunities that are facilitated through the setting	Prestigious boarding school goals
	Various industry work experiences
	Pupils accessing 1:1 mentoring and support
	Exposure to national and international travel
<b>3. Knowing and growing thy self:</b>  This theme looks at how people experience change whilst being a part of the setting	The promotion of racialised self-identity
	The makings of a leader
	Affirmations and elevated aspirations
	The nurturing of growth and maturity
	Explicit high expectations for staff, pupils and parents to be their best
	Benefits of a holistic curriculum
<b>4. Supporting systemic strategies:</b>  This theme looks at specific strategies to support the young people and their families	Transparency between setting and the pupils' families
	Facilitating parenting workshops (parent university)
	Providing advisory services
	Clear and unambiguous boundaries and consequences

The themes will now be demonstrated.

### **4.3 Overarching Theme: Education is more than academia**

This overarching theme encapsulated the ideas that underpinned all the themes. The perspective that education was something more than teaching academia was a central finding. All the participants felt that Risley High's curriculum was robust and centred around developing a range of skills and abilities, including but not exclusive to academic performance. The overarching theme demonstrated how the ethos held within the setting was that education was a multifaceted phenomenon and required several different approaches to its delivery.

#### **4.3.1 Theme 1: Strong sense of belonging**

This first theme captured the participants' perceptions about the type of relationships that were facilitated through attending Risley High. They shared ideas about the positive relationships that they had experienced. They also highlighted some unique aspects to how useful these relationships were in relation to the pupils' development and learning. This theme was arranged into four subthemes; "We're a family... forever", "The facilitation of friendships", "Team building tasks" and "Fractious relationships with the mainstream setting".

##### **4.3.1.1. We're a family ... forever**

This subtheme demonstrates how the participants expressed the relationships that were built through being a part of Risley High. They described feeling a strong family type connection and this impacted on the participants' sense of belonging. All the participants described the family orientated atmosphere of Risley High as something positive.

*"... because you've been a part of all the meetings. You've been a part of rejoicing with the parent. You've been crying with that parent you know so it's, it's, we've been like a family. It's been a family experience erm for us at Risley High and I will continue to be a part of it forever..."*

Parent-Grace 612-616



*“...the one saving grace I had was Risley High were on line and I could call them anytime and like I said Trevor (Risley High CEO) was uncle Trevor, so uncle Trevor would always be there to talk to him (her son) and instil in him (her son) family values...”*

Parent-Abiola 352 – 356

The participants not only felt as though Risley High was like a family, many of them felt, as described by Abiola, that it was a place that they could find comfort and acceptance from. The pupils described it as a place where they could be themselves and were treated with a non-judgemental approach.

*“...when I got into year seven that’s when my dad first left the house and that was a bit of struggle for me and over the years I’ve been getting used to it and Risley High was like a second family to me where I could come and be myself...”*

Pupil-Dwayne 9-12

The participants expressed that this sense of family was a defining feature of Risley High. Participants felt that this had an impact on the way they were able to connect, resonate with and understand each other. The staff themselves felt that they played a significant role in facilitating this.

*“... I’ve had to learn to put on different caps for different students. And it’s to ensure that each child that comes here feels a sense of family and feels a sense of home and a sense of a place where you can grow. Because we grow sometimes in a place where, well where we’re comfortable, but we feel loved and nurtured. And that’s what we try to emulate here at Risley High and through knowing each child knowing their parents...”*

Staff-Sean 203- 211

This subtheme encapsulated the feelings of belonging to the Risley High community and how this enriched parents, pupils’ and staff’s lives. The attachment bonds with the school were so fervent that they felt that it was much more than just a school setting, it was a family. The environment allowed them to grow feelings of love and trust for each other.

#### **4.3.1.2. The facilitation of friendships**

The discussion of the different types of relationships experienced at Risley High illuminated the fact there was a significant level of closeness within groups. The pupils described how they had managed to build strong bonds between each other over time.

*“...I think now I have a really really good relationship with them (other pupils) I know most if not all the students who come here...”*

Pupil-Robert 109 – 111

The “good relationship” Robert identified was something that the staff felt was explicitly encouraged throughout Risley High. The importance of peer relationships was described as significant. Additionally, these bonds were highlighted as being “life changing” and “life-long”, extending to life outside of Risley High and even when their paths had taken them different ways. This was spoken about as being a very positive aspect of Risley High as they were able to meet a range of peers that they would not otherwise have been likely to meet.

*“...in fact (son’s name) is in contact with most of the guys of his year. Some of them are at university now and some of them still live in (name of area) so they link up whenever they come home...”*

Parent-Grace 633- 636

*“...the relationship they (Risley High pupils) form once they are here is life changing for them because it’s outside of their experience of meeting other young people. But also it is life-long because these friendships remain as a consequence of Risley High...”*

Staff-Diane 817 – 821

The parents also felt that they had created significant bonds with other parents. Through their child attending Risley High, they were able to meet with other parents who were having similar experiences to themselves.

*“...I mean yea lifelong friends erm now and I guess when you have a group of parents who are all striving for the same thing you have a connection...”*

Parent Nana 212-214

*“...when you’re listening to other parents, you’re thinking wow that’s what you’re going through. Because you always think that, gosh you’re going through the worst thing. When somebody goes through worse, you’re able to give some advice and you’re able to help or console...”*

Parent Abiola

Staff also spoke about the relationship they held with each other. They had a clear respect and cohesive approach to their work at Risley High.

*“... we form a shoulder to shoulder body of staff erm where we are consistent and compliant and incredibly helpful to each other so that that is all we are able to give to everybody else...”*

Staff Diane 226-229

Peer relationships were a momentous aspect of pupils’, parents’ and staff’s experience of Risley High. The school facilitated not just the friendship between pupils, but also between staff and between parents. Thus, there was a high level of trust between peers.

#### **4.3.1.3 Team building**

One of the key features of attending Risley High was the team building activities that the pupils had to take part in. It was felt that through these activities, a deeper level of respect and understanding of the importance of working as a team would be achieved. This was identified by the pupils and staff.

*“...I think the same way that they relate to staff we teach them to be respectful towards each and to work together as a team. So, they do get a lot of team building activities...”*

Staff Sue 713 – 715

*“... a lot of the time anything we do will be done in groups. So, we have to do help build team work. You have to do it with other people and often, the groups are like muddled up a little bit so you’re not always with the same people. So, you have to learn how to work together and to work well with other people.”*

Pupil Robert 89 - 94

Another aspect of the team building was that it made the pupils feel as though they could depend on each other. They were taught that a central aspect of teamwork was them being responsible not only for themselves, but also their peers.

*“...like doing teamwork activities and stuff so that we really, yea we help each other. So, if someone’s struggling with something everyone is always there for each other...”*

Pupil Daryl 106 – 108

*“...we encourage our students to see themselves as being part of the same body. Erm so even though the head might get all the the the the glamour and the glory and the attention, or should I say the face, the arm the armpit the foot bottom are all extremely important. And you know the face will soon reflect the pain that is felt in the foot so from that point of view we try and teach that...”*

Staff-Trevor 413 – 419

Having team building tasks embedded within the curriculum was important to the pupils’ understanding and developing peer support skills. However, beyond the activities, it was felt that Risley High pupils felt as though they all belonged to the Risley High team. In the following extract, Diane likens it to belonging to a football team.

*“...I think they they form a bond which they wouldn’t otherwise have unless they were part of a football team but a football team that is two hundred and odd student big is quite rare...”*

Staff Diane 822 – 825 Diane

The subtheme “Team Building” captured the importance of facilitating team building as identified by the pupils and staff. Activities and lessons were structured with the specific purpose of enhancing the pupil’s ability to work with different peers. It also taught them about responsibility and being dependable.

#### **4.3.1.4. Fractious relationships with the mainstream setting**

All participants spoke about the important relationship with the mainstream school. However, the three participant groups described their interactions with them in different ways.

**Pupils:** The pupils spoke about how the relationship with their mainstream settings had been contentious and something that had affected their learning.

*“...I found it quite difficult to learn because, erm, I was quite inquisitive but like, I felt like I was being shut down by a collection of teachers and like I was really shut out...”*

Pupil-Kojo 5-7

*“...teachers didn’t like me. I still don’t think they do, but it’s better now at least...”*

Pupil-Jahzyon 10-11

**Parents:** Parents also spoke of the difficulties and challenges they had with managing the relationship with their son’s mainstream school. This was mainly because of the negative feedback they would receive regarding their son’s behaviour.

*“...What I remember mostly was erm constant phone calls and always negative...”*

Parent-Simonnete 6-7

*“...there was always a case of everyday I would go in and there are problems. And then it got so bad that I said right that’s it I’m not walking into school. So, I would take (son’s name) across the road stand in the middle of the isle and just see him into school because I thought I can’t bear the complaints every day...”*

Parent-Abiola 19-24

**Staff:** The Risley High staff recognised this fractious relationship not only experienced by the pupils but also their parents. The staff felt that families felt disempowered and often felt the relationship with the school was beyond repair.

*“...many of our parents might struggle with a child in school some of them might get in trouble at school excluded and then for some of them they aren't sure what to do and in some situations the school is trying to get rid of that child...”*

Staff-Sean 244-249

Staff also experience the pupils making contrasting statements to the way they experienced Risley High to the way they experienced their mainstream setting as highlighted in the next extract by Sue.

*“...I remember one student once said the difference between going to school and going to Risley High is that Risley High staff smiled back at you when you smiled at them...”*

Staff Sue 526 – 529

It was evident that the pupils and parents all had experience of having a breakdown of relationship with a mainstream setting. This was because of the way the school responded and reacted to behavioural concerns. The participants felt as though what they experienced at Risley High was a huge contrast to that of the mainstream setting.

The theme “Strong Sense of Belonging” shed light on some of the key relationships and bonds that were formed through Risley High. This impacted immensely on a strong sense of belonging to the setting. Contrastingly, when relationships with the mainstream setting became difficult, it caused both pupils and parents to feel detached from them.

### **4.3.2 Theme 2: Pupil empowerment through unique opportunities**

The second theme emerged as a result of participants frequently speaking about the experiences and opportunities that were facilitated through Risley High. They also spoke about how these opportunities had empowered the pupils. Pupils, parents and staff felt that these opportunities were particularly valuable to the Risley High families as they were unlikely to experience them otherwise. This theme was broken down into four subthemes; “Prestigious boarding school goals”, “Various industry work experiences”, “Pupils accessing 1:1 mentoring and support” and “Exposure to national and international travel”.

#### **4.3.2.1. Prestigious boarding school goals**

All the participants spoke about one of the key benefits of attending Risley High was that some pupils were awarded scholarships to attend renowned boarding schools. It was a central part of the Risley High programme.

*“...that enabled us to expand the number of links with schools and the number of children that we could send to boarding schools. So now we send twenty-five to thirty every year. So, we’ve now placed about a hundred and fifty pupils in boarding school we have an alumni of about forty...”*

Staff Sue 196 – 201

One of the most apparent barriers to the pupils’ otherwise attending a boarding school was the financial implications. In the next extract Jahzyon speaks about the type of people whom, he felt, could afford to pay to go to boarding schools.

*“...they set you up with a certain school and you get a bursary for it and you get to go (to boarding school) for free. So, instead of those rich white people that pay for the school they pay for boarding school, you get to go with the bursary meaning you didn’t have to pay...”*

Pupil Jahzyon 425 – 429

Although bursaries to attend boarding schools could be won through attending Risley High, it was not available to all pupils. There was a list of criterion pupils they had to meet before they could be put forward. One of the things that was

considered was the levels of engagement, not only from pupils but also from parents. In the following extract Nana highlights the responsibility Risley High staff placed on parents. Parents felt that they had to show that they would be able to provide support to their child if they did secure a bursary funded boarding school place.

*“...if you’re not coming to the parents evening then are you the type of parents who are going to be supporting this child when they go off to boarding school. Should we really be considering your child for these opportunities?”*

Parent Nana 721 -724

The opportunity for a boarding school bursary was central to Risley High. Not only did offer the opportunity to families who would otherwise not be able to afford it, but it also gave the pupils and parents a goal to work towards.

#### **4.3.2.2. Various industry work experiences**

This subtheme sheds light on how work experience opportunities were facilitated by Risley High. All the participants recognised this as a valuable resource with various benefits.

*“...there have been quite a number, as I said, of opportunities to attend and to understand the industry experience. Like work experience in the industry and meeting people...”*

Parent Simonnete 462 – 464

*“...they’ve helped me meet some entrepreneurs such as (name of person) who is one of the richest Black men in the country. Being able to meet him to speak to him in person and to hear his story that is somewhat similar to my situation...”*

Pupil Robert 387 – 390



The pupils not only felt positive about the work experience opportunities but also reflected on skills that they had developed during the process. In the next data extract Jahzyon explains how performing well on work experience lead to further opportunities.

