Primary school leaders creating conditions for teacher learning associated with change: developing an understanding with reference to transformative learning theory

Ashley Marcel Brett

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

DOCTOR IN EDUCATION

DECLARATION

I, Ashley Marcel Brett, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Word count: 44883 (Abstract and Chapters 1-6)

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teachers' professional learning, associated with improvements to their practice, as part of the process of school-based change. It further explores how knowledge about this might be developed with reference to transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991), which is a 'theory of adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) within the context of change.

A small-scale study of nine leaders (heads and deputies) was conducted. The qualitative research was undertaken using a constructivist-interpretive approach. Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant; questions related to leaders initiating change, leaders' views about teachers as learners, and leaders supporting teacher resilience. Electronic analysis software, NVivo, was utilised for thematic analysis to identify themes within the data. The themes related to: senior leaders developing teachers' understanding about the need for changes to their practice by sharing a rationale; senior leaders organising teachers' professional learning through practical activities, related to school improvement initiatives promoting internal and external collaborations; and leaders supporting teachers' resilience. The themes emerging from the data analysis were related back to literature on the leadership of change and teacher learning. They were further interpreted, where relevant, against key areas of transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory.

The research methodology had several limitations which contributed to too much unfocused data or prevented richer data from being obtained. Nevertheless, the research develops links between the context and culture of leadership and conditions senior leaders create for the teacher learning associated with change. It also interprets the conditions created by leaders for teacher learning against transformative learning theory, which I consider could benefit senior leaders, who might use this knowledge to strengthen their leadership of change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DEDICATION

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Sue Rogers, for all her tireless encouragement and expert guidance during my learning journey on the Ed.D. I am indebted to the patience of my wife, Natasha, and thank her for letting me pursue my goals. I wish to thank my family, especially my sister, Michele, and my parents-in-law, Bev and Malcolm, for being there and giving me the confidence to carry on. I am appreciative of my fellow doctoral students, especially Dr Sabrina Poma, who provided moral support, and Ed.D course and programme leads, particularly Dr Bryan Cunningham, who led dynamic workshops and helped negotiate my pathway through the doctoral program. I am thankful to my friends too, especially David, Belinda and Laura, as well as work colleagues for their invaluable support and enthusiasm. Finally, I am indebted to the senior leaders, who participated in my research and gave up their valuable time to share their reflections about education.

My thesis and Ed.D are dedicated to my late parents, Phyllis and Siddy, and fondly remembered family members: Dumpy, Ken, Edie, Stella and Susie - you all had such determination and resilience which you have instilled in me.

CONTENTS **Page**

Contents continued **Page**

Contents continued **Page**

TABLES

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASTs	Advanced Skills Teachers
DfE	Department for Education
EAL	English as an additional language
Ed.D	Doctorate in Education
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
INSET	in-service training (Day)
LA	local authority
LSAs	learning support assistants
NQT	newly qualified teacher
PE	physical education
PLC(s)	professional learning community (communities)
PPA	planning, preparation and assessment
SATs	statutory assessment tests/tasks (national curriculum assessments)
SEN	special educational needs
SENCo	special educational needs coordinator
TAs	teaching assistants

APPENDICES

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STATEMENT

This statement reflects my professional learning journey and academic development during the period of my doctoral studies. After ten years as a primary school teacher, I had the opportunity to be employed by a local authority as an education consultant within the now defunct National Strategies' programmes (DfE, 2011). One of my main professional duties was to support programmes of school improvement in schools which underperformed (or were at risk of underperforming) in annual, national assessments (Roberts, 2018) of English and mathematics; or because they had received, or were at risk of receiving, an inadequate OFSTED inspection outcome.

The catalyst for my research stemmed from supporting underachieving schools that found change challenging. On one occasion, I visited a school and, during a routine meeting about the school improvement programme, the headteacher and her deputy voiced their frustrations about feeling little sense of professional autonomy in their dealings with the local authority. They had a particular grievance about the way in which they felt they had to comply with the local authority's expectations, even if they did not agree with them. This experience caused me to become inquisitive about how my peers supported schools to recognise and modify their practice in order to improve their pupils' academic achievement. During subsequent local authority training, I was introduced to the 'Mantle of the Expert' (e.g. see Heathcote and Bolton, 1995; Taylor, 2016), a creative approach to delivering aspects of the curriculum, where children are put in the role of imaginary experts and there is an emphasis on purposeful tasks. The trainer, a local authority education adviser, illustrated the impact of the approach by referring to a school which I had previously supported and in which my work had been met with reticence, hostility or indifference from the senior leadership. The adviser commented that the school had received an OFSTED inspection and the team had been impressed by the school's adoption of the 'Mantle of the Expert'. He suggested that this had supported the school in receiving a (then) 'satisfactory' (now 'requires improvement') OFSTED inspection outcome as opposed to 'inadequate'. These comments prompted me to think that the 'Mantle of the Expert' approach might have inspired a previously reluctant school to engage with changes to its practice. This was the 'tipping point' (Gladwell, 2001) which prompted me to undertake the Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D). Initially, my aim had been to research how schools might be supported by local authority consultants to engage with educational change.

However, later in my studies, as my career developed and roles altered, I decided to modify my research focus to consider the ways in which senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning as part of the school improvement strategies associated with change.

Following the demise of the National Strategies, I became a deputy headteacher in a primary school. This move was an important part of my professional development and enabled me to utilise what I had learnt during my period as a consultant. During my time as a deputy headteacher, I continued to be aware of the demoralising and disparaging consequences for a school when its national assessment results failed to improve. One particular instance arose during my institution-focused study (Brett, 2013). A participating headteacher highlighted some of the consequences of the accountability mechanisms which had led to her capability being called into question. This account was reminiscent of what Thomson (2009) describes as the principal's head being 'on the block'. My reflections on this, juxtaposed with considering some negative, emotional dimensions of being a headteacher (Crawford, 2009), together with the daily, intense and professional experiences of being a deputy, influenced my decision to not pursue headship. My decision was further reinforced when my school found itself at a precipice of underperformance. Despite successful consultancy experiences and my studies at doctoral level, which enhanced my knowledge about school improvement strategies, I came to the realisation that the pressures which my head and I were under were unsustainable for me to manage as part of a sensible work-life balance. Simultaneously, I realised early in my Ed.D professional studies that I ultimately wanted to develop my career within an academic environment. Within a fortuitous sequence of events, I applied for and was appointed to my current role as a university senior lecturer for initial teacher training degrees.

Since taking on my new role, there has been a continuous focus on teacher learning as part of managing change and school improvement. However, how conditions for teacher learning are organised by school leaders remains a critical question and one which provides the impetus for this thesis. It is also an area that continues to interest me in my current role, enabling me to support action research projects and academic research with university colleagues, to explore how headteachers drive change and foster teacher learning through these projects. It has also underpinned a recent series

of coaching workshops I delivered for senior and middle leaders, to support them with implementing school improvement initiatives.

During my Ed.D studies, my research focus has altered as my career has progressed and my professional roles have changed. I consider these developments alongside the development of my academic and writing skills. My 'Foundations of Professionalism' (Brett, 2009) module assignment reflected the tense relationships between local authority consultants (delivering programmes of school improvement) and schools (the receivers of the initiatives). I described the negative professional identity of a consultant and proposed that there should be more autonomous decision-making by schools in a more equitable relationship with consultants and school improvement agencies. The assignment echoed the encounters I had with despondent senior leaders and which ignited my passion to engage with doctoral research. Within the assignments for the (Research) 'Methods of Inquiry 1' (Brett, 2010a) and 'Methods of Inquiry 2' (Brett, 2011) modules, I explored the ways in which local authority consultants might support underperforming primary schools to implement change for sustained improvement. During this period, I was introduced to Mezirow's (1991) work on transformative learning theory. This is a 'theory of adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) within the context of change. I postulated that transformative learning might support transformational change (Ackerman, 1997) in schools, as part of programmes of improvement, and could be attended to by local authority consultants in their activities. These assignments helped me to appreciate the research processes involved in academic studies, including the necessity for clarifying research questions and prioritising relevant literature for inclusion in a research report. This has been an ongoing target for me throughout the thesis stage of my Ed.D.

During the Methods of Enquiry 1 course, I was drawn to literature on professional learning communities (PLCs) as part of a conceptualisation as to how they might support transformational change in schools and the transformative learning of teachers. I excluded this for consideration during the assignment and for the research component in Methods of Enquiry 2 due to the word limits. However, in my paper written for the 'Leadership and Learning in Educational Organisations' specialisation module (Brett, 2010b), I focused upon how unlikely the conditions would be manifested

in underperforming schools for the true operationalisation of PLCs. Feedback indicated that my assignment question had a limited perspective and exposed pre-conceived ideas. A suggestion was made that more open-ended questions might have enabled me to go further in examining the role of PLCs and tensions within school improvement practice. Whilst my thesis is not about PLCs, I consider that their implementation could help senior leaders nurture teacher learning and may be understood with reference to transformative learning theory.

Since I had returned to school-based teaching as a deputy during the period in which I completed my institution-focused study (Brett, 2013), my initial focus on consultancy support became less critical. I therefore altered my focus to explore the ways in which leaders, in underachieving primary schools or vulnerable settings, engaged with change to improve their pupils' standards of achievement. To support this focus, I drew on the Ackerman-Anderson model of change (Ackerman, 1997). I was particularly influenced by this model because it had been used to refer to organisational and transformational change, detailed within research about how schools engage with change (e.g. see McCrone *et al*., 2008). However, subsequent feedback for my assignment indicated that this model of change was aligned more to consultants practising in business, rather than an educational environment. Taking this into account, I returned to Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning theory as the framework for my thesis. This theory is especially helpful to my thesis, which explores how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning as part of change. Since it is a 'theory of adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) within the context of change, I believe that research presented in my thesis might benefit leaders who want to develop their understanding about, and hence strengthen, their leadership of change.

In conclusion, I consider the impact of a professional doctorate on a student's professional and personal life (Wellington and Sikes, 2006; Burgess and Wellington, 2010; Mellors-Bourne, Robinson and Metcalfe, 2016), highlighting several benefits. I reflect on some of these themes from a personal perspective. My studies and the status of the Ed.D supported my professional and personal self-esteem during the impending termination of the National Strategies and eventual demise of my job as a consultant. I felt motivated by the fact that I was in command of my own learning within

the context of my doctoral studies and this was something which could not be taken away from me. The completion of doctoral studies is a requirement for my current job, and the studies were a key factor in helping me attain my position. Moreover, having a doctorate is a requisite for further progression in my career as I transition from a researching student to a 'research active academic' (Burgess and Wellington, 2010, p.166).

The Ed.D has developed my professional practice as a consultant, deputy headteacher and senior lecturer. My studies have enabled me to explore in depth the educational landscape in which I am situated. This has enabled me to reflect on my practice and consider links between theory and practice, and in so doing has supported me in contributing to professional knowledge. My studies have afforded me the opportunity to become more critical and analytical in my academic reading and writing and develop professional behaviours to 'persuade, change, argue a case, challenge assumptions and listen critically to others' (Burgess and Wellington, 2010, p.169). For example, I feel more confident amongst my peers that I might make a valuable contribution in collaborative research about action research projects undertaken between my university and schools. Moreover, I have gained the confidence to draw upon my studies and the associated in-depth literature, to produce training materials as a lecturer. For example, I have utilised literature on resilience and teachers as learners for transition workshops, for those students I teach and who are about to enter their first year in the workplace as newly qualified teachers.

I have become attuned to the learning journey, which people engage with when studying, and have become increasingly mindful of my determination and resilience in undertaking a scholarly activity such as the Ed.D. However, I also acknowledge that this toil has impacted upon my social and family relationships although I have refined my time management skills. This encourages me to be attentive and empathetic when supporting students undertaking initial teacher training degrees and postgraduate courses, which include teachers undertaking their own action research projects. I hope that I am now in a position to inspire them with my own continuing learning journey.

REFERENCES FOR PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE STATEMENT

Ackerman, L.S. (1997). 'Development, transition or transformation: the question of change in organizations'. In Van Eynde, D., Hoy, J. and Van Eynde, D. (Eds.), *Organisation Development Classics*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Brett, A. (2009). 'How are the professional identities of local authority consultants constructed and influenced by the relationships which they have with schools?' *Foundations of Professionalism.* Institute of Education, University of London. Unpublished assignment.

Brett, A. (2010a). 'In what ways can local authority consultants support underperforming primary schools to implement change for sustained improvement?' *Methods of Enquiry 1.* Institute of Education, University of London. Unpublished assignment.

Brett, A. (2010b). 'Why are genuine, professional learning communities unlikely to work readily in 'underperforming' schools? What conditions need to be in place for these schools to move beyond the rhetoric often associated with professional learning communities?' *Leadership and Learning in Educational Organisations.* Institute of Education, University of London. Unpublished assignment.

Brett, A. (2011). 'In what ways can local authority consultants support underperforming primary schools to implement change for sustained improvement?' *Methods of Enquiry 1.* Institute of Education, University of London. Unpublished assignment.

Brett, A. (2013). 'In which ways do leaders in underachieving primary schools, or in vulnerable settings, engage with change to improve their pupils' standards of achievement?' *Institution-Focused Study.* Institute of Education, University of London. Unpublished assignment.

Burgess, H. and Wellington, J. (2010). 'Exploring the impact of the professional doctorate on students' professional practice and personal development: early indications'. [Online]. *Work Based Learning e-Journal,* 1 (1), 160-176. Available at: http://wblearning-ejournal.com/archive/10-10-10/1013%20rtb.pdf. [Last accessed 19th February 2017.]

Crawford, M. (2009). *Getting to the Heart of Leadership.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

DfE. (2011). *The National Strategies 1997–2011 A brief summary of the impact and effectiveness of the National Strategies*. [Online]. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175408/DFE-00032-2011.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Gladwell, M. (2001). *The Tipping Point: how little things can make a big difference*. London: Abacus.

Heathcote, D., and Bolton, G. (1995). *Drama for Learning: Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert approach to education*. Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann.

McCrone, T., Teeman, D., Featherstone, G., Rudd, P., Ahmad, S. and Thompson, H. (2008). *Change Engagement Comparative Study: final report*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/OPM01/OPM01.pdf. [Last accessed 17th February 2017.]

Mellors-Bourne, R., Robinson, C., and Metcalfe, J. (2016). *Provision of Professional Doctorates in English HE institutions*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2016/profdoc/. [Last accessed 23rd April 2017.]

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Roberts, N. (2018). *SATs and primary school assessment in England. BRIEFING PAPER Number CBP 07980. House of commons library*. [Online]. Available at: http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7980#fullreport. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Taylor, T. (2016). *A Beginner's Guide to Mantle of the Expert: a transformative approach to education*. Norwich: Singular Publishing.

Thomson, P. (2009). *Heads on the Block*. Oxon: Routledge.

Wellington, J. and Sikes, P. (2006). 'A doctorate in a tight compartment: Why do students choose a professional doctorate and what impact does it have on their personal and professional lives?'. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31 (6), 723-734.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter introduces my thesis. It begins by explaining the rationale and aims of my research and is followed by a section on the research questions detailing how they developed over the course of my study. Next, an outline of transformative learning theory is presented with an explanation of its relevance to my research. The final section explains the structure of the thesis, including a description of each chapter.

1.1 Research rationale and aims

My research explores the conditions which English primary school senior leaders (headteachers and deputy headteachers) create to develop teachers' professional learning associated with improving their practice within the context of school change. The research then draws upon transformative learning theory, a 'theory of adult learning' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) about changes in practice, to consider how this might contribute to our understanding of the conditions created by school leaders for teacher learning. I feel that this could benefit senior leaders, who might use this knowledge to strengthen their leadership of change. I am interested in this because of my previous professional roles in which I worked with heads and deputies to steer school improvement programmes. By *teachers' professional learning* I mean that which is a 'move from non-reflective habitual action to a more conscious practice', which could 'bring teaching issues to the forefront of their mind' and expose teachers 'to a range of ideas that could enhance their teaching practice' (Kligyte, 2011, p.209). The learning engenders a 'change in perspective, [which is] a more sophisticated view of teaching than was previously held' (*ibid.*). My research is set in state-maintained schools that are following the national curriculum (Gov.uk, no date) and which reflect the type of schools in which my previous professional practices were located.

Throughout this thesis, the following terms are used to characterise the context of school change:

- school 'improvement' is used for the smaller, but critical shifts in school change – i.e. the *how* mechanisms enabling change to occur as part of school improvement (Thomson, 2010), to improve pupils' academic outcomes.

- school ‘transformative change’ signifies greater school change. This represents the *accumulation* of the smaller shifts of school improvement changes.
- school ‘change’ is used as a generic term for school ‘improvement’ and/ or school ‘transformative change’.

Hargreaves (2010) defines the notion of school improvement ‘in terms of the processes of intervention in schools that are deemed, by whatever measure, to be underperforming’ (p.4). Meanwhile, Thomson (2010) regards school improvement strategies as the underpinning processes (the *how* mechanisms) which enable change to occur and impact upon a child’s education. From my professional experiences, school improvement strategies have been utilised to both help academically underperforming schools and support schools to maintain academic standards. The strategies comprise a variety of initiatives, including those used by senior leaders aimed at supporting teachers’ learning. This includes, for example, senior leaders organising the school environment to be conducive to their teachers’ professional learning. The organisation may occur through senior leaders arranging continuing professional development opportunities (Munro, 2011), organising the school as a professional learning community (Stoll *et al.*, 2006; Hargreaves, 2007; Fullan, 2016), and organising support for improving planning and teaching (Hallinger, 2009; Volante, 2012).

Whilst supporting programmes of school improvement as a local authority consultant, I became aware of limitations to aspects of teachers’ autonomy related to the professional learning underpinning changes in their practice. This was because changes in practice could be seen to be steered by senior leaders wanting their teachers to comply with their initiatives. A tension and paradox therefore exist between ‘true’ autonomy and the teacher’s autonomy which is constrained by national, educational responsibility, authority and the accountability mechanisms attached to it (Higham and Earley, 2013). Education is a public service and underpinned by accountability mechanisms; it is located within an environment governed by a centrally determined educational framework and so there can only be limited degrees of autonomy (*ibid.*).

From my previous professional roles, I am aware that driving change whilst facilitating teacher learning presents senior leaders with challenging tasks. One particular challenge is the tension between the need for senior leaders to direct change, as a result of the accountability landscape driven by the educational, political agendas (Wilshaw and Morgan, 2014), and the need to facilitate the teacher learning and changes, so that teachers feel supported and in control with a degree of autonomy. As suggested above, senior leaders both directing change and facilitating teacher learning might be regarded as contradictory, with the former limiting, and the latter promoting, teacher autonomy. However, this is where I am interested in drawing on the use of transformative learning theory, as a 'theory of adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) within the context of change.

According to a former National College for Teaching and Leadership publication (no date), an 'understanding of transformative learning will help us reflect more deeply on how we practise facilitation when working with adults'. I believe that this has value for senior leaders because I see them as facilitating teacher learning as part of driving school improvement. Additionally, transformative learning theory acknowledges that there are degrees of autonomy (Mezirow, 1991) in adult learning: although the learning may be facilitated by another person, it is fundamentally a self-directed process (Cranton 1996). For example, whilst there are external demands from employers, Illeris (2014) highlights that learning itself occurs within an individual employee who influences what is learnt. Meanwhile, Cranton (1996) claims that most teachers can decide independently whether or not to learn about their practice. She emphasises that 'people have the choice of being critically self-reflective or not' (Cranton, 2016, p.6). Therefore, I feel that there is a degree of autonomy which teachers have, albeit within an environment of accountability, to critically reflect as learners on their own practice in relation to making changes and which senior leaders can support. Moreover, transformative learning theory highlights that it is 'not enough to understand intellectually the need to change the way one acts; one requires emotional strength and an act of will in order to move forward' (Mezirow, 1991, p.171). This suggests that in making change, it is not only important to understand why changes in one's actions are needed but it is also important to possess qualities of resilience and commitment. Qualities of resilience are considered to encompass a commitment to change. For

example, Day and Gu (2014) describe resilience as 'more than the ability to bounce back in response to acute challenges. It is the ability to sustain quality and renew commitment over time' (Day and Gu, 2014, p.85).

The theoretical framework that underpins this thesis is transformative learning theory (e.g. see Mezirow, 1991, Christie *et al.*, 2015; Cranton, 2016). The conceptual framework, underpinning my thesis, explores how transformative learning theory might contribute to current knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning as part of school change. I do this by exploring themes emerging from interviews in which senior leaders described changes they had initiated or facilitated within their schools. In turn, I interpret these themes as the conditions which senior leaders created for teachers' professional learning. I then reference these themes against key areas of transformative learning theory, e.g. perspective transformation, degrees of autonomy and resilience, and the ten stages of Mezirow's (1991) theory. My research might benefit senior leaders who want to deepen their understanding about how to develop teacher learning as part of change.

1.2 Research questions

My main research question is:

How do English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning within the context of change?

My sub-question is:

How might knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders organise teacher learning be developed with reference to transformative learning theory?

1.2.1 Development of the research questions

The research questions changed in focus and phrasing during the course of research. Firstly, I made modifications to the questions after submitting the ethical approval forms for my research and sending the informed consent information to potential participants. Secondly, further modifications were made after the data collection phase. The modifications occurred as a result of two main factors: my developing understanding of the concepts of teacher learning, which deepened after extensive

reading of the literature, and greater clarity of precisely what I wanted to explore in my thesis.

To illustrate these changes, in the ethics form (Appendix 1) I had written about the research purpose:

> I wish to explore how teachers' thinking and practice might be transformed by leaders of English primary schools and how they can engender change within their institutions. One popular tenet of driving change is Mezirow's (1991) conception of transformative learning and seeing oneself as a learner in the process of change. I deem it prudent to explore this as part of my future research, whilst examining ideas about environmental and contextual structures that help staff to fully engage with professional learning.
>
> (Appendix 1, p.165)

On reflection, I came to the view that there was a disconnection between what I had written in the form and what I initially wanted to research: how senior leaders' support of their teachers' learning as part of school change might link to transformative learning theory. The first sentence, in the previous appendix extract, was intended to capture the dynamics of the senior leaders transforming (greatly changing) the thinking (i.e. learning) and practice (i.e. teaching practice) of their teachers as part of change. However, I had mentioned an interest in exploring 'teachers' thinking and practice', rather than emphasising teacher learning. The second sentence referred to Mezirow's (1991) conception of transformative learning, because I had the intention of exploring connections between transformative learning, senior leaders steering change, and leaders supporting their teachers to see themselves as learners when engaging with change. The third sentence was intended to make a link between researching transformative learning and the school improvement structures, which senior leaders might employ to help their staff (i.e. teachers) engage with the professional learning associated with change. Nevertheless, both the second and third sentences were vague and lacked clarity. Although my ideas did not clearly articulate my research focus, I posed the question: 'In what ways can senior leaders instigate change in their school?' (Appendix 1, p.165). I acknowledge that this was the second question detailed on the ethics form and, in hindsight, the focus would have been clearer if it

had been the first question. I also acknowledge that the word 'instigate' has negative connotations and would have been better replaced with the word 'initiate'.