*“...before the summer there was like a three week course about making engineering fun. So, we did a programming project at the end where we played with Lego and we had to kind of make it do stuff. We had to make it move around by coding with a laptop. The first two weeks we also did interview skills where I actually won something, I got two weeks paid work experience for that...”*

Pupil Jahzyon 130 – 134

Underpinning Risley High’s ability to provide their students with such vast work experience opportunities was the connection they had with other businesses and successful professionals. Trevor explained how the school had established relationships with various establishments and influential people.

*“...I think with our broad connections our access to probably fifty millionaires a year erm our ability to go behind the scenes of things like the national theatre, our opportunities to erm access people in government who come here, or we go there...”*

Staff Trevor 430 – 432

This subtheme captured the feelings the pupils, parents and staff had about the Risley High work experiences. They felt it was not only useful in a practical sense but exposed the pupils to industries that they might otherwise not have access to. They were introduced to successful businesses and business people. The high calibre of these people/organisations impacted on the pupils in a positive way, as it gave them something to strive towards.

#### **4.3.2.3. Pupils accessing 1:1 mentoring support**

The parents and staff identified that pupils were paired up with mentors who were able to act as role models to them. This extra layer of support provided them with opportunities to build relationships with adults who were able to offer them further advice and guidance.

*“...I don’t think he did have a really positive erm role model until I came to Risley High. And then he had a mentor and that was something that I forgot to mention (son’s name) had a mentor within Risley High who helped him and coached him and supported when I needed help...”*

Parent Abiola 149 -153

*“...it so happens that the photographer, the guy that saw that potential in him, has linked him up with someone now who is, although he’s at uni he’s getting some work. You know so he’s growing he’s being taught and he’s practicing what you know what he’s learning...”*

Parent Grace 466 – 470

Staff identified that it was the expertise and high quality of the professional adults that the pupils were paired up with that made the mentoring so influential. Trevor identified the uniqueness of the mentoring opportunities at Risley High and how this put them in an advantageous position.

*“... our children get mentored by sort of very well you might term them successful people. Our children get taught by some of the best teachers in the country, if not the world. They come and teach drama and science and so on, so I think they get a lot more than the average child...”*

Staff Trevor 430 – 434

This subtheme highlighted the role Risley High played in providing pupils with mentors who could support them in their career development and learning.

#### **4.3.2.4. Exposure to national and international travel**

Parents, staff and pupils spoke about an opportunity that they felt was quite specific to Risley High was the range of national and international trips that took the pupils on that were funded by the school’s supporters. It was felt that one of the barriers that otherwise prevented the children from having such opportunities, as with the boarding school opportunities, was financial.

*“...they used to go out, they used to go away for weekends. They went to Isle of Man you know, he went to Gambia (sons name) and they used to play basketball. They went to Liverpool to the erm slave place. I wouldn't, you know, they've done things that I wouldn't have been able to do...”*

Parent Grace 415 -420

*“...so, we've taken kids to Ghana to Gambia to Jamaica erm and other places erm Tunisia erm they're, you know, kids with no money so it's a very good opportunity...”*

Staff Trevor 432 – 434

Pupils felt that they gained a lot of insight and knowledge from the trips. Although there were educational elements to them, these were sometimes indirect. The pupils were then able to reflect and determine for themselves what they felt they had learned.

*“...like all the trips we do, we would never have that in school at all. It's just fun in here, it's fun but it also helps, helps gain new aspects to everything...”*

Pupil Daryl 436 – 438

National and International trips were a crucial aspect of Risley High. They provided their pupils with opportunities to visit different places both National and Internationally. There were various learning objectives to the trips, but they seemed to have a significant impact on the pupils.

The theme “Pupil empowerment through unique opportunities” captured the participants' voice about some of the things that made Risley unique and special. They valued the various opportunities and welcomed the introduction to new and unfamiliar places and environments.

### **4.3.3 Theme 3: Knowing and growing Thy Self**

The third theme highlighted the crucial role of developing self-awareness and how this was embedded within the Risley High curriculum. Overall participants felt that being a part of Risley High was a learning experience not only for pupils

but for parents and staff as well. Pupils, parents and staff were all able to identify aspects of themselves that had been developed through being a part of the setting. This theme was broken down into the following six subthemes; “The promotion of racialised self-identity”, “The makings of a leader”, “Affirmations and elevated aspirations”, “The nurturing of growth and maturity”, “Explicit high expectations for staff, pupils and parents to be their best” and “Benefits of a holistic curriculum”.

#### **4.3.3.1. The promotion of racialised self-identity**

Pupils, parents and staff spoke about the role that Risley High played in promoting self-racialised self-identity. One of the aspects of identity involved elements of history and geography. Pupils felt as though they had a stronger sense of who they were and where they came from. Robert illustrated the sense of empowerment he felt through learning about African history.

*“...so, we would do the history of African nations in the summer. Last year we looked at the Mali empire and Mansa Musa. So again, all of this is the history that you’re not really taught in school but is really important. Like on the world it’s a really important part of history that they don’t really show you, so it does show you that there is rich Black history all over the world, in Africa in America even in Europe. So, I think it’s just very important to show that...”*

Pupil Robert 462 - 469

Parents also spoke about feeling that they had a stronger sense of self identity from attending meetings at Risley High. Grace expressed how she benefitted.

*“...Brother Zephi used to come in and do the Black history month and take us to places with his speech where we’ve never been, I’ve learned about our culture ...”*

Parent Grace 405 – 408

The staff spoke about how having a sense of racialised identity not only impacted on pupils in terms of having a deeper sense of self, they felt it

transcended into becoming a part of who they were as a person. Sean reflected on his own experience of attending a BSS and the impact that it had.

*“...the fact they’re here and they’re in an environment that supports and encourages their development I think is unique. I’ve been a student on a similar programme erm and that really helped me to have a sense of purpose and identity and then enabled me to become who I am today...”*

Staff Sean 659 - 664

Staff felt strongly that having activities that were targeted towards raising a deeper understanding of self was a vital part of the curriculum. Not only was it something that helped with the promotion of self-identity, it was also something that helped them understand their position in society and in the world.

*“...so they look at their name and its meaning, their ethnic origin, their journey, their own personal geography in history erm their significance in the world, stuff around religion who they are, not just what they do... we are trying to teach them to work out who they are by their character and that sort of thing. So, I think that’s something that permeates everything that we do is their identity and who they are...”*

Staff Sue 694 - 703

This subtheme encapsulated how central the promotion of racialised self-identity was to Risley High. Pupils, staff and parents felt that learning about things such as their history and their ethnic origins helped them to develop confidence and a deeper understanding of who they were.

#### **4.3.3.2. The makings of a leader**

This subtheme illustrates the emphasis of leadership that was a thread all throughout the Risley High curriculum. As well as basing their curriculum around twelve traits that the school had labelled “leadership traits”, they ensured that pupils had chances to practice the skills they learned. This was identified by pupils, parents and staff.

*“...like leadership skills being able to speak and articulate things and also, they talk and do a lot of current affairs, what’s happening in politics and so on. So, it also opens up a way of thinking...”*

Parent Simonnete 454 - 456

*“...for example, the older students have an expectation about how they look after the younger students and that’s just a natural leadership role...”*

Staff Roslyn 408 – 410

The leadership aspect of the setting was very apparent, and the pupils had a strong perception of what leadership was and why they should strive to be leaders. Daryl described how harnessing leadership traits could be empowering.

*“...Risley High is about building all of us to be young leaders and we have traits that leaders follow. Like bearing courage, decisiveness, erm, judgement, knowledge, loyalty, erm yea and they just, all of them, they all play a key part into making us the young leaders of tomorrow...”*

Pupil Daryl 310 - 314

The subtheme “the makings of a leader” illuminated the emphasis Risley High placed on leadership. By focusing explicitly on specified leadership traits, the pupils were then able to transfer the skills learnt to other areas of their lives.

#### **4.3.3.3. Affirmations and elevated aspirations**

This subtheme captured how pupils, parents and staff felt that affirmations were used to harness and elevate the pupils’ aspirations. It was clear that the affirmations had a significant impact on the pupils and were a central aspect of the Risley High experience as described by Dwayne in the following extract.

*“...I choose this moment, this hour, this day, to focus on the task ahead. And I am thankful for all my gifts and all opportunities. I acknowledge the depths of my sword and the endless possibilities. Through belief I am light in the dark, I am vision, I am hope, I am prepared, I am peace. And sometimes you even break that down to to erm understand what you mean by we*

*are vision, because we always have a goal in mind of something that we want to achieve. That we are peace, that we like to stay calm in situations of of anger. And I just think that affirmation is really something that can really help..."*

Pupil Dwayne 471 - 480

Parents reported how through this process their sons seemed to have a deeper clarity and focus in their lives. They began to visualise and set goals for the future.

*"...he had an insight into what he wanted to do and then he was able to go in erm into I think it was (college name) yea I think it was (college name) and was able to just speak confidently do the course he wanted to so and then go on to university..."*

Parent Abiola 458 – 462

Staff member Roslyn felt that the pupils of Risley High only benefitted from the process because they were already aspirational. This is why they committed to attending the setting from 9am on Saturday mornings. From this perspective it may be that Risley High played more of a role in helping the pupils identify and uncovering exactly what their aspirations were.

*"...I think often there is talk about poverty of ambition in Black communities which I don't find here. I think all of these kids are incredibly aspirational for themselves and I don't think Risley High really does much in terms of raising their aspirations because they are aspirational children..."*

Staff Roslyn 204 – 209

The positive role of affirmations and aspirations were identified by parents, staff and pupils. Through attending Risley High, the pupils were able to focus more closely on personal goals and create visions of the type of person they wanted to be. The pupils found the routine of reciting affirmation empowering.

#### **4.3.3.4. The nurturing of growth and maturity**

Pupils, staff and parents explained that there was a steep amount of growth and maturity that the pupils experienced while attending Risley High.

*“...you develop what you wanted to. You start maturing because that’s what I saw, the maturity...”*

Parent Grace 454 - 455

*“...but for him to see it, to see the support and the appreciation for this place, I think it’s something for a lifetime. So, I am not worried what happened because I know the work has been done. He’s matured so that’s how the work has been done and it’s all down to here (Risley High) ...”*

Parent Simonnete 291 – 301

Staff also felt they witnessed the pupils grow and develop in a significant way. However, they attributed this to the dynamism of the curriculum they followed and the wide range of activities they exposed their pupils to.

*“...our children become far more imaginative and engaging erm so whether that be through the creative arts whether that be through meditation. Whether it be through our erm practice on ontology, the whole art of being, our children emerge a bit more of what they truly are compared to when they came in...”*

Staff Trevor 220 – 224

In the following extract Kojo explains how part of his maturity and growth came from Risley High teaching him about his own power.

*“...at school the power I have is to be a student and to learn. So, my learning power, what can I do with that? Do I just use it in the classroom, or is it that for my own benefit am I the one that has to go and search for other ways if the teacher doesn’t want to help me? Who’s got the power to do it? It’s going to have to be me because no matter how small, how little power I have, the responsibility is mine...”*

Pupil Kojo 1119 – 126



The feelings of growth and maturity was not exclusive to the pupils. Parents also felt that they had learned a lot about themselves and being a parent whilst their son attended Risley High. In the following extract Grace describes how she learned skills that developed her confidence.

*“...it’s just helped me to flourish, to be a better parent, to manage my money a bit better. I’m not saying I’ve arrived yet, but it has helped me to be better at what I do. And it also helped me with being confident. When I started Risley High, because of what I was going through you know, I wouldn’t participate I was here for the kids to drop them off and pick them up. I was a bit reserved erm and it has helped me to be a bit more open erm to accept people and just to be myself...”*

Parent Grace 980 -988

This subtheme encapsulated the recognition of change that the participants observed in the pupils. Parents and pupils were also extremely reflective and were able to acknowledge aspects of their own growth and maturity. This impacted on their lives in numerous ways.

#### **4.3.3.5 Explicit high expectations for staff, pupils and parents to be their best**

This subtheme encapsulated the high expectations that were put on pupils, staff and parents to produce their best efforts in every task. Staff member Diane highlighted what this meant to her.

*“...there isn’t a hierarchy at all (between staff members) it’s all about putting in the best of yourself in what the task is...”*

Staff Diane 225 -226

The pupils recognised the effort that staff put into supporting them. They were also aware of the expectations that staff had of them and this inspired them to try and live up to those expectations.

*“...everyone’s really nice. They’re all here to benefit us and I think all the students know that. And yea they always put like 100 percent effort into everything they do, and we know that and we try to duplicate that...”*

Pupil Daryl 137 - 140

*“...when you’re treated as an adult and have expectations to behave as one, you want to, you sort of want to fulfil that and show that you can behave well and be better. I think so, I think that’s just the overall feel that I get from Risley High...”*

Pupil Robert 478 – 481

Not only were there high expectations from staff to commit to the pupils, and for pupils to perform at their best, there were also high expectations for parents to be a part of the process as well. In this way the parents were as invested in as the pupils.