I had also wanted to consider a rationale for the role of senior leaders driving change in response to school improvement, and whether this rationale might trigger teachers to undergo transformative learning. However, I had not explained this on the ethics form. Furthermore, I did not indicate any connection between exploring rationales for change and triggers for transformative learning in the research question asking, 'What are leaders' conceptions of education and school transformation?' (Appendix 1, p.165). I also acknowledge that I had not defined 'school transformation' in the preamble to introducing the research questions.

Additionally, I had envisaged that, in interviews with senior leaders, I would explore questions about the values underpinning the educational system and their leadership of change, and the relationship of these values to opportunities for teachers to experience transformative learning. On the ethics form, I wrote, 'Simultaneously, I am interested in considering whether participants' ideas encompass a more holistic, educational approach which aims to nurture the 'whole' child' (Appendix 1, p.165). However, the research question I posed did not address educational values and appeared too vague to be useful: 'What do senior leaders think might underpin approaches to school improvement to simultaneously impact upon academic achievement within the current standards agenda?' (Appendix 1, p.165).

After submission of the ethics form, and in further discussion with my supervisor, I came to the view that the research questions were disjointed and lacked clarity, and, critically, lacked direction towards foci around transformative learning theory and the ways in which senior leaders might create the conditions to support their teachers' learning. I realised the necessity to rewrite the research questions.

I reconstructed the initial main research question as:

- Using transformative learning theory as a conceptual lens, how might senior leaders facilitate primary teachers' engagement with significant, school-based change?

The sub-questions I posed were:

- How might senior leaders' support of their teachers' engagement with learning be associated with key areas of transformative learning theory?

- How might senior leaders' support of their teachers' engagement with learning be facilitated with reference to the stages of transformative learning theory?

These questions foregrounded transformative learning theory and the senior leaders' support of teacher learning and change. The term 'significant change', in the main research question, was chosen to signify the genre of constant, school-based, educational change (Thomson, 2010), requiring lengthy and concerted efforts by teachers and for teachers to be engaged as learners.

It was not necessary to change the research methodology (i.e. adopting a constructivist-interpretive approach), sampling procedures for participants, sample size, or data collection methods. Since these areas were remaining the same and the area of research was still around leaders and school-based change, I considered at the time that the ethical procedures were similar and that it was not necessary to resubmit a new ethics form with refined questions or background information. Nevertheless, in hindsight, I should have informed participants (in writing or verbally) before the interviews that I would be interpreting their responses to the interview questions against transformative learning theory, explained the theory, and gained their consent to continue participating.

After completing the data collection phase, I realised that the main research question was overemphasising transformative learning theory as the driver of my research, and did not refer to leaders' support of teacher learning. I was also cognisant that the phrases 'how might senior leaders facilitate primary teachers' engagement' and 'senior leaders' support of their teachers' engagement with learning' were being foregrounded in the main and subsidiary research questions respectively, without acknowledging that senior leaders were *organising* the teacher learning (as part of their drive for school improvement).

Additionally, I became aware that I lacked clarity in my research focus with defining my use of transformative learning theory. I needed to determine whether I was looking for evidence of the theory in schools, or wanting to focus on aspects of the theory which might have relevance to understanding how senior leaders create conditions to support teacher learning as part of change. My focus was towards the latter.

Having reflected at length about the focus of my research, I arrived at the following final questions. My final main research question is:

> **How do English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning within the context of change?**

My final sub-research question poses the following line of enquiry:

> **How might knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders organise teacher learning be developed with reference to transformative learning theory?**

I have not altered the general topic of my research, as such, between the post-data collection phase and the current stage of completing my thesis. However, my research questions have developed to refocus the aims. In this thesis, I have interpreted what senior leaders discussed during the interviews – where questions were structured around driving change, teacher learning and supporting teacher resilience - as conditions they created to support teacher learning. I have then analysed these themes (conditions to support learning) against key areas of transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory. This was so that I could explore how the theory might contribute to our knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders create conditions for teacher learning associated with changes in teacher practice.

1.3 An outline of transformative learning theory and its relevance to my research

This section provides an outline of the transformative learning theory, which informs my conceptual framework, introducing its key concepts and its relevance to my research. A more detailed account of the theory and its application to my research will be given in Chapter Two. Transformative learning theory, popularized by Jack

Mezirow (1991), is a theory of adult learning and taking action as part of the change process; this is understood as transformative learning to effect change (Mezirow, 1991). I feel that the theory contributes to an understanding of how senior leaders create the conditions for teachers' professional learning and changes in practice.

Transformative learning theory describes ten stages:

1. Having a disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. A critical reflection of one's assumptions
4. Relating feelings of discontent to others sharing similar views
5. Exploring avenues for new behaviours
6. Planning a line of action
7. Gaining knowledge and skills to implement one's plans
8. Experimenting with new roles
9. Building one's confidence and competence in these new roles
10. Reintegrating oneself back into society with one's altered perspective

(Adapted from Mezirow,1991, pp.168-169.)

The theory proposes that, through a process of critical self-reflection, we change the understanding we have of the meaning of an experience (have a perspective transformation) and act upon that new understanding (Mezirow, 1990a; Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). This suggests that we become aware of our presuppositions, challenge our established patterns of thinking, and that 'learning includes acting on these insights' (Mezirow, 1990a, p.xvi). For example, this could entail teachers changing their practice based upon observational feedback, or a school vision presented by school leaders as part of school improvement. However, Mezirow (1991) asserts that learning involves change but 'not all learning is transformative' (p.223). Therefore, I also acknowledge that it is possible for teachers to change their practice without undergoing transformative learning.

My conceptual framework will enable me to explore how the theory might be used as a lens to help understand how senior leaders organise the processes of teachers' professional learning associated with changes in their practice. This will be done by considering how senior leaders in my study create the conditions for this learning to

occur with reference to key areas associated with transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory.

The theory distinguishes between critical reflection and critical self-reflection. The former relates to 'critically questioning the values, assumptions, and perspectives of the world' (Cranton, 2016, p.74). However, Mezirow (1990b) develops the argument that by engaging with critical self-reflection, we participate in a learning process to gain awareness about how and why our presumptions limit our perceptions, understandings and feelings about our world. The learning and change are considered a 'process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide [and take] future action' (Mezirow, 1996, p.162). The learning itself involves the autonomy – that is the independent decision - of the individual to engage with learning about their practice (Cranton, 1996; Illeris, 2014).

Transformative learning theory has relevance to my research because it is a 'theory of adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33). In my research, I position the senior leaders as those helping the adults (the teachers) to learn and make changes to their practice. The former National College for Teaching and Leadership (no date) suggested that an 'understanding of transformative learning will help us reflect more deeply on how we practise facilitation when working with adults'. My thesis explores how transformative learning theory might contribute to knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning which is associated with changes in practice.

1.4 The structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter One, as the introduction to the thesis, has explained the research's rationale and aims and described the development of the research questions. The relevance of transformative learning theory to my research has been introduced. I have proposed that transformative learning theory could be used as a conceptual framework to understand how senior leaders can organise teachers' learning which is associated with changes in their practice within the context of school change.

Chapter Two, the literature review, starts with a return to the research questions to reflect on how the literature search was undertaken. It then explores relevant literature, which is divided into two sections. Part 1, linked to the main research question, presents the context and culture of leadership and how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning to enhance their practice as part of school improvement and school transformative change. It details how the environments established and nurtured by senior leaders (as part of a school's context, culture, structures and systems) and leadership styles contribute to a culture in which school improvement/ school transformative change and related teacher learning occur. This begins with a consideration of the national and individual school contexts, and the culture in which senior leaders nurture changes in teacher practice as part of school improvement. The cultural features reflected upon are: how senior leaders may encourage teachers to learn as professionals; establishing a professional learning community; establishing trust, nurturing commitment, supporting resilience and using emotional intelligence; and the cultural structures and systems. Following this, details about leadership styles which support teacher learning are presented, after which there is brief consideration about how adult theories and models of learning are relevant to senior leaders coordinating teacher learning.

Part 2 of the literature review is linked to the sub-research question and describes how transformative learning theory could be used to understand how senior leaders create a culture for teacher learning as part of school change. In this context, aspects of the literature from Part 1 on leadership and change are referred to. This is so that the literature, on the culture and context of leadership and change, contributes to an argument about how transformative learning theory can frame an understanding of how senior leaders create a culture for teacher learning and their perspective (transformative) change. This is set within the context of school improvement and school transformative change. Part 2 begins by providing a more in-depth explanation of transformative learning theory and commentary about reflection. Following this, criticisms of the theory are detailed. However, further explanation indicates why my research spotlights the theory and how, within my conceptual framework, it might contribute to knowledge about, and frame, how senior leaders create conditions for teacher learning associated with changes in teaching practice. In relation to this, key areas of the theory are presented: meaning schemes, meaning perspectives and

perspective transformation; types of adult learning; degrees of autonomy; and resilience (including the aspects of emotion and commitment to change).

Chapter Three details the methodological approach underpinning the research. It begins with a consideration of the research paradigm. This justifies the constructivist-interpretive framework of the research design and describes the ontological, epistemological and theoretical perspectives underpinning my research. Following this, the research methods are outlined, which describe the approach used for participant selection. This section explains why only senior leaders were interviewed (rather than teachers) and why senior leaders were chosen from schools according to their OFSTED inspection outcomes. This section also considers the rationale for choosing nine leaders as the sample size. Next, the data collection process (two semi-structured interviews undertaken with each leader) and the research tool (two interview schedules) are described. Within this, there is acknowledgement about the limitations of the interview schedules and why this may have led to too much unfocused data being collected. Moreover, there is consideration given to the senior leaders' lack of engagement with a gap task set between their two interviews. Details are also provided about why questions were not asked explicitly about transformative learning theory during the interviews, and the ethical decision not to inform participants that their responses to questions would be interpreted against the theory. Following this, the chapter addresses the processes used to prepare and analyse the data, justifying the use of thematic analysis and electronic software. Consideration is then given to the themes of validity and generalisability in the qualitative research. The chapter concludes with a review of ethical dimensions of the research, which includes discussion about the decision not to seek respondent validation.

Chapter Four presents extracts from the interviews to illustrate themes emerging from data analysis. These themes are presented as the conditions created by the participant leaders to support teacher learning. The conditions are grouped under three headings: 'understanding the need for change', which relates to how senior leaders shared a rationale for change with teachers; 'practical activities', which relates to school improvement initiatives (to strengthen teachers' practice) and which senior leaders had initiated or facilitated through collaborative activities; and 'supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change)', which relates to

how leaders supported teachers with these elements. I consider that supporting teachers' resilience would be conducive to an environment in which leaders direct school improvement initiatives and organise teachers' professional learning.

Chapter Five explores links between the themes emerging from data analysis and the literature on the ways in which senior leaders can create the conditions to support teachers' learning in order to facilitate changes in their practice. This is in relation to the main research question. Next, transformative learning theory is used to help explain how senior leaders organise teacher learning which is associated with change. This is in relation to the sub-research question.

Chapter Six concludes the thesis. It details the limitations of my research, focusing on the methodology, and suggests ways in which, if the study were to be repeated, it might be modified and improved. Next, I answer the research questions, after which my original contribution to knowledge is presented around three themes:

- Deepening our understanding of the links between the context and culture of leadership and the conditions senior leaders can create for teachers' professional learning associated with changes in their practice
- Interpreting these conditions against the key areas of transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory to develop our understanding of the leadership of change
- Understanding better the value of the senior leaders' role in supporting the conditions for teachers' resilience, including teachers' emotional wellbeing and commitment to change

Chapter Six continues with a brief consideration about dissemination, followed by suggestions about the direction of future research. It is proposed that action research might offer a way to further explore the ways in which transformative learning theory can contribute to knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders create conditions needed for teacher learning.