*“...the same way we are with our children with the high expectations and the very clear boundaries, we’re the same with our parents. Because it’s really important that they’re following the very same, I guess call it expectations as their children otherwise it collapses...”*

Staff Diane 353 - 357

*“...it was like the investment in the parents was just as much the investment in the children...”*

Parent Nana 243 - 244

Not only were there high levels of expectations for pupils, parents and staff to be their best, the school tried to support them to be able to achieve this. Personal bests were not based on the performance or capabilities of others, they were individualised and recognised by the amount of effort they put into each task.

#### **4.3.3.6 Benefits of a holistic curriculum**

The final subtheme summarised what the pupils, parents and staff felt were the most profound aspects of the Risley High curriculum. It was clear that pupils felt more confident in many areas of their lives by attending lessons and partaking in activities.

*“...most of the skills that I’ve learnt at Risley High are holistic but because they are transferrable I myself have taken it upon me to make it my responsibility that I’m applying the things I’m learning at Risley High to my academic as well as like me a person...”*

Pupil Kojo 548 – 552

Parents also commented that the transferable skills also included certain aspects that contributed to the family. Parents felt as though Risley High was able to not only teach the pupils but also to show them and explain to them how and why it was important to be respectful in the family context.

*“...they basically helped him with his school work they helped him to sort of settle down and to focus and for me that was the main thing; another thing that was really important for me is that Trevor spoke about respect - respect in the home respect for other adults and how it should look...”*

Parent Abiola 101 - 107

Staff were very aware that the teaching style they had adopted was very different from many mainstream settings. They prided themselves on being able to take an individualistic approach to learning strategies whilst also being able to provide their pupils with a curriculum that supported them holistically.

*“...erm I’d say the difference in the staff relationship here as opposed to other educational contexts where I’ve worked is that because it’s kind of an approach through which we support the whole child...”*

Staff Roslyn 64 -67

Parents were very thankful and appreciative of Risley High and the unique educative learning style that they employed. All the parents reported that they felt that if their sons had not accessed the support of Risley High, things would have resulted in far worse outcomes for them.

*“...but I know this if he, if he wasn't at Risley high I think he would have done very very poor because the structure and the other what it took to get him to get those grades is because of Risley high if he hadn't have got that I think he would have probably have flunked it...”*

Parent Nana 539 -544

*“...if it wasn't for the Risley High staff, who knows what my son would have ended up with and you know I just thank God that he wasn't one of those that, you know, went down that wrong path to end up in prison because it could have very easily happened...”*

Parent Abiola 294 – 298

The Risley High curriculum was something that offered the pupils skills that they felt were transferable and that they could implement in various parts of their lives. For the parents, Risley High provided their sons with brighter futures and was a place of sanctuary.

The theme “Knowing and growing thy self” gave voice to the participants experiences of personal discovery whilst being a part of Ridley High. It was evident that the education that both parents and pupils received whilst at Risley High was multifaceted and impacted on their sense of self in various ways.

#### **4.3.4 Theme 4: Supporting systemic strategies**

This final theme illustrated the systemic support and strategies that the setting put in place to ensure that, not only the pupils were supported, but also their families. The theme was broken down into four subthemes; “Transparency between setting and pupils' families”, “Facilitating parenting workshops (Parent University)”, “Providing advisory services” and “Clear and unambiguous boundaries and consequences”.

#### **4.3.4.1. Transparency between setting and pupils` families**

All the participants spoke about high frequency communication between families and the staff. This meant that staff required parents to trust them and inform them of any family issues or challenges in regard to school or in the family context. The emphasis on this was so that staff knew how best to support the pupil.

*“...if there are any family issues or disputes that happen, families will come here and sit down with us. Both partners will sit down with us if there is an issue but also if their having problems with the children’s behaviour, aggression, all of those things...”*

Staff Diane 274 – 280

*“...you just have to understand that it’s a partnership, it works better in a partnership. You have to be totally transparent with the organisation, but you also have to trust that they’ve also got your child or son`s interest at heart, and that is whatever it is...”*

Parent Nana 397 - 400

In the following extract Kojo explained some of the methods that were implemented to ensure that his voice was heard. The extract also demonstrated how Risley High supported the pupils and families to have better communication and understanding between each other.

*“...what happens is if they have to talk to my parents about something, they will talk to my parents and will explain it in every way possible then get me to explain my situation because the only person that fully knows my situation is me...”*

Pupil Kojo 603 – 606

Communication and transparency between families and Risley High played an important role in enabling the staff to understand and meet the needs of each pupil. The pupils were aware of this high level of communication and found it to be something that worked well for them.

#### **4.3.4.2. Facilitating parenting workshops (Parent University)**

This subtheme emerged from the data of parents and staff. They identified that one of the key features of Risley High was the way they supported the parents. This included organising various meetings and parent focused activities.

*“...we hold meetings with parents, and we hold interactive meetings with parents so that they can pair and share. We hold food meetings with parents where they bring food and where there is an agenda and there is a speaker, but for the most part they are part of a body that is moving in a direction...”*

Staff Diane 375 – 379

*“...we will have parent meetings erm what we will have is get togethers and socials with parents as well, so that they feel a sense of community...”*

Staff Sean 242 - 244

All the parents expressed how positive they found the parent focused activities and felt that it ensured that they were included and a valued part of the Risley High Community. In the following extract Nana explains how there were events that were more focused on enjoyment and bonding whilst others focused more on discussion and problem solving.

*“...we were being, were, included as well. We were a big part of it. The parents evening, so the parents evenings, it wasn't all just work, work, work, we had fun evenings as well and we had time that we could connect and discuss what challenges that others were going through and you know compare notes and stuff ...”*

Parent Nana 153 – 158

The parents were also given homework tasks and exercises that were aimed at strengthening their parenting skills and equipped them with practical strategies that they could use in the home.

*“...parent university which meant that I was able share with other parents you know what I was going through and other parents did the same. We were able to erm share good practice... We had exercises that we could, and I don’t mean physical, as in we would have work that we were able to take away with us to think about...”*

Parent Abiola 222- 229

The parents found the parents’ workshop invaluable and felt as though Risley High supported them almost as much as they supported their pupils. Although there was a focus on learning for parents, they also made the learning environment fun and engaging which made the workshops feel less formal.

#### **4.3.4.3. Providing advisory services**

This subtheme emerged from the data of parents and staff. It was very apparent that the support the pupils received from Risley High included advocating for them. This included writing letters, attending meetings and having drop-in clinics where parents could receive advice.

*“...we are still helping parents deal with erm appeals when their son has been excluded from school. And we do find that Black boys are still more likely to be excluded for the same thing that a white boy has done and hasn’t been excluded so there’s clearly still issues in the system which we continue to work with...”*

Staff Sue 95 -99

The parents expressed how Risley High staff were a monumental support to them at periods when they felt most helpless and powerless in fighting against decisions the mainstream school were making about their children. This made them feel more able to challenge the schools and question their decisions.

*“...they have been very supportive of me because the last, this last year has been one of the hardest years of our lives because my son was expelled permanently from the school after the incident. So before even that they took me to all the meetings all the appeals. I got all the support...”*

Parent Simonnete 231 - 235

*“...if I needed them to go into school that was something else that they would do. If I needed support in school, they would come in and offer that support whether it would be Mr Trevor or he would send a member of staff. So, I’d have that person with me so I didn’t feel alone and I didn’t feel intimidated by people (mainstream school staff) who felt that they knew more than me...”*

*Parent Abiola 367 – 373*

The subtheme “Providing advisory services” illustrated how the kind of support that the parents were able to access from Risley High. Having Risley High as a support network helped the parents to feel empowered when having to deal with the mainstream setting.

#### **4.3.4.4. Clear and unambiguous boundaries and consequences**

This final subtheme captures the pupils, staff and parents’ feelings about Risley and the essence of discipline that underpinned the setting. Diane gives an example of one of the consequences for not following the school rules.

*“...you better have your uniform on otherwise you’re going home...”*

*Staff Diane 828 – 829*

Parents also understood the boundaries and felt that they had a role to play in ensuring that they were met. This created a sense of shared responsibility and strengthened their bond with the setting.

*“...as a parent you have to fix up as well because your child has got to be here on time so if your child has got to be here on time that’s your responsibility to get the child here on time so as something as abstract as time keeping if you come here and your child get locked out it’s your fault so it means you need to fix up...”*

*Parent Nana 716 – 721*

The pupils spoke about finding the firm boundaries useful and that they were then able to implement discipline in other areas of their lives.



*“...this guy that came in erm he was very strict and I understood what we were meant to do and I was able to practice being disciplined with myself knowing when to keep quiet knowing when to do certain things and how to do them erm the experience was very useful because in class people can talk a lot people can really distract you in class and through Risley High I was able to control that urge to talk to someone and it really helped a lot...”*

Pupil Dwayne 25 - 31

Pupils responded well to having clear and unambiguous boundaries. The parents were also held accountable for upholding the school's policies. Having the boundaries served a purpose for ensuring that the pupils and parents both shared an understanding about what was and was not acceptable.

The theme “Supporting systemic strategies” shed light on the layers of support Risley High provided for their families. The strategies they used were there to enable the families and pupils to get the most from being a part of the Risley High community.

#### **4.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented the key findings that emerged from the data analysis. The analysis revealed that the participants found Risley High to be a positive place where they were able to feel a strong sense of belonging. This contrasted somewhat with the relationship that pupils and parents had with their mainstream setting. Pupils who attended Risley High felt empowered through the chance to engage in unique opportunities, including travelling and work experience. Through following the Risley High curriculum, they were able to know and grow and deepen their knowledge of self. Risley High ensured that there were supporting strategies not only to help pupils but also their parents. In the next chapter these findings will be discussed in relation to psychological and theoretical literature on the phenomena.

# CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

## 5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter highlights the findings of the current study in relation to the research questions and the literature on the phenomena. The objective of the study was to explore how a BSS supported Black boys at GCSE level who had been labelled with challenging behaviour by their mainstream school. This chapter begins with a summary of the finding in which the four research questions are discussed in relation to existing literature. This will be followed by a critical analysis of both the strengths and limitations of the study. A discussion of the implications of the research findings for EPs, BSS's and mainstream schools will then be presented. Suggestions for future research are also put forward. The chapter will close with my reflections regarding the overall research process and the conclusions of the discussion chapter.

## 5.2 Research questions, summary of main findings and links to previous research

### 5.2.1 RQ1: How do pupils, parents and staff feel the school supports pupils' SEMH and educational development?

The overarching theme "Education is more than academia" captured the underpinning ethos of the school's approach to education. Participants articulated that although Risley High supported pupils with their academic development, this was not the main focus of their curriculum. Their curriculum was designed to target various aspects of the pupils learning including developing their social skills and emotional well-being. These findings support the idea that schools are places that should focus on developing aspects of pupils' emotional and social skills (Black-Hawkins, Florian and Rouse, 2016; Roffrey, 2017). Roffreys' (2017) ASPIRE framework promotes the idea that mainstream schools serve multifaceted roles in assisting the development of CYP. Thus, focusing on social and emotional well-being alongside academic development is most useful for CYP. However, the findings of this present

research suggest that the pupils and families felt that this was being neglected within their mainstream schools. Thus, Risley High offered them a place where they could develop emotional and social skills in a non-judgemental environment.

The present study's findings illustrated that academia is one level of education, but education is something more than this. It is made up of several components including interactions on the "Individual Level", "Microsystem", "Macrosystem", "Chronosystem"; systems identified within the B-PPCT model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This is echoed in Taylor's (2018) findings who explored the benefits of young people who engaged in a Boxing As an Intervention (BAAI) programme that was external to their mainstream educational provision. He found that attending the boxing intervention had a significant impact on all the CYP's ecosystems. For example, at the individual level he found that it provided them with positive moments. At the micro level, it gave them a feeling of family. At the macro level, they experienced a demonstration of high expectations. At the chrono level, their technical boxing skills improved over time. This indicates that some CYP benefit greatly from attending extra places of learning alongside their mainstream setting. It may be that these provisions can offer pupils the opportunity to focus on skills that mainstream schools do not prioritise.

Interestingly, in terms of SEMH development, there were no themes that emerged relating to the pupils displaying "challenging behaviour" whilst at Risley High. This could be because of the way Risley High staff perceived the pupils and their behaviour. The fact that their mainstream school had labelled them as having "challenging behaviour" could be related to the findings of Hyland (2005). She found that White teachers held negative core beliefs about Black pupils' behaviour and academic abilities. Therefore, it could be that Black boys are at risk of exclusion due to negative perspectives mainstream school teachers have about how they behave. In contrast, the Risley High staff held positive perceptions about the pupils and placed focus on supporting them to reach their optimum potential as learners. It is also possible that the staff didn't see displays of challenging behaviour because they used their cultural knowledge alongside their knowledge of SEMH needs enabled them to implement effective strategies to support them.