1.5 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has set out the key research themes and described the structure of the chapters. I have explained how my research questions developed and introduced the key features of transformative learning theory and its relevance to my research. The aims of my research and research questions are centred on: exploring the conditions which senior leaders create for teachers' professional learning so that they may strengthen their practice, within the context of school change, and how transformative learning theory may be used, as a conceptual framework, to contribute to an understanding about this process.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review. It begins with a reflection on how the literature search was undertaken and then explores the literature which was used to structure the research and research questions. This exploration is divided into two parts. Part 1 relates to the main research question: 'How do English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning within the context of change?'. It is focused on the context and culture of leadership and change and how senior leaders create the cultural conditions for teacher learning, associated with improvements to their practice as part of school improvement and school transformative change. The nature of national and individual school contexts is briefly considered before discussion about the cultural elements which can support leaders to drive change and support teacher learning. Following this, there is a summary of some leadership styles which can support change and teacher learning, after which there is a brief consideration about how some adult theories and models of learning are relevant to senior leaders organising teacher learning.

Part 2 of the literature review relates to the sub-research question: 'How might knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders organise teacher learning be developed with reference to transformative learning theory?'. This focuses on how senior leaders creating the conditions for teacher learning may be interpreted against transformative learning theory. Here, links are made between both parts of the literature review. In this way, the literature on the context and culture of leadership and change (from Part 1) is used to contribute to an argument about how transformative learning theory can frame an understanding of how senior leaders create a culture for teacher learning and their perspective (transformative) change. This is set within the context of school improvement and school transformative change. Part 2 starts by explaining transformative learning theory in more detail. Next, some criticisms of the theory are introduced, but explanations about my interest in the theory and its relevance to teacher learning associated with change are presented. There is then a description of how references to some of the key areas of transformative learning theory might contribute to our understanding about how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning associated with changes to their practice.

2.2 How the literature review was undertaken

Reading relevant literature has been ongoing throughout the duration of my research (Gray, 2009), inevitably informing the literature review, the data collection and data analysis. The main research question was developed around my interest in the ways in which primary school senior leaders created conditions to develop teachers' learning, associated with strengthening their teaching practice, within the context of school change. In order to gain an overview of the area, I consulted three existing literature reviews compiled by Thomson (2010), Tusting and Barton (2003), and Day and Sammons (2013). Parker and Sefton-Green's (2010) foreword to Thomson's review commented that it provided a useful overview of 'why people engage in school change and the main processes describing how such change occurs', and was directed towards 'those interested in changing schools' (p.9). Tusting and Barton (2003) provided an overview of adult learning theories and how educators might apply them to support the learning experiences of those engaged in adult education for mathematics and literacy; I applied some of the theories they described to the senior leader's role in shaping the learning experiences of teachers. From this I developed the sub-research question about how the processes used by senior leaders to organise teacher learning might be further understood with reference to transformative learning theory. Day and Sammons's (2013) review focused on leadership within the context of school improvement. From this review my interest in leadership styles which can enhance teacher resilience to support change began to develop.

Next, I explored primary sources searching for key themes related to my research questions (Gray, 2009) – these are detailed below. I used bibliographic databases to search for journal articles including: Education Abstracts (EBSCO)**,** Education Database (ProQuest), ERIC (EBSCO), ERIC (ProQuest). I also used the Google Scholar search engine and the Institute of Education's online library catalogue for journal articles, books, grey literature (e.g. non-commercial publications such as educational government documentation), theses and conference papers. Additionally, I trawled the reference lists of journal articles and conducted hand-searches to identify relevant sections or chapters in educational books (Gray, 2009).

In the database searches, the terms used included the following (individually and in combination):

- school senior leaders driving (and/ or leading and/ or steering and/ or supporting) change; educational leadership of change; leadership of school improvement and/ or transformation; leadership of school change
- theories and/ or models of school change and/ or improvement; school change; primary school-based change; organisational change linked to education; organisational change in schools; school transformation; school transformative change; school transformational change; professional learning communities
- theories and/ or models of adult learning; educator learning; professional learning; teacher learning; teacher learning for change (and/ or organisational change and/ or school improvement and/ or educational change); changes in teaching practice; continuing professional development; andragogy; self-directed learning, reflection and/ or experiential learning; transformative learning; transformative learning theory; teacher transformative change
- environments (and/ or conditions) to support teacher learning for educational change; learning culture; contexts of educational change and/ or improvement and/ or transformation; resilience; resilience to support teacher learning and change; accountability; autonomy

The following terms were used, when appropriate, in combination with the phrases detailed above:

- primary (and/ or elementary) schools (and/ or education)

Whilst the focus of my research was directed towards primary education, as this constituted my professional experiences, much literature was relevant to the contexts of both primary and secondary schools. Moreover, whilst I was interested in the English educational context, I was aware that international literature about modern educational systems had relevance (Hopkins, 2001). My focus was on state-maintained schools following the national curriculum (Gov.uk, no date) because this was the sector in which I was employed, and in which I delivered school improvement programmes designed to enhance how schools taught the national curriculum (DfEE and QCA, 1999; DfE, 2013a). However, I appreciated that much educational literature

on leadership, school change and teacher learning had relevance to schools whether or not they were state-maintained or required to follow the national curriculum.

2.3 Literature review part 1 – context and culture of leadership; senior leaders creating and supporting conditions for change and teacher learning

This section reviews literature in relation to the main research question about how senior leaders actively create conditions for teacher learning associated with changes to their teaching practice. I begin with a consideration of the contexts of educational change (specifically: national contexts and individual school contexts) and school cultures. Next, I briefly describe leadership styles which can support school change and teacher learning. Finally, I briefly reflect on some adult theories and models of learning which are relevant to school change and teacher learning.

Contexts and cultures

Southworth (2004) claims that 'context is… about understanding the culture of the school: that is the way things are done in a particular school' (p.7). Such a claim would suggest that it would be important to explore the environmental conditions under which change might occur - the contexts, cultures, and structures and systems - and leadership styles which contribute to senior leaders creating a culture for the teacher learning associated with change. As Southworth suggests (above), these environmental conditions are inextricably linked. Leadership for school change is positioned both within the internal school context, and the external contexts of wider society at local, national and international levels (Davies, 2009; Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016; Fullan, 2016). For the purpose of my research, I focus on the national and individual school contexts.

In relation to national contexts, pressures on school leaders to initiate changes in their teachers' practice are brought about by the accountability culture (see DfE, no date). Commentators in the field note that educational change in England has long been characterised by a performativity and accountability culture (Gleeson and Husbands, 2001; Ball, 2013; Ball, 2015). This culture emphasises pupils' academic achievement in English and mathematics, as measured by internal school-based data and national and international assessments (e.g. DfE, 2016; Biesta, 2017; DfE, 2018). A twin perennial focus of the English educational system have been the raising of pupils'

academic standards so as to remain economically competitive in the global market, alongside the drive to reduce inequalities between vulnerable groups of pupils and their peers as a matter of social justice (e.g. DfE, 2016; DfE, 2017; Social Mobility Commission, 2017). Meanwhile, OFSTED has been tasked with holding schools accountable for their outcomes since public education is a service provided by the state (Wilshaw and Morgan, 2014, p.5). OFSTED (2014) demands that 'only a good or better [outcome to school inspection]... is acceptable' (p.12), but considers this beneficial, because 'The best providers value inspection as an external challenge that helps to sustain and improve performance' (*ibid.*).

Several writers have recognised that the criteria power – 'the aims and purposes of education' (Simkins, 2010, p.216) fall within the jurisdiction of the government, influence accountability mechanisms, permit limited autonomy (Higham and Earley, 2013) and place constraints on professionalism (Wills and Sandholtz, 2009). Nevertheless, it has been acknowledged that the government has increased the operational power – to decide *how* education is provided (Simkins, 2010) and school improvement is delivered (Thomson, 2010) - to schools and to the senior leaders. This is relevant to my research about how leaders direct school improvement and coordinate their teachers' professional learning.

Nick Gibb (DfE and Gibb, 2017), School Standards Minister, referred to the school system transforming over several years which has empowered educators with greater responsibilities and autonomy. This development and school transformation seem to align with Caldwell and Spinks's (2013) reference to 'self-managing' schools - those which have 'the authority and responsibility to make decisions within a centrally determined framework of goals, policies, standards and accountabilities' (p.30). As a result of these shifts, there has been an increased importance on heads initiating and leading school improvement strategies as change agents (Muijs, 2012; Day and Sammons, 2013), and supporting their teachers to improve their practice and pupils' academic outcomes. This also underscores the importance of leaders recognising the benefits of their teachers' professional learning for school improvement (Southworth, 2004; Munro, 2011) and transformative change (Timperley, 2011).

In the context of individual schools, for successful change to happen, leaders need to be aware of, and sensitive to, their own schools' context, and current and future potential academic performance (Southworth, 2004). This awareness will help leaders to position and establish their school's priorities and interests within the larger national and international contexts of educational change (Southworth, 2004; Fullan, 2016; Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016). Braun *et al.* (2011) claim that school change initiatives and policy implementation are 'intimately shaped and influenced by school-specific factors' (p.585). Their research identifies four contexts: situated, professional, material and external. They are based on four secondary school case-studies but have relevance to those leading primary school improvement. The situated context includes the history, intake and locality of the school. The professional context includes the school's values, 'teacher commitments and experiences, and 'policy management' [sic]' (p.588). The professional context suggests that leaders should have knowledge of a school's capacity to professionally learn (Munro, 2011). The material context includes the school budget and the physical condition of the building. The external context reflects 'pressures and expectations from broader policy context, such as OFSTED ratings' and 'league table positions' (Braun *et al*., 2011, p.588). Southworth (2004) suggests that English leaders need to understand, navigate and sometimes interpret contextual influences for their teachers, when changes occur that stem from educational policy and which will impact upon their school. In doing this, leaders could support teachers to make links between their context, their school's vision and that of the national educational landscape.

For effective school improvement and transformative change, several writers (e.g. Kruse and Louis, 2009; Stoll, 2010) emphasise that it is important for senior leaders to nurture a learning culture for their teachers. A school's culture, characterized by traditions, values, beliefs and aims, informs how 'things get done' (Kruse and Louis, 2009, p.17) in the school and reactions to school improvement initiatives (Stoll, 2010). Cultural change can be promoted when senior leaders enable teachers to critically evaluate shared and/ or tacit assumptions, beliefs, values and outlooks which underpin the ways they think and hold perceptions of themselves, and what they believe may be achieved (Halpin, 2003; Kruse and Louis, 2009). Some key features of school culture are detailed below; they are not mutually exclusive.

One cultural aspect to support teacher learning is when leaders encourage teachers to learn as professionals, which Tusting and Barton (2003) refer to as 'learning how to learn' (p.24). This includes: learning from reflecting about everyday experiences; group learning; and an emphasis on self-responsibility for self-education, autonomy and being a lifelong learner (Tusting and Barton, 2003). Within this environment, senior leaders can recognise and value teachers' professional experiences by encouraging reflection about them and sharing worthwhile practices with others (Kruse and Louis, 2009; Munro, 2011). It offers professional learning opportunities for staff to learn with and from each other and support school improvement (Munro, 2011), for example in peer coaching (Logan and Sachs, 1991; Joyce and Showers, 2003). This echoes practices underpinning a 'learning enriched' (Telford, 1996, p.20; Stoll, 2011, p.106) institution in which leaders facilitate teacher collaboration and mutual support for continuous learning.