### **5.2.2 RQ2: What are the perspectives of pupils, parents and staff on how the school helps to develop their pupils' sense of identity?**

The theme “Knowing and growing thyself” related strongly to this research question. The subtheme “The promotion of racialised self-identity” illustrated the impact that Risley High’s racialised teaching had on pupils. For example, they taught them about the strong influence of various historical African Empires and African leaders have had on the world. Pupils also engaged in activities that focused on exploring and understanding their ethnic identities. This correlates with the findings of Andrews (2016) who found that BSSs were places where children were taught about their cultural heritage. He argued that this helped to develop their resiliency against the presence of racism that was saturated within UK society. Many of the participants felt that the racialised learning experiences were unique to Risley High as they were not taught these lessons in mainstream schools. This supports the argument put forward by Chevannes & Reeves (1987) that the mainstream school curriculum was Eurocentric and neglected to acknowledge African contributions to history. The importance of racialised identity in the high academic achievements of Black boys has been highlighted by studies such as Robinson (2013). She found that the Black boys in her study were able to use their positive sense of racialised identity as motivation to challenge negative stereotypes that others held about their academic abilities.

An interesting finding of the present research that was not in the existing literature was that parents also felt that their racial identity was deepened and enriched from their sons’ attending Risley High. This was achieved by parents being invited to Black History events and encouraged to purchase certain culturally educative texts. This suggests that BSSs can offer a deeper understanding of racial identity to adults as well as CYP.

The subtheme “The makings of a leader” demonstrated a different aspect of identity that Risley High helped to develop. They had their own distinct curriculum on leadership and had identified twelve traits that they felt were pertinent in being a good leader. Risley High taught pupils that they should take the responsibility of adopting leadership roles in different aspects of their lives.

Interestingly, this was not documented in any of the existing literature on BSSs and therefore further research into this area is required. In addition, the subtheme “Explicit high expectations for staff, pupils and parents to be their best” encapsulated how there was a high level of expectation of pupils from staff to strive to be the very best person that they could be. Previous literature has found high expectations of teachers positively affect the academic outcomes of Black pupils (Bigford, 2015; Demie & McLean, 2018). This suggests that the BSS staff held positive beliefs about their pupils and the pupils were then able to internalise this, resulting in a developed sense of self-esteem and confidence. Interestingly, the high expectations were also expected of parents and staff. This possibly contributed to creating shared values between them.

The subtheme “Affirmations and elevated aspirations” unveiled how Risley High taught pupils to use affirmations to develop a stronger sense of their individualised identities. Affirmations in this context meant reciting positive statements about who they were, as exemplified in Chapter 4. Through the exercise of reciting affirmations, pupils engaged in self exploration. As a result, they were able to identify aspirations that were previously underdeveloped as they had not been taught the skills of how to access them in their mainstream schools. This theme has similarities with what Dogra, Parkin, Warner-Gale & Frake (2017) describe as ‘self-talk’ as mentioned in Chapter 2. They state that it is a process whereby individuals can use internal dialogues with themselves as a strategy of emotional regulation and facilitate relaxation.

### **5.2.3 RQ3: How do pupils, parents and staff feel the school facilitates parental involvement and parental support?**

Parental involvement and parental support were found to be an imperative feature of Risley High. The subtheme “Transparency between setting and the pupils’ families” emphasise the importance that Risley High placed on being involved with the pupils and their families. They felt that for them to best be able to support their pupils’ needs, the families had to be as transparent with them as possible. This meant that there was a high level of trust and honesty that was

required of the parents. The parents described that they were able to be transparent as they felt that Risley High had their children's best interest at heart. Thus, there was a high level of engagement between parents and Risley High. This links to research highlighting that close liaison between home and school is an important aspect of meeting pupils needs (Cork, 2007; Demie & McLean, 2018; Dogra, Parkin, Warner-Gale & Frake, 2017; Tomlin & Olusola, 2007). Tomlin and Olusola (2007) found that high levels of parental involvement and schools working in partnership with parents positively contributed to high academic attainment. They found that mainstream school staff felt their high performing Black pupils benefitted from their parents coming into the schools to work with teachers on various school projects. Additionally, Cork (2007) found that supporting Black parents was an imperative aspect to Black children having high academic achievements. This included parents being involved in the development of school curriculum materials and being on the school governors board. As the pupils who participated in the present study were all high achievers at GCSE level, the high levels parental engagement may have played a significant role the effectiveness of Risley High.

The subtheme "Facilitating parenting workshops (Parent University)" highlighted one of the methods used to engage, as well as to support and teach parents. Risley High engaged and supported parents by not only speaking to them about their child, but also providing parenting workshops and parenting discussion groups. Robertson & Symons (2003) found that school quality alone was not a good predictor for academic attainment. They found that parental values and qualities also had strong effects on academic outcomes. The parents in the present study spoke about Risley High helping them to understand education and the education system. It also helped them grow and develop their skills as a parent and gave them practical strategies of how they could support their sons with their learning. There is evidence to suggest that parents showing interest in the academic achievements of their children can have positive outcomes (Robinson, 2013; Robertson and Symons, 2003). The findings of the present study suggest that Risley High was able to demonstrate to the parents how important their explicit support and interest was. They taught the parents effective strategies, such as study techniques, that they were then able to use

with their sons. Most importantly, the parents felt that they had more understanding of their sons' needs and effective ways of supporting them.

The subtheme "Providing advisory services" was illustrative of the profound role Risley High played in advising parents on education legislation when they were dealing with complex difficulties with mainstream schools, such as exclusions. This was not present in existing literature on BSSs. Therefore, it could be that this service is unique to Risley High. The parents voiced that they often felt that the mainstream school was trying to find ways to exclude their sons. Risley High staff perceived their role to be not only advising parents, but also advocating for the pupil's rights, within an educational system that staff regarded as unfair and unjust.

#### **5.2.4 RQ4: What do pupils, parents and staff recognise as the most beneficial features of the school?**

From the data it emerged that one of the aspects of Risley High that participants felt was most beneficial was related to the theme of "Strong Sense of Belonging". As described in Chapter 2, the concept of belonging relates to feelings of being connected to a group/community. Kapoor and Tomar (2016) found that a sense of connectedness can have positive impacts on emotional well-being. For example, they found that pupils scores on school membership highly correlated with their self-management skills. This supports the findings of the present study and suggests that schools should be following a curriculum that celebrates diversity and makes all CYP, regardless of ethnic background, feel welcomed and valued. However, the high prominence of sense of belonging within the data was unexpected. It suggests that positive personal relationships between Risley High staff, pupils and family was central to the effectiveness of the school. This also relates to B-PPCT proximal processes that will be discussed later in the chapter.

The subtheme "The facilitation of friendships" highlighted the fact that relationships were formed within groups (e.g. pupils were able to form close friendships with other pupils). The pupils spoke about forming strong

relationships with other pupils who had attended Risley High and seemed to feel that they shared similar principles and aspirations with them. There has been some research which has suggested that peers can influence one another's educational values and aspirations (Robertson & Symons, 2003; Robinson, 2013). The findings of the present study suggest that this may also have a positive impact on sense of belonging. Risley High was an environment where everyone was expected to be striving towards reaching their best potential. Thus, knowing that their peers were also trying to be the best they could be may have meant they shared core values, and this then reinforced their bonds. The importance of this is that BSSs may be a space where Black boys feel supported in building peer relationships and are taught how to value and respect one another, hence the feeling of "family" that emerged within the subtheme "we're a family... forever". This was something that the participants were not experiencing in their mainstream schools. Therefore, the findings of this study provide an evidence base that EPs can use to advise schools on ways to facilitate sense of belonging. This will be described in greater detail in the subsection "Professional Implications of the Research".

Another aspect of Risley High that participants found most beneficial was captured in the theme "Empowerment through unique opportunities". The subthemes "Prestigious boarding school goals" and "Exposure to national and international travel" illustrated how attending Risley High meant that they were able to attend private schooling. This opportunity empowered them and gave them the vision of a goal that they could aim for. The main reason it had such an impact was because this opportunity was for pupils who demonstrated high academic ability, but their household's annual income was less than £40,000. Therefore, the pupils would not otherwise have had the financial ability to pay for boarding school or afford to travel to some of the destinations, even if it was something that they desired. These types of opportunities were not reported in the previous literature on BSSs.

The subthemes "Benefits of a holistic curriculum" and "The nurturing of growth and maturity" encapsulated how the holistic approach to education directly impacted on the pupils' identities as learners. They were able to feel more confident about their academic abilities. This included aspects such as being



more able to maintain focus and concentration during lessons. Parents felt strongly that if their sons had not received support from Risley High, then they would not have been able to attain the academic achievement they did at GCSE level. This seemed to be because the pupils began to have more belief in their identity as a person who could achieve academic success. Furthermore, they began to see the value of education and why it was important. This was probably directly impacted on by Risley High staff having high expectations. This relates to the finding of Kapoor & Tomar (2016) who found that when CYP feel a sense of belonging, they are more likely to develop healthier relationships with themselves as well as with others.

### **5.3 Research findings in relation to Critical Race Theory- Community Cultural Wealth**

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Yasso (2005) indicated that communities of colour can provide students with CRT-CCW. The findings of the current study correlate with the theoretical claims of this theory in several ways.

#### **5.3.1 Aspirational capital**

Previous literature and empirical data portrayed young Black boys as underachievers at GCSE level. However, the focus of the present study was on Black boys who were performing well at GCSE level. It demonstrates how Risley High provided pupils with a nurturing environment that was permeated with cultural wealth which impacted on their identities as learners, despite their challenges. In relation to CRT-CCW, it could be argued that the teachings they received at Risley High served as a form of “Aspirational capital”. The challenges that they faced within their mainstream school put them at risk of school exclusion. Some of the parents spoke about the hopelessness they felt when their son had been permanently excluded from their mainstream school. However, Risley High supported the pupils and their families, facilitating an environment that helped them to elevate their goals and ambitions.

### **5.3.2 Familial capital**

The pedagogy and ethos of Risley High is centred on developing and providing students with an educational programme that focuses upon developing their leadership skills. This was encapsulated within the subtheme “The makings of a leader”. The Risley High curriculum was also underpinned by the acknowledgment that there is a rich historical cultural identity of the Black community. This is something that is not often incorporated into mainstream educational curriculums (Mirza, 2009). Thus, the Risley High curriculum is demonstrative of “familial capital”. They used their knowledge of the community’s needs to empower Black pupils within the community itself. A part of this was by offering them opportunities to experience things that they would not otherwise have. This was captured in the theme “Pupil empowerment through unique opportunities”. Schools in the UK are currently encouraged to acknowledge “Black History Month”, however this could be interpreted as contributing to the marginalisation of Black pupils. The fact that it is acknowledged in a separate month, rather than throughout the school year is tokenistic and is demonstrative of inequalities within the school curriculum itself.

### **5.3.3 Social capital**

Risley High demonstrated a novel approach to supporting the educational and social development of young Black boys who had been labelled as having challenging behaviour by staff of their mainstream setting. This BSS was organised and staffed by Black staff, with the exception of one staff member. The findings of the present study found that Risley High staff were able to apply an array of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts that enabled them to create a learning environment in which the pupils were able to thrive in. This is illustrative of CRT-CCW’s version of “social capital” in that they were able to use the skills and knowledge of people from the same ethnic group facilitate a learning environment that aided the development of its pupils.

#### **5.3.4 Navigational capital**

By exposing the pupils to various educational settings, working industries and developing their team building skills, Risley High was able to demonstrate to pupils the importance of social mobility. This enabled the pupils to develop positive perceptions about their ability to strive in different environments. For example, as a result of attending Risley High, many of the pupils spoke about meeting with millionaires and doing work experience in high profile companies. They learned that some of these millionaires and company owners had come from low income background and had faced challenges in school. Thus, Risley High used “navigational capital” to empower the pupils and enabled them to perceive themselves in positions of wealth by navigating through social institutions.

#### **5.3.5 Resistant capital**

Risley high provided their students with opportunities to access some experiences that would otherwise not be available to them. This included opportunities to attend some of the most reputational boarding schools in the country. They also took them travelling and exposed them to various working industries. It could be argued that this was a form of “resistant capital” as they encouraged the pupils to strive for things that were not easily available to them, not only because of their race but also because of their economic status.

In summary, concerns around Black boys and their educational outcomes at GCSE level are well documented (Byfield, 2008; Coard, 1971; Demie & McLean, 2015; DfE 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017). However, this study indicates that with the correct environment and educational tools they are able to excel in their academic achievements. CRT-CCW demonstrates how Risley High offers an educational environment that is free from racial prejudices and a place where they can celebrate their racial identity. Previous literature has also found one of the key features of BSS's to be that they help pupils to develop cultural self-awareness (Andrews, 2016; Bigford, 2015). Thus, CRT-CCW

helped to identify ways of promoting racialised identity that can be used with not only Black pupils, but any minority ethnic groups within the UK.