Munro (2011) suggests that it is important for senior leaders to provide bespoke support based upon each teacher's existing knowledge. However, learning can also be facilitated through leaders respecting teachers 'as professionals with autonomy over their professional goals for self-improvement' (Keisler, 2017, p.5), and valuing them as self-directed (Smith, 1983; Smith, 1990; Munro, 2011) and lifelong learners (Tusting and Barton, 2003; Senge, 2006; Senge, 2012).

Senior leaders can further support a culture for teacher learning by developing a professional learning community (PLC). Interest has developed in the potential of PLCs for building capacity to support school improvement initiatives (e.g. Fullan, 2016; Vangrieken *et al*., 2017; Day and Lieberman, 2018). In a PLC, leaders support their staff members to learn continuously and collectively as a team through dialogue, with an understanding of how change occurs to benefit pupil outcomes (Louis, 2006; Fullan, 2016). There is a 'shared commitment to the goals and learning outcomes' (Munro, 2005, p.2) of the professional learning. However, PLCs are considered challenging to implement (Fullan, 2016; Stevens, 2017) because they require a cultural change in schools to one of openness and trust, and a focus on the group learning together (Fullan, 2016) to influence individual learning.

In PLCs, alongside individual and group learning, there is also typically openness to learning from other sources, networks and partnerships (Stoll *et al*., 2006), including seeing the headteacher as a co-learner (Nixon, 2016). Collegiate inquiry to inform change is crucial (Bolam *et al.*, 2005; Hord and Sommers, 2008). This involves teachers and leaders inquiring about, reflecting upon and evaluating the school's current and future academic status, and evaluating the procedures used for improvement (Timperley, 2011). Such inquiry might involve leaders using statements or inquiry questions (*ibid.*) to talk to their teachers about pupils making insufficient progress. Primary school leaders can establish a collaborative culture to help teachers to debate and face challenges in an open and trusting environment (Nias, Southworth and Campbell, 1992). Southworth (2009) asserts that professional dialogue underpins teacher learning and that increasing opportunities for reflection are professional learning opportunities. This may be facilitated through cultural factors such as having or developing: an openness to improvement; relationships of equity, trust and respect; a school in which teachers expand their cognitive and skill bases; and supportive leaders within lateral and formal organisations of leadership (Kruse *et al*., 1994; Stoll, 2010; Hallam *et al*., 2015). Such cultural factors can also be facilitated by senior leaders building a shared vision of school direction with their teachers (Senge, 2012) and an approach which also encompasses 'team teaching, mentoring, action research, peer coaching, planning and mutual… feedback' (Stoll, 2010, p.99).

External collaboration is also highlighted within PLCs to facilitate change (Stoll *et al.*, 2006). Kruse and Louis (2009) differentiate between professional learning communities (based on internal school relationships) and networked learning communities (based on external relationships with other schools). Meanwhile, Harris, Jones and Huffman (2018) delineate between the following models of community learning: whole school (involving entire school collaboration), within school (where groups or 'professional learning teams' (p.5) can lead improvement), and across school (involving network learning).

An additional cultural factor, which leaders can develop to nurture teacher learning, is an environment which supports trust, commitment and resilience (Munro, 2011; Gu and Day, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014). This may also be facilitated when leaders demonstrate emotional intelligence (Ryan and Tutters, 2016). Commentators in the

field emphasise that school leaders can establish a culture of collaboration, enabling teachers to learn from each other (Munro, 2011) and external sources (Kruse and Louis, 2009), and by facilitating a culture of trust through honesty, openness and regard for others (Munro, 2011). Southworth (2004) claims that monitoring procedures of teachers, undertaken by leaders, can be seen as positive if they invite constructive feedback and learning opportunities. This also seems to be emphasised by Timperley (2011) who acknowledges that a school's culture can enable respectful but challenging conversations for the benefit of improving student outcomes.

Several writers have increased our understanding of the emotional dimensions of school change and development. Nurturing a culture of commitment to change (Senge 2006) is fundamental to school improvement (Volante, 2012), and includes senior leaders attending to their teachers' resilience (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014). Resilience is conceived as 'more than the ability to bounce back in response to acute challenges. It is the ability to sustain quality and renew commitment over time' (Day and Gu, 2014, p.85). Fostering resilience, motivation and feelings of wellbeing are acknowledged as important considerations for school leaders (Gu and Day, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014; Bingham and Bubb, 2017). Research about successful, English school improvement initiatives indicates how emotional understanding by leaders shape 'teachers' commitment, resilience and effectiveness' (Day and Sammons, 2013, p.39). This emotional intelligence, required by senior leaders to establish effective relationships (Ryan and Tuters, 2016), can drive school improvement (Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016), and is characterised by making teachers feel valued and involved and having concern for their professional and personal wellbeing (Day and Sammons, 2013, p.17). Bingham and Bubb (2017) acknowledge that whilst it is difficult to establish causal links between a teacher's wellbeing and health and student outcomes, literature suggests some form of a relationship. They further comment that 'although a link between a teacher's 'wellbeing and professional learning and development is hard to establish directly, having good mental and physical health is a prerequisite to learning' (p.181) and leaders have a valuable role in developing a conducive environment.

Crossley and Corbyn (2010) refer to having the 'right people on the bus' (p.63) to facilitate change. Their suggestion is that resistant teachers need support from senior

leaders so that they can make a decision about their commitment to school improvement and decide whether 'to get on the bus or get off it' (*ibid.*). This resonates with changing teachers' beliefs, not just behaviours (Guerra and Nelson, 2009). Changing beliefs might occur through senior leaders providing a rationale and vision for change to garner their teachers' commitment (Crossley and Corbyn, 2010). Meanwhile, Guskey (2002) acknowledges that professional development activities are sometimes considered a cornerstone to altering teacher beliefs. Whilst this is of relevance to senior leaders fostering teacher learning, Guskey proposes that changes in teacher attitudes and beliefs can also come as a result of change in their students' learning outcomes.

Additionally, structures and systems attended to by senior leaders can contribute to a school's culture, which can facilitate the teacher learning for improvements to their teaching practice associated with school improvement and transformative change. Structures and systems support a school's culture by providing accepted ground rules and expectations about ways of teaching and learning; this might include planning, monitoring and training opportunities (Southworth, 2004). Granting opportunities for professional learning has relevance for senior leaders who are delegated greater ownership over their schools' professional learning needs (Middlewood and Abbott, 2015). Southworth (2004) asserts that 'teachers' professional learning lies at the heart of school improvement' (p.128), underpinned by opportunities for dialogue (Southworth, 2009). Similarly, Munro (2011) highlights that a conducive culture for improvement 'scaffolds a systematic set of professional learning opportunities' (p.57). Senior leaders' support of their teachers' professional learning can incorporate modelling (e.g. through external providers), mentoring (e.g. peer-to-peer support where practice is respected and shared between colleagues) and coaching to support improved practice (Kruse and Louis, 2009) and transformative change (Timperley, 2011).

<u>Leadership styles which support teacher learning and change</u>

My main research question is about how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning which is associated with improvements to teaching practice within the context of school change. As part of this, the leadership style plays an important part and I briefly consider below how instructional, distributed and transformational styles

of leadership can influence school change and opportunities for teachers' professional learning. As a way of introduction, it is important to acknowledge that whilst my research positions senior leaders as steering school change, senior leaders work with and through colleagues and are dependent upon them to put ideas for school improvement into practice (Southworth, 2004). Day and Sammons (2013) acknowledge that how the effects of leadership operate to improve student outcomes is debatable. However, their supporting role has been noted in, for example, nurturing a positive school culture; enhancing teacher motivation and commitment; team building with teachers and recognising their potential (*ibid*.); setting a school vision and goals for teachers; and granting teachers autonomy (Hattie, 2015). Hallinger (2011) claims that an initially assertive leadership style might be warranted where there is an 'urgent need for improvement, a lack of demonstrated success, and uncertain confidence' (p.135). Nevertheless, this can eventually be replaced with a more democratic and collaborative style, conducive to promoting teachers' agency and informed decision-making (Barnett and Stevenson, 2016).

Instructional (or pedagogical) leadership is based on having a pedagogical vision and using a direct hands-on approach, or indirectly through delegation, to influence teacher instruction and practice to ultimately support student learning (Hallinger, 2009; Muijs, 2012; Day and Sammons, 2013). This includes leaders monitoring and demonstrating effective practice and supporting ongoing professional learning through 'staff development, peer-peer networking, or peer coaching' (Hallinger, 2009, p.10). It also requires leaders to develop cultural norms of trust and collaboration, and teacher growth and development (Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, 2004). Instructional leaders also promote opportunities for teachers to have discussion for 'reflection, insight and enquiry' (Southworth, 2004, p.105) into their practice.

Distributed leadership can act as a strong, internal driver for school improvement (Harris, 2003), enabling professional learning from offering or receiving support. In primary education, distributed leadership extends leadership responsibilities to middle leaders and beyond (Southworth, 2004) in recognition that this can promote improvement, e.g. by opening up opportunities for colleagues to peer teach (Southworth, 2004; Muijs, 2012). This is also 'learning-centred leadership' (Southworth, 2004, p.162), which increases the 'influence of all staff to support and

shape the quality of teaching and learning across the school' (*ibid.*). In this respect, it can draw on untapped leadership potential (Muijs, 2012) for teachers to 'significantly influence their colleagues' practice' (Volante, 2012, p.14).

Transformational leadership focuses more on the relationships between leaders and teachers (Day and Sammons, 2013). This supports teachers' commitment (Volante, 2012) as part of the school's culture, particularly with seeking to transform beliefs, attitudes and feelings in relation to school improvement (Harris, 2003; Hopkins, 2003). Instructional and distributed leadership can work in tandem with transformational leadership (Hallinger, 2010; Day and Sammons, 2013). Hallinger (2011) refers to this as 'leadership for learning' (p.126), which supports pupil learning and outcomes, and teachers' professional learning.

Adult theories and models of learning

In this section, I briefly explore the literature on adult learning and recontextualise the findings to schools. Merriam (2001) explains that a combination of theories and models comprises our understanding of adult learning, and I consider below how this can be applied to teachers as adult learners and to the principles of senior leaders coordinating teacher learning associated with school change.

Literature on social constructivist theories of adult learning, derived from child-based models of learning (e.g. Vygotsky, 1978; Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1978), highlights for educators (senior leaders) that learners (teachers) benefit from interaction with others (Tusting and Barton, 2003). Meanwhile, andragogy, defined as 'the art and science of helping adults learn' (Knowles, 1980, p. 43) and which Mezirow (1991) associated with his theory of transformative learning, emphasises the motivated self-direction of learners (teachers) (Tusting and Barton, 2003). Self-direction in professional learning can support school improvement (Munro, 2011) and the educator (senior leader) can provide conditions that are conducive for its occurrence (Tusting and Barton, 2003).

Tusting and Barton (2003) note that reflective and experiential models of adult learning promote the distinct nature of reflecting upon experience, where people encounter problems and consider how to resolve them. For senior leaders, this resonates with

the idea that there is value in supporting their teachers to see situations from different perspectives as a way of developing their pedagogy (Loughran, 2017). From this reorganisation of experience and seeing situations in new ways, 'adult [teacher] learning is potentially transformative' (Tusting and Barton, 2003, p.6). However, whilst reflective and experiential learning may be promoted, there is no guarantee that the learning will occur (*ibid.*). The concepts of reflection and experience underpin transformative learning theory (Calleja, 2014) and are explored further in Part 2 of the literature review.

For me, the literature detailed in Part 1 (about change and the context and culture of leadership) contributes to an argument about how transformative learning theory can frame an understanding of how senior leaders create a culture for teacher learning as part of school improvement and school transformative change. Aspects of this literature, where relevant, are referred to in the second part of the literature review.