#### **5.4 Research findings in relation to Bioecological-Process, Person, Context, Time model**

After data analysis, the B-PPCT model presented a conceptual framework of how the BSS supported the different systems over time. In the participants' narrative of the experience of Risley High, it was apparent that the school's processes involved working in the different systems of the B-PPCT model. Although Risley High itself is positioned in the microsystem, there were elements of the Risley High curriculum and the participants' experiences that involved all the systems. Further, it provided a framework for making sense of the context for children, from the immediate to the impact of community and culture.

##### **5.4.1 Individual level**

The findings of this study relate to the individual level as there were aspects of BSS that specifically targeted the pupils' understanding of themselves and their behaviour. For example, the participants spoke of how pupils developed a greater sense of racialised identity and the positive impact this had on the way they viewed themselves. The "Person" component of the B-PPCT model describe resourceful characteristics as those that relate to mental, emotional and social resources, such as access to educational opportunities that suit their individualised needs. The findings of this research indicate that Risley High was able to help develop pupils' resourceful characteristics at the individual level. Subthemes "The promotion of racialised self-identity", "Pupils accessing 1:1 mentoring and support" and "Clear and unambiguous boundaries and consequences" were identified as relating to the pupils at an individual level. This was achieved through various strategies such as teaching about Black history, finding positive role models and mentors for 1:1 work and having clear boundaries so that the pupils knew what was expected of them.

### **5.4.2 Microsystem**

This study demonstrated how Risley High performed as a Microsystem in the pupils' lives. The awareness and acknowledgement of the proximal processes were central to the effectiveness of Risley High. Thus, the interactions that took place within the microsystem influenced the development of the pupils; Risley High staff demonstrated that they were aware of it. They understood the needs of their pupils and family's. They understood that being labelled with challenging behaviour as well as being Black and being a boy made them extremely vulnerable within mainstream schools. Risley High therefore, used their position to not only focus support on the pupils, but also on the parents. The proximal processes that the pupils encountered at their mainstream school seemed sometimes to be detrimental to how they perceived themselves. For example, Chapter 4 illustrated how Kojo felt like he was being shut down by the teachers in his mainstream school. However, Risley High used their expertise to develop their pupils' self-esteem. The subthemes "The facilitation of friendships", "Facilitating parenting workshops (Parent University)", "Team building tasks" and "We're a family... forever" relate to the Microsystem.

### **5.4.3 Mesosystem**

The BSS interacted with other microsystems including their parents and school. A part of this was attending mainstream settings with the parents (for meetings) as well as offering them advice on educational legislation. Thus, Risley High played a role in facilitating various interactions between the pupils, their families and their mainstream settings. Further, Risley high did not only facilitate interactions, it empowered the people within the interaction. They achieved this by providing them with emotional support and ensuring that each person had opportunities to have a voice. This was for pupils as well as parents. Interestingly, the "voice of the child" and "the voice of the family" are concepts that are central to government legislation e.g. DfE & DoH SEND COP (2015) and The Disability Act (2010) as mention in Chapter 1.

Two of the most benefiting interactions that took place in the Microsystem was not only between Risley High and the pupil or also Risley High and the parents.

Risley High also interacted with mainstreams school as an advocate for the pupils on behalf of parents. The subthemes “Fractious relationships with the mainstream setting”, “Transparency between setting and the pupils’ families” and “Providing advisory services” were identified as relating to the Mesosystem.

#### **5.4.4 Macrosystem**

Risley High’s curriculum was used as a tool of empowerment not only academically, but culturally and socio-economically. The pupils were exposed to positive historical facts about their ethnicity. They were also exposed to opportunities that were typically only experienced by people who were of a higher “class” to themselves. This links in with the theory of intersectionality that was described in Chapter 2. Thus, the Black boys were not only at a disadvantage because of their race and gender, but also because of their economic status. The BSS understood their needs well and offered them opportunities accordingly. Hence Risley High was able to use their cultural knowledge and educational stance challenge race, gender and “class” inequalities. This had a positive impact as the Macrosystem level and provides an argument for why BSSs are currently needed. The subthemes that related to closely to the Macrosystem were “Benefits of a holistic curriculum”, “Affirmations and elevated aspirations”, “Explicit high expectations for staff, pupils and parents to be their best”, “Prestigious boarding school goals” and “Various industry work experiences”.

#### **5.4.5 Chronosystem**

The findings of this study suggest that Risley High taught pupils how to develop their leadership skills over time. This worked alongside nurturing their maturity. “The nurturing of growth and maturity”, “The makings of a leader” and “Exposure to national and international travel” were the subthemes that related to this level.

By using the B-PPCT model as a lens to understand the present study’s findings, it highlighted the importance of proximal processes within the

microsystem. As an exploratory piece of research, the B-PPCT model was useful as a conceptual framework for shedding light on multiple layers of the impact the participants felt Risley High had. It demonstrated how attending Risley High impacted on the participants from the Individual Level through to the chronosystem. B-PPCT, although accepted that concepts such as race and power could impact on an individual, it did not break this down in terms of how and why. It also did not explain how people belonging to a minority group living within a dominant culture can experience prejudices and inequalities. Therefore, the usefulness of using it as a lens alongside CRT-CCW will be explained in the following sub section.

### **5.5 Bioecological-Process, Person, Context Time model in conjunction with Critical Race Theory Community Cultural Wealth**

The B-PPCT model was used along with CRT-CCW to explore the psychological underpinnings of the participants experiences of Risley High. CRT-CCW was useful in that it offered a racialised lens through which the context of the phenomena being investigated could be understood. It acknowledged the impact of Race and power and provided a historical context regarding why BSS's were initially introduced by the Black community in the UK. It also offers some explanation as to why Black boys underachieve at GCSE level and how BSSs may be a tool that can empower them. Applying the lens of CRT-CCW alongside the B-PPCT model demonstrates how the impact of racist ideologies that are embedded within the chrono- and macro- systems can filter down to the micro- and Individual Level systems. CRT-CCW demonstrates how marginalised minority ethnic communities can use various cultural capitals within the Microsystem to empower themselves.

The findings of the present study indicate that more racialised learning needs to take place within schools. It also demonstrates that Black boys are vulnerable within the education system, not only because of "within child" SEMH needs, but because of the marginalisation and racism they experience in the systems around them. Essentially, the Microsystem is an important place where CRT-CCW can be used to empower Black boys. However, unless inequalities are

tackled at the Macrosystem level, these educational inequalities will continue to prevail.

## **5.6 Professional Implications of the Research**

### **5.6.1 Implications for Educational Psychologists**

EPs have an integral role in supporting provisions to understand the individual needs of each child. They are well placed to help schools and educational practitioners understand the needs of this group. With more emphasis on evidence-based practice, they can use research to promote good practice and inclusion within mainstream settings. This kind of systemic work could be imperative with regards to challenging the negative discourse that has surrounded Black boys and their academic attainment for the past few decades (Byfield, 2008; Coard, 1971; Demie & McLean, 2015).

EPs have the responsibility of analysing, critically evaluating and synthesising information from various components of the individual's life in order to advise provisions of how best to meet their needs. Increasingly, they are also encouraged to ascertain the "voice of the child" themselves. Thus, EPs are not just clinicians; they are also advocating for CYP and can act as a bridge between them and their relationship with their educational provision. Therefore, they are well placed to encourage schools to implement some of the supportive factors that this study found to be useful to pupils and parents. B-PPCT can be used to explore the systems around CYP and give deeper understanding to the context of their experiences and behaviours. This can also include factors such as institutional racism and cultural biases.

As highlighted in the introduction, government data also indicates the fact that Black boys are at high risk of experiencing school exclusions. Additionally, the introduction also highlighted that the most common cause for school exclusions are of "persistent disruptive behaviour". Yet, current legislation clearly states that behaviour can be indicator for SEMH needs. EPs can use planning



meetings with SENCOs to identify whether there are any pupils of this profile who may benefit from EP support. They should be identified as early as possible to reduce the risk of them being excluded. Yet there are challenges to the EP profession that have practical implications on the ways in which EPs work. Government incentives to reduce LA budgets have resulted in many Educational Psychology Services (EPSs) having to adopt a business-based model termed “traded services” in order to be sustainable (AEP, 2011). This means that schools must directly pay for EP time. However, schools are finding that the needs of their children supersede the budget they can afford to allocate to EP time. As a result, research has questioned whether traded services are an ethical substitution for EPSs (Islam, 2013). Using this model, EP time is allocated to schools who have “bought it”, not necessarily where there is the greatest need. Although formal government legislations (i.e. The SEND Code of Practice, 2015; The Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act, 2001; The Equalities Act, 2010; The Children and Families Act, 2014) place importance on supporting CYP with SEND, the budget to ensure this is possible seems unparalleled (Islam, 2013). Therefore, EPs must be innovative in the way they work. The B-PPCT model allows EPs to work with systems to facilitate change, not just with individuals at the “Individual Level”.

The findings of this study further suggest that for some groups, a sense of racialised identity and a sense of belonging plays an important role in pupils feeling like a valued member of a community. Therefore, EPs can play a role in informing provisions about the needs of this group as well as developing strategies and interventions that may have positive impacts on them. EPs can develop and deliver training on the benefits of having a culturally inclusive curriculum. They can encourage schools to embrace a pedagogy that is rich and diverse in the contributions that various ethnic groups have made both nationally and internationally. When working with CYP, they can also use Personal Construct Psychology tools to explore their sense of belonging. This will be useful in identifying areas where the school can offer more support for that individual.

EPs are well placed to work with educational provisions and their staff to help them reflect on their practice. For example, they can offer supervision or can

facilitate peer consultation groups to help them question some of their perspectives and narratives about specific children. They can also do this through the consultation process. In addition, EPs are well placed to help schools use their school data to identify and monitor who their vulnerable children are and if there are any patterns that are giving cause for concern e.g. particular exclusion patterns or underachievement patterns.

EPs are well placed to encourage schools to implement strategies such as Sue Roffrey's ASPIRE framework, as described in the literature review. Such frameworks offer practical guidance on how schools can support both teachers and pupils with social and emotional learning. For example, the "I" in ASPIRE refers to inclusion and suggests that inclusivity can be promoted within schools by celebrating differences (i.e. culture, religion, sexual orientation) as well as acknowledging the shared experiences of all humans. EPs can help schools develop ways of implementing activities to facilitate this with schools as well as deliver training on it.

The BPS states that it is essential that Psychologists recognise the ethnic differences that exist among BAME communities (BPS, 2017b). This is embedded within both the BPS and The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) assessment of Developing Professional Skills and Competencies (e.g. Diversity and Cultural Differences). The current studies provided professionals with useful information on how to improve the educational experiences and outcomes for not only Black boys, but also other vulnerable groups of CYP. It may also be useful for EP training providers to introduce culturally diverse perspectives on psychology and development within teaching pedagogy.

### **5.6.2 Implications for mainstream educational provisions**

It is important for schools as well as other educational provisions to create a learning environment where CYP feel wanted and valued. One way this can be achieved by following a culturally rich curriculum that sheds history of various cultures. Thus, the pedagogy of educational provisions can help to develop pupils' ethnic identities and social class. Black history should be a central

feature of the curriculum at all key stages, recognising the contributions that people of colour have made historically. Thus, Black History should be embedded within an inclusive curriculum and used to promote positive identities for ethnic minority pupils.

The findings of this research indicate that some pupils may find it difficult to feel a sense of belonging in school. Schools can develop pupils' sense of belonging by creating strong bonds between peers. They could facilitate peer bonding with team building activities. Pupils may need support in learning how to manage peer relationships as well as how to view each other as a valued team member. Schools are places where CYP learn about covert social rules and where they learn about their identity. The findings of this study demonstrated that having a sense of racialised identity impacted the pupils in a positive way. Schools should ensure that their pedagogy is inclusive of diverse cultural differences and that these differences are celebrated.

The findings of this study suggest that parent involvement is central to supporting Black boys who have been labelled with challenging behaviour. It is imperative that schools create opportunities for home-school liaisons that are not just based on "negative" behaviour.

### **5.6.3 Implications for Black Supplementary Schools**

The findings of this study indicate that BSSs can play a significant role in supporting Black boys labelled with challenging behaviour and their parents. The findings indicate that Risley High provided a safe space for families to engage in multifaceted learning that was culturally rich. BSSs should implement strategies to engage parents as well as pupils. This may include having parents' evenings and discussion groups. This may have a deeper impact on CYPs Microsystem as well as facilitate a sense of community.

Currently there is limited knowledge about BSSs in the UK. The BSS has been referred to as a socio-political movement and advocates of educational change to eradicate inequalities. It is important that BSSs seek to get themselves

documented and make their presence known in the UK so that the movement can have more of a voice.

## **5.7 Contribution to Knowledge**

### **5.7.1 Contribution to Academic Knowledge**

Through exploring what participants felt were the key features of Risley High, this study was able to outline how the ecological systems interacted with each other. CRT-CCW provided a conceptual theory that contributed to the understanding of the context of the BSS and the experiences of their pupils through a racialised lens. Thus, the present study was able to offer a novel insight into the role a BSS played in supporting Black boys at GCSE level. Consequently, it was able to address gaps in the literature on how BSSs supported Black boys specifically and the methods they used to engage parents.

By choosing critical realism as an epistemology I was able to give a voice to the participants who had not been given a voice before. Additionally, the focus of my research meant that the study was able to offer a positive perspective on the academic achievement of this vulnerable group. Thus, the findings of this study contribute to the advancement of academic knowledge in this area, given that there is a dearth of literature on BSSs and the role they play in supporting Black boys.

### **5.7.2 Contribution to Professional Knowledge**

This study is beneficial to the field of Educational Psychology in that it illuminates some of the strategies that can be used to support Black boys to promote positive self-identity. This complements BPS and HCPC governance of eliciting ways to support vulnerable groups, particularly because the findings contribute to maintaining an evidence base for working with such groups which is a core element of EP professional practice. As highlighted in Chapter 1 the academic outcomes of Black boys at GCSE level are extremely concerning and

have been so for several decades (Byfield, 2008; Coard, 1971; Demie & McLean, 2015). Yet there is limited research that investigates how this group can be supported to succeed in education. Therefore, the findings of this study add to the existing knowledge base onto how this vulnerable group can be supported.

Sense of belonging is a concept that is thought to have significant implications for schools at the present time. In January 2019 the Division of Educational and Child Psychology held a national conference centred on sense of belonging. Additionally, In May 2019 the DfE “Timpson review of school exclusion” was released. This document outlined that EPs had a role to play in reducing the amount of school exclusions, particularly for overrepresented groups, Therefore, this research is extremely relevant to current discussions within the profession.

## **5.8 Strength and Limitations of the Research Study**

### **5.8.1 Strengths**

This study used a single case study to shed light on the role a BSS plays in supporting Black boys with challenging behaviour at GCSE level. Existing literature exploring the role that BSSs undertake in supporting Black pupils is extremely limited. Further, there was a gap in the research as to how BSSs supported pupils who were identified by their mainstream setting as having “challenging behaviour”, but who were performing well academically at GCSE level.

I held a member checking session with some of the participants before finalising the results. This provided an element of triangulation and increased the validity of this study’s findings.

Throughout the research process I was able to attend conferences centred on raising the academic achievements of Black children in the UK. Speakers at these conferences consisted of EPs, academics, headteachers and school

family liaison officers. Attending these conferences gave me deeper insight into the contemporary issues relating to Black children and education. I was also able to arrange discussion meetings with several experts in the field of education studies, race studies and qualitative research methods. From these meetings I was able to build a deepened understanding of the research's implications for different professionals.

### **5.8.2 Limitations**

The recruitment process of the present study consisted of advertising within Risley High. This meant that I did not have a chance to gain the perspectives of pupils, staff or parents who had previous experience of the setting but were no longer a part of it. Also, self-selection can be viewed as a limitation as the researcher is unable to gain the views of those who choose not to participate.

This single case study is specific to a BSS within a London borough that has one of the highest BAME communities in the country. Caution needs to be applied in generalising the findings to other areas of the UK where the demographics are significantly different. Furthermore, Risley High is a registered charity and staff who work for the school are employed and paid a salary. The school receives funding from various supporters although it does not receive any financial support from public funds. Literature suggests that this is quite a unique case as most BSSs are run on a voluntary basis. Additionally, many BSSs have closed, due to issues with funding. Risley High's financial position and charity status gives them access to a wider range of funding than other BSSs thus further limiting the generalisability of the study.

This research did not include the perspective of mainstream schools. From the findings it emerged that pupils and parents struggled to maintain positive relationships with the mainstream settings. Including the perspectives of the mainstreams school would have therefore offered a deepened understanding of the impact of Risley High. However, this was not part of the research design of the present study because this study was focussed on how the BSS was experienced by those who were directly a part of it.

### **5.9 Suggestions for future research**

Future research could employ a multi case study design to explore the role different BSSs play in supporting Black boys with challenging behaviour at GCSE level. This would be effective in helping to establish whether there are any similarities or differences in the way they support their pupils and their families.

A study that employed an ethnographic method would be particularly useful as it would enable the researcher to immerse in the context of the school. This might give deeper insight into the culture, values and ethos of Risley High. The researcher could also use observation data to provide some triangulation to the results, making them more reliable.

Future research might consider replicating the study with Black boys with challenging behaviour at GCSE level who were not expected to gain the national average of 5 GCSE's. This would help to ascertain how those pupils and their families perceive the role of Risley High.

Future research may consider broadening the recruitment strategies such as advertising on social media forums and community notices boards, to give more people the opportunity to take part in the study. This may result in accessing individuals who had stopped attending the setting due to negative experiences and offer different perspectives.

### **5.10 Comprehensive personal reflections of the research process**

I have chosen to include this section within my thesis to offer a deepened sense of personalisation and reflection in relation to the research process. The journey has been an invaluable learning experience. I feel that my skills and competency as a researcher and a practitioner psychologist have grown immensely.

I felt enthusiastic about this study and it was important for me to produce a high-quality piece of research. My passion and dedication towards the study was sustained throughout the entire process. After hearing the narratives of the participants, I felt touched that they had shared their personal experiences with me. For some participants this included giving their accounts on aspects of their lives that they had found quite difficult and challenging. For example, one parent recalled how saddened she was when her son was first permanently excluded from school at the age of five due to his “challenging behaviour”. She voiced how she discovered Risley High after that incident and how the school had impacted on her family’s life in such a positive way. All the participants were inspiring; I feel proud to have been able to engage with them and uncover some of the mechanisms of Risley High. Moving forward, giving a voice to the Risley High staff, pupils and parents and being able to disseminate the valuable research findings to other professionals will be extremely gratifying.

During the research process I was able to meet and discuss my research with some Professors and Doctors in the field of areas including Education, Race studies, Sociology, Psychology and Research Methods. The reaction they had when hearing about my research was incredibly encouraging. They all displayed such interest and enthusiasm in the study. I feel particularly proud and honoured to be undertaking research that was of interest to different professionals and schools of academia.

This research has also led me to a deeper understanding of some of the psychological theories that underpin child development. This has had a direct impact on my own professional values and practice. I intend to use the knowledge I have gained to help schools support children with challenging behaviour and implement effective strategies and interventions for them and their families where possible.

Upon reflection I feel that the overall research process has been a delightful experience despite the many challenges that I endured along the way. One factor I found most difficult was the lack of literature pertaining to the role BSS’s play in the Black community. I also felt saddened by the disproportionate rates of school exclusions for Black boys nationally and how this impacted on them in



adult life. I hope that the findings of this study can contribute towards promoting more positive outcomes for this group.

### **5. 11 Conclusion**

This chapter has offered an analytical discussion to the present studies research findings. The present study aimed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge within the field of Educational Psychology and the literature around BSSs. In conclusion, there were several findings that could be useful to EPs, Mainstream Educational Provisions and BSSs. Most of the themes that emerged from the data were supported by previous literature. It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the limited body of knowledge that currently exists and encourage more research into BSSs. It is also hoped that the findings of the current study will prove useful for educational provisions and educators to help reduce the gaps that exist in academic achievements at GCSE level. This thesis provides evidence that some Black boys, despite being labelled with challenging behaviour, are capable of performing well at GCSE level, thus defying the statistical odds. It also demonstrates that BSSs are places of empowerment within the Black community. This research can be used to inform good practice as well as raise understanding around the needs of this group. It also may encourage professionals to think of behaviour as a systemic issue, not a “within child” problem.

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## Appendix 1: Confirmation of data protection registration

Dear Laura

Thank you for the application for Data Protection Registration.

If you choose to rely on consent as the legal basis for processing you should always consider whether the individual child has the competence to understand and consent for themselves, and take steps to verify parental consent where appropriate.

Note that where a child is competent enough to consent for themselves to a particular research intervention, it is still good practice to involve their family as part of the decision-making process unless the child specifically asks the researcher not to do so.

Where children are in a potentially vulnerable or within a dependent position it is important to ensure that they have the time and opportunity to discuss their choice to participate with a trusted adult.

You should also ensure that the information is targeted at the relevant age group. For example, you should make a distinction between addressing a 10 year-old and addressing a 16 year-old child. If your target audience covers a wide age range, consider providing different versions of your notice.

Information notices for children must be presented in a way that is appealing to a young audience. Graphics and videos that will attract and interest children may be appropriate. In an online context, you should consider the use of dashboards, layers, just-in-time notices, icons and symbols.

With this in mind, I am pleased to confirm that this project is covered by the UCL Data Protection Registration, reference No Z6364106/2018/04/33 social research.

It is rarely necessary to store electronic personal data on portable devices such as laptops, USB flash drives, portable hard drives, CDs, DVDs, or any computer not owned by UCL. Similarly, manual personal data should not be regularly removed from UCL premises. In the case of electronic data, to minimise the risk of loss or disclosure, a secure remote connection to UCL should be used wherever possible.

Downloading personal data on to portable devices or taking manual personal data off-site must be authorised in writing by the Data Owner, who must explain and justify the operational need in relation to the volume and sensitivity of the data. The data must be strongly encrypted. Users should only store the data necessary for their immediate needs and should remove the data as soon as possible. To avoid loss of encrypted data, or in case of failure of the encryption software, an unencrypted copy of the data must be held in a secure environment. The Information Security Group guidance on [encryption](#) should be followed:

Manual personal data and portable electronic devices should be stored in locked units, and they should not be left on desks overnight or in view of third parties.

In order to comply with the fifth data protection principle personal data should be [securely destroyed](#) when no longer required, with consideration for the format of the data. The Information Security Group guidance should be followed.

Personal data must not be disclosed unlawfully to any third party. Transfers of personal data to third parties must be authorised in writing by the data owner and protected by adequate contractual provisions or data processor agreements, agree with UCL's notification and must use safe transport mechanisms.

There are cases where anonymised data needs to be treated as confidential, so please ensure that you comply with any further restrictions contained within contracts or agreements relating to the data.

If not already done so, please provide copies of any information sheets and consent forms that you are using.

When all essential documents are ready to archive, contact the UCL Records Office by email [records.office@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:records.office@ucl.ac.uk) to arrange ongoing secure storage of your research records unless you have made specific alternative arrangements with your department, or funder.

## Appendix 2: Confirmation of ethical approval

Dear Laura,

I am pleased to inform you that your research project '**Exploring the role a supplementary school plays in raising the academic attainment of Black boys with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs at GCSE level**' for the year 2 research project on the Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology, has been given ethical approval. If you have any further queries in this regard, please contact your supervisor.

Please note that if your proposed study and methodology changes markedly from what you have outlined in your ethics review application, you may need to complete and submit a new or revised application. Should this possibility arise, please discuss with your supervisor in the first instance before you proceed with a new/revised application.

Your ethical approval form has been logged and will be uploaded to the UCL IOE database.

Good luck with your data collection.

Kind regards,

Lee

**Lee Rensimer**

**Programme Administrator**

Doctorate in Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology

UCL Institute of Education



[Redacted phone number]



[Redacted email address]

## Appendix 3: Research information sheet for pupils

Institute of Education



### Young Person Information Sheet

**Research Project Title:**  
**Exploring the role a black supplementary school plays in supporting black boys labelled with "challenging behaviour" at GCSE level**



#### Who am I?

Hi, my name is Laura Ricketts. I am currently a university student who is training to be an Educational Psychologist. Educational Psychologists are people who work with children and young people to help find out what helps them with their learning.

#### Why am I doing this research project?

I would like to hear your thoughts and opinions on your experiences of attending [redacted]. I know you are either about to take your GCSE's or have recently taken them and I would like to hear about how attending [redacted] has helped you in school, if at all. The information you give me will then be written up in a report and will help me to understand how attending [redacted] impacted on your learning.

#### What will happen if you choose to take part?

I would like to visit you at [redacted] and invite you to take part in an interview. The interview will last about 45 – 60 minutes. I would like you to feel comfortable when talking to me so if you would like one member of the [redacted] staff to be present at the interview then that will be fine. I will use an audio recorder to tape the interview. However, the interview will be anonymised. This means that your name or any personal details will not be mentioned in the final report and all the information you share will be confidential.

#### What type of questions will I ask you?

I will ask you questions like

- How did you come to start attending [redacted]?
- What kind of activities have you taken part in at [redacted]?
- How do you feel attending [redacted] has helped you with your GCSE's?
- How do you feel the [redacted] has impacted on how you think of yourself as a student?