2.4 Literature review part 2 – using transformative learning theory to contribute to an understanding about how senior leaders organise teacher learning as part of change

This section reviews literature in relation to the sub-research question about how transformative learning theory might be used to develop an understanding about the ways in which senior leaders organise teachers' learning to enhance their practice, within the context of school improvement and school transformation. I begin by explaining transformative learning theory in more detail and explain the stages of transformative learning and the nature of reflection. Next, I present some critiques of the theory but explain my interest in using transformative learning theory for my area of research. Finally, I explain how references to some of the key areas of transformative learning theory might support our understanding about how senior leaders create the conditions for the professional learning of teachers.

In this study, I use the terms 'transformative learning' and 'transformative change' for a teacher interchangeably. I associate a teacher's transformative change, or transformative learning, with a perspective change about their teaching practice, pedagogy or views about education, and them taking subsequent action. Whilst this is different to my use of (a school's) transformative change used earlier, in Part 1, both

themes in my thesis promote improving pupils' academic outcomes. I acknowledge that 'not all learning is transformative' (Mezirow, 1991, p.223) and that teachers can alter their practice without undergoing transformative change. Nevertheless, Hoban (2002), Gu and Day (2013) and Cranton (2016) recommend that leaders need to provide a supportive environment for teacher learning to occur.

The nature of transformative learning theory

This section explores Mezirow's transformative learning theory and comments about the nature of reflection to guide learning. Mezirow's theory was initiated in the 1970s as part of research about women returning to study after a hiatus (Mezirow, 1991). He reported that their re-engagement with studying led to a raised consciousness about their new status and that this occurred over 10 stages:

1. Having a disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. A critical reflection of one's assumptions
4. Relating feelings of discontent to others sharing similar views
5. Exploring avenues for new behaviours
6. Planning a line of action
7. Gaining knowledge and skills to implement one's plans
8. Experimenting with new roles
9. Building one's confidence and competence in these new roles
10. Reintegrating oneself back into society with one's altered perspective

(Adapted from Mezirow,1991, pp.168-169.)

Stages 1-4 provide triggers for action. This begins with a disorienting dilemma which occurs when people have an experience or series of experiences which they were not expecting, or is incompatible with their current level of understanding. This may cause them to examine their feelings in response to the dilemma and encounter guilt or shame. Next, they may critically reflect (explained below) about their assumptions which underpin their view of the situation they have experienced. Individuals may have conversations with others who have met similar experiences of discontent. Stages 5-7 are preparations for action to deal with changes in behaviour, as a result of having a new perspective. This involves individuals exploring options for new ways

of acting, making a plan for taking action and acquiring relevant knowledge and skills to enable them to implement their plan of actions. Stages 8-10 involve taking action. This happens where people trial new roles associated with the change in behaviour and become confident and proficient in these. Finally, people return to everyday life with their changed behaviour, based upon the new perspective.

Mezirow (1991) defined reflection as 'critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience' (p.104). Content reflection is 'reflection on *what* we perceive, think, feel or act upon' (p.107). Process reflection entails 'examination of *how*' (p.108) we perceive, think, feel or act, and an assessment of our efficacy in these functions. Premise reflection entails us 'becoming aware of *why* we perceive, think, feel, or act as we do' (p.108). Transformative learning theory proposes that, through critical self-reflection, we alter our world view, the ways we create the meanings we attribute to experiences, and take action as a result (e.g. see Mezirow, 1990a; Mezirow,1990b). This means we are aware of our presuppositions, challenge our established patterns of thinking, and 'learning includes acting on these insights' (Mezirow, 1990a, p.xvi).

Transformative learning theory describes how critical reflection and critical self-reflection foster adult learning (Mezirow, 1998a; 1998b). Critical reflection, underpinned by content and process reflection, involves the learner reflecting 'back on something that occurred' and 'examines the assumptions or presuppositions that were involved in the reflection process' (Kitchenham, 2008, pp.115-116). This typically involves critical reflection of a meaning scheme (Kitchenham, 2008). A meaning scheme consists of habitual assumptions governing specific situations (Mezirow, 1990b). Critical self-reflection is akin to premise reflection (Kitchenham 2008) and is 'a critique of a premise' (Mezirow, 1998b, p. 186) upon which the assumptions are based. As a practice, it involves becoming cognisant of, and critiquing the assumptions underpinning our world view to confront our habitual thinking (Mezirow, 1991). Premise reflection has the greatest potential for transforming our meaning perspectives and for transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991; Cranton and King, 2003) - (meaning perspectives are our broader world views (Mezirow, 1990b)). For example, senior leaders might foreground the purpose of children's education as a rationale for change to prompt premise reflection among their teachers. Cranton and King (2003)

propose that reflection about teaching can be enabled through content reflection (e.g. about 'What did I do that led to this outcome?' (p.34)), process reflection (e.g. about how something was taught or to question if something went wrong) and premise reflection (e.g. 'Why do I feel responsible for this situation?' (p.35)). However, they suggest critical self-reflection is particularly important to challenge our habits of mind about teaching.

Transformative learning theory literature differs in the ways in which it distinguishes 'critical reflection' from 'critical self-reflection' (e.g. see Kitchenham, 2008). Indeed, over time, Mezirow altered and refined his ideas and use of both concepts (*ibid.*). Whilst suggesting that the deeper process of critical self-reflection increased a tendency towards the occurrence of transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow, 1994), he later indicated both types of reflection could be influential (Mezirow, 2009). I will use both terms - 'critical reflection' and 'critical self-reflection' - interchangeably, according to the specific language used within relevant literature.

Criticisms of transformative learning theory

This section explains some of the criticisms directed against transformative learning theory but details how I will use the theory within my research. It is acknowledged that Mezirow refined his theory and stages (Kitchenham, 2008) and his original conception has been considered with greater flexibility (Mezirow, 2000; Kumi-Yeboah and James, 2012; Cranton, 2016). For example, it has been suggested that some of the originally identified ten stages may be omitted (Taylor, 1997; Percy, 2005; Kitchenham, 2008), and that a disorienting dilemma may be a single epochal dramatic event or a more gradual, cumulative process that could include everyday experiences (Mezirow, 2000; Kitchenham, 2008; Cranton, 2016). Nevertheless, some order and linearity between stages is postulated, e.g. experiencing disorientation at the beginning and reintegration back into everyday life at the end, based upon the new perspective (Cranton, 2016).

Traditionally, critical-reflection within transformative learning theory was considered to be devoid of emotions and that individual, rational thought and formal logic (cognition) would guide actions to solve problems (Dirkx, 1997; Kreber, 2012). However, these views were contested (Kreber, 2012; Cranton, 2016) with scholars like Taylor (2001)

drawing on neurobiological research to highlight the reciprocal relationship between emotions and cognitive thought. The role of the emotional components of learning were subsequently given greater centrality by Mezirow (e.g. Mezirow, 2000; Illeris, 2014; Taylor, 2015) as was the context in which learning occurred (Christie *et al*., 2015; Cranton, 2016).

There has been a rapid growth in interpretations of transformative learning theory (e.g. see Cranton and Kasl, 2012; Dirkx, 2012; Taylor and Cranton, 2012). These critiques have resulted in challenges distinguishing transformative learning from other forms of learning and change (Dirkx, 2012; Newman, 2012; Hoggan, 2016). Dirkx (2012) argues that 'developing a new or different attitude... may reflect effective learning experiences' (p.400), but it does not necessarily equate with genuine transformative learning. This resonates with Mezirow's (1991) suggestion that whilst learning is change, it is not all transformative unless it involves critical (self-) reflection upon assumptions that underpin a world view, and informs action taken as a result of new perspectives.

Despite these critiques, I am interested in transformative learning theory because it can get to the heart of why adult learners make change through reflecting upon and critiquing their deeply held world views. Mezirow's theory has been applied to a variety of group and individual contexts, including those of educational professionals (Cranton, 2016). For example, it has been used in relation to teacher education, educators within higher education, and early childhood and secondary school teachers (e.g. Cranton, 1996; Kumi-Yeboah and James, 2012; Feriver *et al*., 2016), and has been used to help explain critical triggers for changes in teachers' practice (e.g. Kitchenham, 2008).

The role of leaders in driving organisational change, underpinned by transformative learning theory, has been developed by Watkins, Marsick and Faller (2012). I am interested in Mezirow's (1991) 'theory of adult learning' because it is 'addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (p.33). However, to the best of my knowledge, there has been a lack of application of the theory to the English primary sector and, in particular, to our understanding of the conditions which senior leaders create to organise teacher learning to improve teaching practice as part of school change. I feel

that application of transformative learning theory could benefit senior leaders who might use this knowledge to strengthen their leadership of change.

How transformative learning theory can frame the role of senior leaders in supporting the professional learning and perspective (transformative) change of teachers

This section considers how transformative learning theory is applied to my research. It explores the relevance of key areas of the theory to develop an understanding about how senior leaders may support the professional learning and perspective change (transformative change) of teachers in relation to their practice. Mezirow's (1991; 1997) theory proposes that change occurs when an individual experiences a perspective transformation and takes action as a result. It emphasises that this process may be facilitated when educators support learners to critically self-reflect on their world views, and question, challenge and engage in critical and collaborative dialogue with others, to examine their own and others' assumptions underpinning their experiences of a situation. Mezirow (1997) also proposes that educators should establish collaborative norms of respect and responsibility for helping one another learn. Within the field of education, these processes can enable teachers to construct other perspectives to understand their practice and consider the consequences resulting from their own practices (Cranton, 1996; Cranton and King, 2003). Moreover, Cranton and King (2003) argue that critical self-reflection could support teachers' professional development and learning.

When applied to my research topic, Mezirow's theory leads me to think that senior leaders could support teachers' professional learning and a perspective (transformative) change, by providing opportunities for them to examine their teaching practice through critical self-reflection and collaborative dialogue. This mirrors leadership and change literature about leaders promoting collaboration to support school improvement and school transformative change through teachers' professional learning (e.g. Southworth, 2004; Caldwell and Spinks, 2013); this might include peer demonstration and coaching (Joyce and Showers, 2003). Opportunities for reflection can be challenging, but educators can create a nurturing culture by supporting learners to resolve issues relevant to their real-life experiences (Tusting and Barton, 2003) and seeing situations from different perspectives to develop their pedagogy (Loughran, 2017). Additionally, Senge (2006; 2012) foregrounds the collaborative and social

dimensions underpinning the disciplines of a learning organisation such as team learning, which may be facilitated by leaders. However, Cranton (2016) acknowledges that collaboration is not requisite for individual transformation to happen.

Key areas associated with transformative learning theory have relevance for framing and contributing to an understanding about the ways in which senior leaders develop teacher learning to strengthen teacher practice for school improvement. These themes, developed below, are: meaning schemes, meaning perspectives and perspective transformation; types of adult learning; degrees of autonomy; and resilience (including emotion and commitment to change).

Meaning schemes, meaning perspectives and perspective transformation

Mezirow (1990b, 1991) suggests that adult learning occurs through the experience of a perspective transformation. This occurs from the critical self-reflection of an experience and using that to revise or renew the meaning of an experience to guide future action. Mezirow postulates that there are two linked components underpinning a perspective transformation: meaning schemes and meaning perspectives. These underpin our world view and are based on past experiences. Meaning schemes are our sets of habitual assumptions that govern our understanding of specific situations (Mezirow, 1990b). They encompass particular attitudes, beliefs and emotional reactions to direct our understanding as implicit rules (Mezirow, 1991). In relation to a senior leader directing change, this might involve them having an awareness of the need to alter a teacher's limiting predisposition to a particular pedagogical approach (constituting a meaning scheme) if it is not supporting school improvement. Meanwhile, meaning perspectives are our broader world views - higher order sets of related meaning schemata, or frames of reference: 'theories, propositions, beliefs, prototypes, goal orientations and evaluations' and 'networks of argument' (Mezirow, 1990b, p.2). They are our frames of reference, or the way we perceive our realities (Percy, 2005). For a senior leader directing change, this might involve them becoming aware of the need for a teacher's assumptions about the role of education (constituting a meaning perspective) to alter if they are not aligned with the national and school's perspective of school improvement.

A perspective transformation is governed by us becoming 'critically aware of how and why our assumptions' underpinning our meaning schemes and perspectives 'have

come to constrain the way we perceive, understand and feel about our world' (Mezirow, 1991, p.167). The incidents (disorienting dilemmas) which trigger a perspective transformation can include episodes occurring in the workplace (see Marsick, 1990) or may be elicited via a leader through an eye-opening, thought-provoking discussion which challenges employees' presuppositions (Mezirow, 1990b, Mezirow, 1991). A perspective transformation can occur in groups as well as for individuals. It involves attending to alternative points of view which we initially consider to be discordant with our own (Marsick, 1990; Mezirow, 1991; Yorks and Marsick, 2000). Transformative learning theory suggests that a teacher's 'significant experience' for a perspective transformation can include 'powerful in-service training… [or] educational reform' (Taylor, 2015, p.18) which results in shifts in thinking about pupils and their role as educator. Some teachers, as a result of a significant incident, might find that their frame of reference is incompatible with the new situation, or insufficient to provide adequate understanding about the experience (Taylor, 2015). For example, a perspective transformation might be triggered by senior leaders having pedagogical conversations with their teachers about incumbent improvements as part of school improvement. The teachers may be emotionally awoken and supported by senior leaders to question their underlying assumptions about their practice and, through dialogue and critical reflection about the triggering incident, they might experience a perspective transformation (Taylor, 2015).

Transformative learning theory claims that learners (including teachers) may have insufficient information to engage with change (Mezirow, 1990b). To counteract this, senior leaders can share their knowledge with teachers, about how their school's culture and the contexts in which their school operates help inform school improvement priorities (Southworth, 2004; Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016; Fullan, 2016). Additionally, teachers may be unaware of deficiencies within their own practice and it may be necessary for leaders to have challenging conversations with their staff, accompanied by a raft of support mechanisms, to facilitate change.

Types of adult learning

Another key area associated with transformative learning theory, which has relevance to senior leaders driving change, is the type of professional learning which occurs. I position teachers' professional learning as a 'move from non-reflective habitual action

to a more conscious practice', which could 'bring teaching issues to the forefront of their mind' and expose teachers 'to a range of ideas that could enhance their teaching practice' (Kligyte, 2011, p.209). The learning engenders a 'change in perspective, [resulting in] a more sophisticated view of teaching than was previously held' (*ibid.*). I feel that senior leaders can facilitate this as part of the processes of school improvement and that this may be understood through transformative learning theory. I explore below how senior leaders supporting teachers' professional learning could be interpreted against instrumental and dialogic learning.

Instrumental (or technical) learning involves learning to have control of, and manipulation over, the environment or other people, where change is measured through productivity, performance, or behaviour (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). For example, this might involve senior leaders organising teacher training to improve specific techniques of classroom practice. The culture for teachers to improve their practice in their daily environment is contingent upon support offered by senior leaders (Timperley, 2011). If leaders eventually delegate autonomy for self-directed learning opportunities at an appropriate time (Barnett and Stevenson, 2016), then this can show respect for their teachers as professionals (Keisler, 2017) and support their intrinsic motivation to engage as learners (Tusting and Barton, 2003). Although there is a role for prescriptive and instrumental learning, an overuse can limit learning because it does not necessarily promote critical reflection about practice (Cranton, 1996). Nevertheless, technical knowledge can prompt change by providing learners with skills and knowledge to open up possibilities for redefining themselves within their work context (Cranton, 2016).

Dialogic (or communicative) learning centres around making ourselves understood and learning to comprehend and evaluate the validity of the meaning conveyed by a communication (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). Mezirow (1991) asserted that meaning exists within ourselves and is validated through communication, or critical discourse, with others. This resonates with social constructivist theories of adult learning, highlighting for educators (senior leaders) that learners (teachers) benefit from interaction with others (Tusting and Barton, 2003). Transformative learning theory claims that learning might be engendered by bracketing our preconceived ideas and critically reviewing the evidence and arguments we might have (Mezirow, 1990b).

For example, this could occur if senior leaders provide their teachers with reasons for change to improve the academic results of underachieving groups in relation to social equity (see Morgan, 2016), which might be then reflected on and deliberated by teachers. This seems relevant to the micro and macro contexts in which leaders operate to identify priorities for their school (Southworth, 2004; Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016; Fullan, 2016). This also resonates with Timperley's (2011) assertion that making meaning of a situation is essential for the transformative change underpinning sustained professional learning for 'solving entrenched educational problems' (p.5).

Kitchenham (2008) suggests that when new meaning schemes and perspectives are interpreted, peer discussion is an ideal medium for learning. A professional learning community (PLC) might be regarded as an environment in which to promote this communicative learning because it involves ongoing, collaborative, critical and reflective interrogation of practice to support teacher learning and growth (Bolam *et al.*, 2005; Stoll *et al*., 2006; Fullan, 2016). For example, leaders might discuss inadequate pupil progress with their teachers through statements or inquiry questions (Timperley, 2011). Whilst this aligns with accountability requirements, Southworth (2009) asserts that professional dialogue underpins teacher learning and that increasing opportunities for reflection are professional learning opportunities. Dialogic learning through interaction with others (Mezirow, 1991) may occur through internal and external collaborative practices organised and facilitated by senior leaders (Muijs, 2012), or as part of community learning promoted through current policy. For example, this could involve accessing support within one's school, teaching school alliances (DfE, 2016), and establishing network learning communities to examine solutions to educational challenges (Crossley and Corbyn, 2010; Caldwell and Spinks, 2013; DfE, 2016). Moreover, within community learning, and as part of communicative learning, an educator (leader) might be regarded as a co-learner by teachers (Mezirow, 1997; Cranton, 2016; Nixon, 2016).

Degrees of autonomy

I am interested in the operational power of education (how it is provided); specifically, how senior leaders facilitate teachers' professional learning and how knowledge about this may be developed through an understanding of transformative learning theory.

This section explores how teacher autonomy with learning may be understood in relation to senior leaders directing school change.

Transformative learning theory research and literature emphasise voluntary participation and agency (e.g. Ross-Gordon *et al*., 2015; Feriver *et al*., 2016). However, accountability mechanisms operating within the centrally determined educational framework permit only *limited* autonomy (Higham and Earley, 2013), with the criteria power (aims and purposes) of education remaining in the government's hands (Simkins, 2010). Watkins, Marsick and Faller (2012) present a transformative learning theory model relevant for top-down or bottom-up organisational change. It allows for top-down change, e.g. via the presentation and implementation of new visions, cultures or strategies, where individual learning will be influenced by these organisational systems. However, the authors acknowledge limitations to this since it aligns with 'conformity and compliance' (p.383), which can meet with resistance. Their second, bottom-up route, presents a more collaborative, autonomous and empowered approach, with change at the individual or team level dispersed throughout the organisation and considered as being more conducive to sustained change.

Mezirow's (1991) theory drew on andragogy, defined as the 'art and science of helping adults learn' (Knowles, 1980, p.43) and which positions the responsibility for learning upon the adult learners who are self-directed and have a certain readiness to learn supported by internal motivators (Cranton, 1996). However, these motivators may be enhanced by senior leaders, who look to alter teachers' beliefs (Guerra and Nelson, 2009) and garner their commitment to change by providing a vision and rationale (Crossley and Corbyn, 2010).

Transformative learning theory also proposes that a locus of control and self-determination may be garnered through the process of autonomous thinking as part of the critical self-reflection upon which change is based (Mezirow, 1997). There is freedom to engage with critical reflection about one's perspective (Mezirow, 1991; Cranton, 1996; Henderson, 2002), enabling teachers as learners to 'make dramatic gains in self-direction' (Mezirow, 1990a, p.xiii) and autonomy. This autonomy is also reflected in literature about how senior leaders support teacher change through increasing autonomy and empowerment for their professional learning (e.g. Kruse and

Louis, 2009; Munro, 2011). For example, this occurs when educators (senior leaders) have a raised awareness of their learners' (teachers') self-direction (Tusting and Barton, 2003), nurture teacher autonomy in relation to their targets for self-improvement (Keisler, 2017), and foster their autonomy with learning how to learn (Smith, 1990; Tusting and Barton, 2003). Alongside the autonomy (independent choice) of the individual teacher to engage with learning about their practice (Cranton, 1996; Illeris, 2014), there is autonomy delegated by leaders under conditions of distributed leadership (Day and Sammons, 2013) and 'leadership for learning' Hallinger (2011, p.126). Moreover, Cranton and King (2003) indicate that autonomy to develop the curriculum, as professional learning, can generate transformative learning by developing 'new insights that may be furthered through later discussions' (p.36).

Resilience and the affective dimensions of learning

I detail below how leaders nurturing teacher resilience and attending to the emotional dimensions of learning have relevance to senior leaders supporting teacher learning as part of change. Resilience, emotional dimensions of change and commitment to change seem to be interrelated. For example, Day and Gu (2014) assert that resilience encompasses themes of inner vocational drive, intrinsic motivation and emotional commitment to drive student achievement. The role of the affective components of learning has been given increased prominence within transformative learning theory (Mezirow 2000; Illeris, 2014; Taylor, 2015). For example, Mezirow (1991) emphasises that it is 'not enough to understand intellectually the need to change the way one acts; one requires emotional strength and an act of will in order to move forward' (p.171). This suggests that developing resilience is important for the learning associated with change and develops the idea that it could be beneficial for senior leaders to nurture teachers' resilience to facilitate their learning

When senior leaders develop teacher learning, this could lead teachers to question their personal values and themes underpinning their self-concept, and lead them to question or negate ideas which they have held close (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). This may make the procedure threatening for teachers, by exposing their vulnerability (Taylor 2015). It may also be painful and emotive, and lead to a tendency for new learning to be blocked, reducing anxiety (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991).

Nevertheless, ‘emotion-laden experiences are often the basis of... critical incidents [disorienting dilemmas]’ which ‘lead to personal development, learning and growth’ (Lundgren and Poell, 2016, p.23). Mezirow (1990c) asserts that educators can provide emotional support in ‘a secure environment that fosters the trust necessary for critical self-examination and the expression of feelings’ (pp.359-360). For example, this might occur when teachers engage with dialogue, as part of observational feedback from senior leaders, and acknowledge the need to amend their practice. This mirrors literature on senior leaders and the ways in which they can help to develop a culture of change by using their own emotional intelligence (Clarke and O’Donoghue, 2016) to shape ‘teachers’ commitment, resilience and effectiveness’ (Day and Sammons, 2013, p.39) and to understand teachers and their situations to help resolve issues (Ryan and Tuters, 2016). In particular, senior leaders can attend to the emotive dimensions of change, which are experienced by their teachers, by facilitating a supportive culture (Ryan and Tuters, 2016), building positive relationships, and valuing and being aware of their teachers’ professional and personal wellbeing (Day and Sammons, 2013; Fullan 2016). The emotional fallout of self-realisation about one’s teaching practice can ‘impinge on teachers’ sense of professional identity and competence’ (Timperley, 2011, p.16), and needs sensitive handling by senior leaders.