I will ask similar questions all relating to your experience of attending [redacted].

What you tell me will be confidential, so it is private between me and you (and one of the [redacted] staff if you choose to have them at the interview). I will only have to

share information with your supplementary school safeguarding lead and my supervisor if you tell me something that means you or someone else is in danger.

#### What do you need to do if you want to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether or not you choose to take part. However, if you do choose to be involved then I hope you will find the experience beneficial. If you would like to take part, you can let one of the [redacted] staff members know and they will inform me. Alternatively you can email me directly [redacted] to let me know that you would like to take part. You can also email me if you have any further questions. There is a consent form for you to fill out which I will give you to complete once I have been notified of your interest to take part. The deadline for taking part in the project is 31st July 2018.

#### What do you need to do if you don't want to take part?

If you do not want to take part in the research, then that is also perfectly fine. Participation in the study is totally voluntary. Also, if you choose to take part, but later change your mind, then this is also ok. You can opt out at any time, even once the interview has started. The main thing is that you feel comfortable and safe to talk with me.

#### Will you be notified of what I find?

Once I have completed all my interviews, I will write it up in a report. I will then send you a summary of my findings for you to read. The research will be complete in July 2019. Please be assured that your name and any personal details will not be in the report.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email me at [redacted]

Thank you for your time ☺

## Appendix 4: Participant demographic form

Name		Date	
<b>Please complete the relevant section</b>			
<b>I am a X school pupil</b>			
What is your gender?	Male	Female	Other
Do you identify as a person of Black heritage?	Yes	No	Unsure
Please state your ethnic group:			
What is your age group?	15 and under	16 or 17	18 and older
Have you attended X supplementary school for 12 months or more	Yes	No	Unsure
Are you predicted or have recently gained at least five level 4's at GCSE level?	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you have any disabilities or Special Educational Needs?	No	Yes (please give details)	
<b>I am the parent of a pupil at X school</b>			
What is your gender?	Male	Female	Other
Do you identify your son as a person of Black heritage?	Yes	No	Unsure
Please state your ethnic group:			
Is your son aged	15 and under	16 or 17	18 and older
Has your son attended X supplementary school for 12 months or more	Yes	No	Unsure
Is your son predicted or has he recently gained at least five level 4's at GCSE level?	Yes	No	Unsure
Does your son have any disabilities or Special Educational Needs?	No	Yes (please give details)	
Do you have any disabilities or Special Educational Needs?	No	Yes (please give details)	
Are you able to speak fluent English?	Yes	No	Unsure
<b>X supplementary school staff</b>			
Please state your ethnicity:			
Have you worked at X supplementary school for at least 12?	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you have experience of supporting pupils within the setting?	Yes	No	
Are you able to speak English?	Yes	No	

## Appendix 5: Parent informed consent form

Institute of Education



### Parents Consent Form

**Research Project Title:**  
**Exploring the role a black supplementary school plays in supporting black boys labelled with “challenging behaviour” at GCSE level**  
**April 2018 - July 2019**

If you are happy to participate, please complete this consent form and return to [redacted] by 31st July 2018

	Yes	No
I have read and understood the information leaflet about the research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am happy to be interviewed which will be audio recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that if any of my words are used in reports or presentations that no one will know it is me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time, and that if I choose to do this, any data contributed will not be used	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that I can contact Laura Ricketts at any time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that the results will <u>be</u> shared me when the research is finished.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

.....  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent of (your child's name) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

UCL Institute of Education  
20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL



## Appendix 6: Pilot pupil interview schedule

Young Person interview schedule		
Item No*	Question	Follow up/ prompt
1.	Can you tell me a bit about your experiences of schools before you started attending XXXXXX?	What was Primary/ Secondary school like?
2.	Before attending XXXXXX, who were the adults that supported you with your learning?	
3.	How was it that you came to start attending XXXXXX?	
4.	Can you tell me a bit about your initial experiences of starting at XXXXXX?	
5.	Can you tell me about the type of activities that you do at XXXXXX?	
6.	What kind of academic skills do you think XXXXXX helped you to develop?	
7.	What kind of social skills do you think XXXXXX has helped you to develop?	
8.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with the other students who attend XXXXXX?	
9.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with XXXXXX staff?	
10.	What ways do you feel XXXXXX staff support you and is this different to the staff in your mainstream school?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
11.	Have you ever felt that you were expected to act in a certain way in your mainstream school?	If yes, can you give me an example please
12.	Do you feel you have ever been are stereotyped or judged?	If yes, could you tell me how/ when/ by who?
13.	How has XXXXXX helped you to grow and develop as a young male?	
14.	How has XXXXXX helped you grow and develop a Black person?	
15.	Can you tell me a bit about how XXXXXX helped you prepare for your GCSE's?	
16.	Can you tell me how you feel about your GCSE results/ predicted grades?	
17.	How has XXXXXX helped you to grow and develop as a student?	
18.	How has XXXXXX helped you to see your role as a member of your community?	
19.	How has XXXXXX has helped with your academic attainments?	
20.	Has attending XXXXXX offered you any unique opportunities?	
21.	Can you tell me about the relationship between XXXXXX and your parents?	
22.	Do you think other Black boys could benefit from attending XXXXXX?	
23.	Is there anything else you would like to tell me about attending XXXXXX that you think might be beneficial to the research?	If yes, could you explain a bit more please

## Appendix 7: Pupil interview schedule for main data collection

Young Person interview schedule		
<p><b>INTRO:</b> I'll begin by introducing myself, my name is Laura and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the Institute of Education. Educational Psychologists are people who are interested in how children and young people learn and seek to find ways to facilitate this.</p> <p>I would like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. I greatly appreciate your contribution to this project. Before we begin, can I first ask that you read through the information sheet and sign the consent form in front of you.</p> <p>I would also like to make sure that you understand that you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, if after the interview has commenced. <b>(check that participant understands)</b></p> <p>Thank you. Do you have any questions you would like to ask me at this point?</p> <p>The questions in this interview aim to explore your experiences of XXXXXX. I would like to make sure that you understand that this interview will be recorded as part of the data analysis process. This is because people often say very helpful things during these interviews, and I can't write fast enough to get them all down. Your name will not be used at all in the findings and everything you say will be confidential. This means that no one will be informed of your name or details and only you and I will know what you have personally told me. I have two recording devices here <b>(point to recorders)</b> just in case one device stops working or develops a fault half way through the interviews.</p> <p>Do you have any questions that you would like to ask at this point?</p> <p>Ok right we are almost ready to start. Please feel free to interrupt during the interview if you are unclear on any of the questions that I am asking. If anything occurs to you after the interview which you'd like to discuss with me, please don't hesitate to contact me via email.</p> <p>Do you have any questions? I will begin audio recording now.</p>		
Item No*	Question	Follow up/ prompt
1.	Can you tell me a bit about your experiences of schools before you started attending the XXXXXX?	What was Primary/ Secondary school like?
2.	Before attending the XXXXXX, did any adults support you with your learning?	If yes who and how
3.	How was it that you came to start attending XXXXXX?	
4.	Can you tell me a bit about your initial experiences of starting at the XXXXXX?	
5.	Can you tell me about the type of activities that you do at XXXXXX?	
6.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with the other students who attend the XXXXXX?	
7.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with the XXXXXX staff?	
8.	Do you feel the XXXXXX staff support you?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
9.	(If yes to previous question) Is this different to the staff in your mainstream school?	If yes how
10.	Have you ever felt that you were expected to act in a certain way in your mainstream school?	If yes, can you give me an example please

11.	Do you feel you have ever been are stereotyped or judged?	If yes, could you tell me how/ when/ by who?
<b>Offer the participant a toilet break</b>		
12.	Has the XXXXXX helped you to grow and develop in anyway?	Prompt young male Black identity Role as a student Social identity
13.	Has the XXXXXX played a role in helping you prepare for your GCSE's?	
14.	Have you ever felt that you were expected to act in a certain way at XXXXXX?	
15.	Can you tell me how you feel about your GCSE results/ predicted grades?	
16.	Has the XXXXXX helped you to develop any skills?	Prompt academic skills, social skills, life skills
17.	How has the XXXXXX has helped with your academic attainments?	
18.	Has attending the XXXXXX offered you any unique opportunities?	
19.	Can you tell me about the relationship between the XXXXXX and your parents?	
20.	Do you think other Black boys could benefit from attending the XXXXXX?	
21.	Is there anything else you would like to tell me about attending the XXXXXX that you think might be beneficial to the research?	If yes, could you explain a bit more please

## Appendix 8: Staff interview schedule for main data collection

Staff interview schedule		
<p><b>INTRO:</b> I'll begin by introducing myself, my name is Laura and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the Institute of Education. Educational Psychologists are people who are interested in how children and young people learn and seek to find ways to facilitate this.</p> <p>I would like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. I greatly appreciate your contribution to this project. Before we begin, can I first ask that you read through the information sheet and sign the consent form in front of you.</p> <p>I would also like to make sure that you understand that you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, if after the interview has commenced. (<i>check that participant understands</i>)</p> <p>Thank you. Do you have any questions you would like to ask me at this point?</p> <p>The questions in this interview aim to explore your experiences of XXXXXX. I would like to make sure that you understand that this interview will be recorded as part of the data analysis process. This is because people often say very helpful things during these interviews and I can't write fast enough to get them all down. Your name will not be used at all in the findings and everything you say will be confidential. This means that no one will be informed of your name or details and only you and I will know what you have personally told me. I have two recording devices here (<i>point to recorders</i>) just in case one device stops working or develops a fault half way through the interviews.</p> <p>Do you have any questions that you would like to ask at this point?</p> <p>Ok right we are almost ready to start. Please feel free to interrupt during the interview if you are unclear on any of the questions that I am asking. If anything occurs to you after the interview which you'd like to discuss with me, please don't hesitate to contact me via email.</p> <p>Do you have any questions? I will begin audio recording now.</p>		
Item No*	Question	Follow up/ prompt
1.	Can you tell me about any skills or qualifications that you have that you feel are beneficial to you working at XXXXXX?	
2.	Can you tell me a bit about your professional background?	
3.	Can you tell me a bit about your experiences of working with children and young people before you started attending the XXXXXX?	
4.	How was it that you came to start working at XXXXXX?	
5.	Can you tell me about your relationship with the staff at XXXXXX?	
6.	Can you tell me a bit about your about your role at the XXXXXX	
7.	Can you tell me about the role of some of the other staff at XXXXXX?	
8.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with the students who attend the XXXXXX?	
9.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with the parents of the students who attend the XXXXXX?	
10.	Can you tell me about the type of activities that pupils take part in at XXXXXX?	
11.	Do you think the XXXXXX helps its students to develop any particular skills?	If yes what type of skills? Prompt academic skills, social skills, life skills
12.	Do you feel the XXXXXX staff support its pupils?	If yes, can you give me

		an example/ can you tell me how
13.	(if yes to previous question) Do you feel the support that the XXXXXX staff offer their pupil's is different to the support they receive from their mainstream school?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
14.	Can you tell me about any other professional agencies who XXXXXX liaise with in supporting students?	
15.	(If not mentioned in previous answer) Can you tell me if Educational Psychologists play a role in supporting XXXXXX to support their students?	If yes how
16.	Do you think the XXXXXX staff have certain expectations of their students?	Can you give me an example please
17.	Do you feel that some of your students have experienced being stereotyped or judged?	If yes, could you tell me how/ when/ by who?
18.	Does the XXXXXX play a role in helping students to prepare for their GCSE's?	If yes, how
19.	Has the XXXXXX has helped it's students to grow and develop in their personal identity in anyway?	Prompt young male Black identity Role as a student Social identity
20.	Can you tell me a bit about the relationships held between the XXXXXX pupils?	
21.	Does attending the XXXXXX offer pupils any unique opportunities?	If yes, what
22.	Do you think other Black boys could benefit from attending the XXXXXX?	
23.	Is there anything else you would like to tell me about working the XXXXXX that you think might be beneficial to the research?	If yes, could you explain a bit more please

## Appendix 9: Parent interview schedule for main data collection

Parent interview schedule		
<p><b>INTRO:</b> I'll begin by introducing myself, my name is Laura and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the Institute of Education. Educational Psychologists are people who are interested in how children and young people learn and seek to find ways to facilitate this.</p> <p>I would like to thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview. I greatly appreciate your contribution to this project. Before we begin, can I first ask that you read through the information sheet and sign the consent form in front of you.</p> <p>I would also like to make sure that you understand that you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, if after the interview has commenced. <b>(check that participant understands)</b></p> <p>Thank you. Do you have any questions you would like to ask me at this point?</p> <p>The questions in this interview aim to explore your experiences of XXXXXX. I would like to make sure that you understand that this interview will be recorded as part of the data analysis process. This is because people often say very helpful things during these interviews and I can't write fast enough to get them all down. Your name will not be used at all in the findings and everything you say will be confidential. This means that no one will be informed of your name or details and only you and I will know what you have personally told me. I have two recording devices here <b>(point to recorders)</b> just in case one device stops working or develops a fault half way through the interviews.</p> <p>Do you have any questions that you would like to ask at this point?</p> <p>Ok right we are almost ready to start. Please feel free to interrupt during the interview if you are unclear on any of the questions that I am asking. If anything occurs to you after the interview which you'd like to discuss with me, please don't hesitate to contact me via email.</p> <p>Do you have any questions? I will begin audio recording now.</p>		
Item No*	Question	Follow up/ prompt
1.	Can you tell me a bit about your experiences of your son's schools before he started attending the XXXXXX?	What was Primary/ Secondary school like?
2.	Before attending the XXXXXX, were there any particular adults that supported your son with his learning?	
3.	Has your son ever received any support from agencies or professionals with regards to his behaviour?	If yes can you tell me about the support they offered
4.	How was it that your son came to start attending XXXXXX?	
5.	Can you tell me a bit about your initial experiences of your son starting at the XXXXXX?	
6.	Can you tell me about the type of activities that your son does at XXXXXX?	
7.	Can you tell me about the type of parent activities that you have been involved with at XXXXXX?	
8.	Can you tell me about your relationship with other parents at XXXXXX?	
9.	Can you tell me a bit about your son's relationship with the other students who attend the XXXXXX?	
10.	Can you tell me a bit about your relationship with the XXXXXX staff?	

11.	Is this different to the relationship you have with the staff in your sons' mainstream school?	If yes, then how
12.	Can you tell me a bit about your sons' relationship with the XXXXXX staff?	
13.	Is this different to the relationship he has with the staff in his mainstream school?	
14.	Do you feel that the XXXXXX has helped your son develop in any way?	Social skills, academic skills, identity
15.	Do you feel the XXXXXX staff support your son?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
16.	Do you feel the XXXXXX staff support you as a parent?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
17.	Do you feel your son has ever been are stereotyped or judged?	If yes, could you tell me how/ when/ by who?
<b>Offer the participant a toilet break</b>		
18.	Do you feel attending the XXXXXX helped/ has helped your son prepare for his GCSE'S?	
19.	Can you tell me how you feel about your sons GCSE results/ predicted grades?	
20.	Do you feel that attending the XXXXXX helped your son to develop any skills?	Academic skills, social skills
21.	How has the XXXXXX has helped with your son academic attainments?	
22.	Has attending the XXXXXX offered your son any unique opportunities?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
23.	Has attending the XXXXXX offered you any unique opportunities as a parent?	If yes, can you give me an example/ can you tell me how
24.	Do you think other Black boys could benefit from attending the XXXXXX?	
25.	Do you think other parents could benefit from their sons attending the XXXXXX?	
26.	Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your perspective of the XXXXXX as a parent that you think might be beneficial to the research?	If yes, could you explain a bit more please

## Appendix 10: Example of initial coding for staff member ROSLYN”

1 STAFF (ROSLYN)	
2 R1: Can you tell me about any skills or qualifications that you 3 have that you feel are beneficial to you working at RH	
4	
5 ROSLYN: Erm yes so I have a Master's degree in education and 6 then an undergraduate erm in history literature and culture in the 7 America so just a general sort of humanities undergraduate 8 degree and then erm some experience studying abroad as part of 9 my undergrad to Columbia university and A levels and GCSEs 10 (laughs) and that would be my educational background and then 11 i've worked sort of informally at RH Trevor is my dad so I've 12 kind of always been involved in the life of the organisation I've 13 worked for two years at inter university which is another 14 educational charity erm I also currently work as a house mistress 15 at an independent school and I've worked at a separate 16 independent school as well as a boarding assistant and I worked 17 for XXX and I worked in erm a pupil referral unit for a year 18 when I was at university as well so a fair amount of sort of more 19 or less formal experience with young people	<p>5 -9 level of Higher and Further education obtained ROSLYN</p> <p>10 - 12 long term involvement in the supplementary school organisation due to other family members being involved ROSLYN</p> <p>12 -13 experience with working within charity organisations ROSLYN</p> <p>13- 16 experience of supporting young people within a residential setting ROSLYN</p>
20	16 - 18 experience of supporting children who had been excluded from school ROSLYN
21 R1: Ok and can you tell me a bit about your professional 22 background	
23	
24 ROSLYN: Yes so after i graduated so my final year of university 25 I was here full time and working to help run the after school 26 tuition programme so sort of setting up a structure and running 27 that weekly erm I've worked in two boarding schools just in 28 terms of pastoral care in my current boarding school I also head 29 up the careers provision as well as doing sort of informal support 30 at Risley High and I worked for two years as erm a graduate on 31 the graduate programme for XXX university which is another 32 erm charity that works in education sort of supplementary 33 education as well	<p>23 -26 implementing an after school tuition programme ROSLYN</p> <p>26- 28 experience of providing pastoral support to young people ROSLYN</p> <p>28 - 32 experience of working with different supplementary school settings ROSLYN</p>
34 R1: Ok and can tell me about a bit about your experiences of 35 working with children and young people before you started at 36 RH	



37

38 ROSLYN: Yes so erm its been a bit of range so obviously  
39 working in a pupil referral unit that sort of the extremes of  
40 behaviour so behaviours so all of their students had been  
41 excluded from a number of schools and I was just doing one to  
42 one GCSE support with them a couple days a week I've worked  
43 for XXX which is really informal so it's a three week structured  
44 programme that is outside of school time it's for sixteen year  
45 old plus it's a kind of mentoring relationship but with a group  
46 of twelve young people so I worked with them throughout my  
47 university summers for about three years and then I've done  
48 two roles where I've lived in boarding houses and been sort of  
49 overall responsible for the pastoral care in the boarding houses

50

51 R1: Ok and how was it that you came to start working at RH

52

53 ROSLYN: So my dad runs it (laughs) so so it's always kind of  
54 been sort of the fabric of our family and at various times I've sort  
55 of dipped in and out of different roles here

56

57 R1: And how long has that been

58

59 ROSLYN: Erm I if I suppose formally since I was about  
60 twenty-one so six or seven years ago yes

61

62 R1: Ok and can you tell me a bit about your relationship with  
63 the RH staff

64 ROSLYN: Well one of them is my father (laughs) erm but I  
65 think erm I'd say the difference in the staff relationship here as  
66 oppose to other educational context were I've worked is that  
67 because it's kind of an approach which supports the whole  
68 child you get to know the families very well I know the  
69 families of the boys

37 - 38 experience of working  
with children with behavioural  
issues ROSLYN

39 - 40 behavioural issues  
leading to exclusion ROSLYN

40 - 41 experience of offering  
1:1 GCSE support ROSLYN

41 - 44 experience of providing  
supplementary school support  
ROSLYN

45 - 48 experience of offering  
residential and pastoral care  
support ROSLYN

52 - 53 Risley High is  
embedded in the family  
ROSLYN

53 - 54 worked as various roles  
ROSLYN

58 - 59 long-term involvement  
with Risley High ROSLYN

64 - 67 holistic approach to  
supporting the child ROSLYN

67 - 68 understanding the  
family context ROSLYN

70	here better than the families of the girls that I've lived with in	68 - 70 deep knowledge of family context. <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
71	my roles at boarding schools so yea it definitely is a very joint	
72	up approach and I think that impacts the staff team as well	70 - 72 working with families <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
73	because everybody works long hours they work hard because	
74	its kind of it feels more than a job it's it's more vocational I	71 - 74 shared staff ethos and high work ethic <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
75	think is the word to describe it so yea we are all very close yea	
76		74 - 74 close staff team <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
77	Ok and can you tell me about the role of some the RH staff	
78		
79	Erm yea so Sue is project manager so she sort of is the fountain	75 - 79 strong leadership <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
80	of knowledge she she's been at Risley High for a long as my	
81	dad has so she is responsible for all of the administrative	79 - 80 long term involvement with RH <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
82	functions making Risley High run she knows the families she	
83	knows the parents she knows the schools incredibly well Diane	81 - 82 management know the families well <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
84	heads up the pastoral provision an she also does the boarding all	
85	the scholarships programmes and then obviously my dad heads	82 - 85 clear staff responsibilities <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
86	up everything so those would be three examples i guess	
87		
88	Ok can you tell me about your role at RH	
89		
90	Yea so a lot of what I do is about supporting the students who	89 - 90 supporting children with transitions to independent school <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
91	are transitioning to independent boarding schools erm so a lot	
92	of support and talks having worked in both contexts at Risley	
93	High more full time and then full time in boarding school so	
94	giving talks and things like that but erm also specifically kind	93 - 98 range of support offered. <a href="#">ROSLYN</a>
95	of working after school and coming in the holidays and working	
96	to support GCSE students not particularly with their academic	
97	revision but a more joined up kind of holistic approach to how	
98	you organise yourself to be a successful student so I guess this	
99	is why I produce this document kind of its	
100		
101	Can you tell me about that <a href="#">document</a>	
102		
103	Yea so its kind of just reflecting upon my own personal	

## Appendix 11: Example of research timeline

<b>November 2017</b>	Meeting with the National Director of Black Supplementary Schools in the UK. Discussed the history of Black supplementary schools in the UK and their prevalence today. Spoke about the different types of supplementary schools and how they function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the meeting it appeared that most supplementary schools functioned on a very "informal" basis. Word of mouth was the most frequented marketing technique used and they function on a very limited budget without any governing agency, such as OFSTED.</li> <li>Also, a lot of the information on Black supplementary schools is anecdotal. Need to find more academic papers on supplementary schools in the UK.</li> </ul>
<b>December 2017</b>	Another discussion with Dr Tracy Robinson: Discussed the lack of research in high achieving Black boys. Discussed the focus of my research and how it would be possible to move forward focusing on positive outcomes. Discussed developments with my methodology, potential challenges and various ways that the data could be collected. Looked at how it would differ from her own research, but still add to the current body of knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue developing research proposal.</li> </ul>
<b>December 2017</b>	Attended at the supplementary school involved in my research. They were celebrating the successes of some of their pupils, some of whom had been in newspaper articles for their achievements. Got a chance to meet some of the pupils and parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend more sessions at the school so that the staff, parents and pupils get used to me.</li> </ul>
<b>December 2017</b>	3,5000-word proposal submitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wait for feedback</li> </ul>
<b>January 2018</b>	Attended a conference "Raising the Achievement of Black Caribbean Pupils" held at UCL IOE. Included talks from Head teachers, SENCO's, Professors of Education, OFSTED inspectors. Lots of research and action research looking at ways to close the achievement gap with Black pupils. Many of the speakers spoke of the need for there to be more research into the role supplementary schools and extra-curricular activities can play in supporting black pupils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look in greater detail and some of the research papers presented.</li> <li>Contact some of the speakers who may have useful information for helping me develop my research ideas.</li> </ul>

<b>February 2018</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> supervision meeting with academic supervisor and EP supervisor. Discussed feedback from proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address feedback comments.</li> <li>• Continue working on literature review and methodology.</li> <li>• Complete ethics forms and apply for a data protection number.</li> <li>• 10,000-word draft to be submitted in April</li> </ul>
<b>March 2018</b>	Ethics submitted to data protection team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait for email confirming that my ethics has been awarded a data protection number.</li> </ul>
<b>April 2018</b>	Year 2 report submitted. Ethics submitted (data protection number received)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait for progress review</li> <li>• Wait for see if ethics has been granted.</li> </ul>
<b>April 2018</b>	Attending presentation by Dr Tracy Robison about her research " <i>Exploring the narratives of African Caribbean high attaining boys: perceived peer influences in education.</i> " At a meeting held for Black and Ethnic Minority Educational Psychologists.	
<b>April 2018</b>	Attended seminar on Critical Race Theory: Looking at race issues in education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find out if there are any CRT articles that relates directly to supplementary schooling.</li> </ul>
<b>April 2018</b>	Ethics granted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete pilot</li> </ul>
<b>June 2018</b>	Attended a performance put on by the supplementary school that I will be doing my research on at the Greenwich Theatre. Met a lot of the pupils, parents and financial supporters of the school, some of whom had "celebrity" status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue attending events/ sessions at the supplementary school.</li> </ul>
<b>June 2018</b>	Completed pilot with a parent, pupil and staff member of the supplementary school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss with EP supervisor.</li> </ul>
<b>June 2018</b>	Attended a meeting for Black and Ethnic Minority Educational Psychologists. Looked at research that was presented at a conference titled ' <i>Understanding and Managing Emotional and Behavioural Challenges in Young Black People</i> ' Discussed key concepts and implications for EP Practice following conference feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To include key points on main challenges highlighted by research in literature review.</li> </ul>