2.5 Conclusion

Teachers’ professional learning and development have a reciprocal relationship with school improvement and school transformation (Munro, 2011). To improve student achievement, the school needs to alter its pedagogy and learn the appropriate teaching to facilitate this (*ibid.*). Leaders’ guidance and support of teachers’ professional learning is particularly effective when they lead learning and create school communities that learn (Timperley, 2011).

Part 1 of the literature review considered the context and culture of leadership and how senior leaders created the conditions for teacher learning, to strengthen teaching practice, as part of school improvement and school transformative change. This was linked to the environments they establish and nurture (in terms of school contexts, cultures, and collaborative organisational structures and systems), their leadership styles, and some relevant adult theories and models of learning. Drawing on this literature, my main research question addresses the ways in which English primary

school senior leaders can create the conditions for teacher learning to improve practice as part of change. Part 2 of the literature review established links between the literature presented in Part 1 on leadership and change, and transformative learning theory. Links were made between both parts of the literature review so that the literature on the culture and context of leadership and change (from Part 1) contributed to an argument about how transformative learning theory can frame an understanding of how senior leaders create a culture for teacher learning and their perspective (transformative) change. This was set within the context of school change. This informed my sub-research question which explores how transformative learning theory can frame an understanding of how senior leaders can organise teacher learning. This is within the context of leaders creating a culture for teacher learning as part of school improvement and transformative (school and teacher) change. I am not aware of the theory having been applied to this area elsewhere in the literature and feel that it could benefit senior leaders who might use the knowledge to strengthen their leadership of change. Transformative learning theory is used because it is a 'theory of adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33). In the next chapter, I consider the methodological decisions and approaches used within my study.

Chapter 3 Research Considerations

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach used in my research and makes links, where appropriate, to the research questions. It starts by detailing the research paradigm, a constructivist-interpretive approach, followed by the ontological, epistemological and theoretical perspectives, which underpinned it. Next, it considers the methods used to collect, process and analyse the data. This commences with a consideration of participant selection, which includes an explanation of how and why senior leaders were chosen as participants and why OFSTED criteria of school inspection outcomes were used as part of this process. Following this, the data collection processes (two interviews) and the construction of the research tool (two interview schedules) are described. Within this, limitations of the interview schedules are acknowledged and why this may have led to too much unfocused data being collected. Additionally, there is consideration given to the senior leaders' lack of engagement with a gap task set between their two interviews. Details are also provided about why no questions were asked explicitly about transformative learning theory during the interviews, and the ethical decision not to inform participants that their responses to questions would be interpreted against the theory. After relating the procedures used for the data preparation and analysis, themes of validity and generalisability are considered. Finally, approaches to ethical considerations are described, which includes an explanation of why the decision was made to not ask for respondent validation after the interviews were conducted. Some ethical considerations are detailed throughout the chapter in relation to certain methodological decisions made.

3.2 My research paradigm and its underpinnings

The basic set of beliefs that guided my actions (Guba, 1990; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014) aligned me to a constructivist-interpretive methodological approach, which focused upon the portrayal, analysis and interpretation of individuals' perceptions and organisations within real-life contexts (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Robson 2011). This framework suggests that researchers should seek to understand 'the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (Schwandt, 1994, p.118). My understanding of the participants' ideas (Schwandt, 1994) developed during the initial conduct of

interviews and subsequent data analysis phases. My individual construction of meaning occurred during two stages of data analysis. Firstly, I identified themes from the interviews based upon the senior leaders' examples and perceptions of change, teacher learning and resilience. This linked to my main research question about how English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning associated with strengthening the quality of teaching practice within the context of change. Secondly, I illustrated these themes, where relevant, against key areas associated with transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory. This linked to the sub-research question about how an understanding might be developed about the ways in which senior leaders organise teacher learning.

Underpinning research decisions are considerations about ontology, epistemology and theoretical perspectives (Gray, 2009; Creswell, 2018). Blaikie (2000) suggests that 'ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality' (p.8). In other words, ontology is about the nature of reality and truth. My ontological perspective was influenced from the relativist consideration of there being multiple realities and world views held by individuals (Guba, 1990; Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014; Noble and Smith, 2015). Even though there were likely to be commonalities amongst participants in relation to the topics discussed, I also wanted to capture examples of and/ or perspectives about school change, teacher learning and resilience pertinent to each leader.

My epistemological position - my understanding of how reality might be known (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) - was underpinned by my subjectivist stance from which findings, based on a participant's subjective knowledge, can be constructed through an interaction between the inquirer and inquired (Guba, 1990). During my research, I sought to interpret the leaders' examples of and/ or perspectives about school change, teacher learning and resilience by undertaking and analysing qualitative interviews. My theoretical perspective was influenced by interpretivism which endeavours to develop an understanding of the participants' personal world (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). I drew on my interpretive stance to explore aspects of education (school improvement) from the senior leaders' perspectives. To answer the main research question, I used interviews and data analysis. From the analysis, I identified themes associated with the leaders creating the conditions to nurture

teachers' learning associated with enhancing their practice relevant to school change. To answer the sub-research question, I then explored how we might develop our understanding of these themes with reference to key areas of transformative learning theory and the stages of the theory.

3.3 Methods

This section discusses the methods I used to undertake my research. Research methods may be defined as 'techniques or procedures used to gather or analyse data related to some research question or hypothesis' (Crotty, 1998, p.3).

3.3.1 Participant selection

Having been a local authority consultant and deputy headteacher involved in delivering and leading programmes of school improvement, I became interested in exploring how senior leaders support their teachers' learning. This was because the teachers' engagement with learning varied and impacted upon the success of the programmes I was involved with. I chose not to interview teachers because I was interested in collecting the views of headteachers and deputies. As the two most senior professionals I had supported with the leadership of change when I was a consultant, the head's leadership role was traditionally undertaken with a deputy (Glatter, 2010). Moreover, as a deputy myself, I was leading school improvement programmes alongside my headteacher. Therefore, the perspectives of headteachers and deputies about change and teacher learning still held much relevance for my professional position.

When making decisions about the suitability of my sampling strategy (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011), one of my criteria was that participants be a substantive or acting (with similar responsibilities) headteacher or deputy in a state-maintained primary school. I focused on state-maintained schools and the primary age range because this was the sector and phase in which I was employed and it was therefore relevant to my professional learning and practice. I sought practitioners who had been in their leadership position, or employed at their school, for at least one academic year. This was so they would have knowledge of, and would have had involvement with, strategies of change undertaken within their school. When potential participants contacted me, I discussed the time criterion to gauge their suitability for being

interviewed. The time criterion was also influenced by my knowledge about Crossley and Corbyn's (2010) claim that schools should aim to make significant change within twelve months, a claim that resonated with my consultancy experiences.

I used purposive sampling to select leaders. This method restricted external validity by acknowledging that my sample would not represent the wider population (i.e. all primary school leaders) (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). External validity refers to extending the findings beyond the research setting and the participants (Mertens, 2014). However, purposive sampling enabled me to accomplish a specific requirement of my research and approach individuals (senior leaders) possessing relevant, first-hand information (about school change, teacher learning and nurturing teacher resilience) associated with their professional position (Drew, Hardman and Hosp, 2008; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Robson, 2011). I could have selected participants from senior leaders I knew professionally. However, I rejected this approach. I wanted to avoid the risks associated with convenience sampling which involves selecting the 'most convenient persons to act as respondents', without due regard to 'whether or not findings are representative' (Robson, 2011, p.275). Using acquaintances might have also increased a propensity for bias to occur, which could have distorted the data within the interviews (Gray, 2009). For example, leaders might have answered questions in a particular direction because of their acquaintance with me as a deputy. Similarly, I rejected using senior leaders from schools I had worked with as a consultant.

I chose to select leaders from schools according to their OFSTED grading (e.g. OFSTED, 2013) because OFSTED (no date) are charged with monitoring standards in English schools, including those state-maintained schools required to follow the national curriculum. From my professional experiences as a consultant and deputy headteacher, school improvement initiatives were often based upon the outcomes/ recommendations of an OFSTED inspection to enhance delivery of the national curriculum (DfEE and QCA, 1999; DfE, 2013a). Irrespective of their OFSTED grading, improvement for any school is a key objective (Southworth, 2004) and initiatives to enhance educational standards has been, and remains, a major national objective (e.g. DfE, 2015a; DfE, 2015b; DfE and Gibb, 2017). I therefore sought participants from schools receiving 'outstanding', 'good' or 'requires improvement' OFSTED

inspection outcomes. The decision to select leaders from this range of schools, rather than focus on one category, was so that my findings might resonate with a wider audience (King and Horrocks, 2010). I did not approach schools with the lowest OFSTED grading ('inadequate') because I was aware, having supported such schools as a consultant, of the pressures their leaders would be under. I deemed it unlikely that participating in my research would be a priority for them.

I could have identified the leaders of schools without reference to OFSTED categories. For example, I could have contacted schools which demonstrated evidence of key examples of school change and implementation, such as those engaged in specific school improvement initiatives through learning networks and communities (e.g. Lang, 2014; Marlow, no date). However, I did not want to confine my discussions with leaders solely to the specific programmes of school improvement with which they would have been identified for participation. Nevertheless, had I selected participants in this way, I recognise that I could have developed questions to ask them about additional examples of school improvement initiatives.

I had originally proposed to select leaders from suburban schools within the south-east of England. Such schools might have shared certain characteristics including economic, social and cultural diversity, any of which could impact upon a school (Braun *et al.*, 2011). I had also intended to select leaders from schools inspected under the then current 2012 OFSTED framework, when the last major raft of inspection changes had occurred. The intention was that there might be a degree of similarity with leaders reflecting upon the same inspection framework in relation to school improvement strategies. However, as a practical measure, I decided to select suburban London schools from different education authorities which were close to north-east London and easily accessible to my home to conduct interviews. Moreover, I selected schools according to their last OFSTED report grading, rather than the 2012 OFSTED framework, via the OFSTED inspection reports website (https://reports.OFSTED.gov.uk/). This was because I came to the realisation that a leader may have experienced a range of OFSTED inspection outcomes grades in their school, from different inspection frameworks, and be able to talk about the school's learning journey in relation to both of these. I acknowledge that the suburban schools did not share similar socio-economic traits of their student populations and had not

necessarily been inspected according to the same inspection framework. This might have affected the senior leaders' responses to questions, though this was not a research focus. For example, school change initiatives are affected by school-specific contexts, such as student intake (Braun *et al.*, 2011), whilst being inspected under different OFSTED frameworks might have engendered different opinions about school improvement.

I sought to interview nine leaders in total, with a representation of three leaders - a combination of heads and deputies – within each of the OFSTED inspection outcome categories of 'outstanding', 'good' or 'requires improvement'. Recommendations about sample size in research varies (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006; Baker and Edwards, 2012; Boddy, 2016). One issue highlighted is that since 'qualitative research is exploratory by nature, qualitative researchers may not know how much data to gather in advance' (Baker and Edwards, 2012, p.5). This can produce a tension with the 'concept of data saturation, which is the point at which no new information or themes are observed in the data from the completion of additional interviews' (Boddy, 2016, p.427). Gillham (2000) claims that 'as few as four or five interviews of individuals carefully selected as typical' can be effective to provide 'insight into what it is like to be a person in that setting' (p.12).

Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) explored data saturation and reported that, for a relatively homogenous group, it started to occur by a sixth in-depth interview and was certainly evident by the twelfth. Even though I chose to select participants according to their school's last OFSTED inspection grading, the senior leaders represented a relatively homogenous group. Moreover, I was not seeking to compare or contrast senior leaders' responses within or between categories of schools according to their school's OFSTED outcome.

Having considered Guest, Bunce and Johnson's (2006) discussion about sample size and data saturation, I was anxious that interviewing six leaders - one head and one deputy from each OFSTED category I had chosen - might not collect sufficient data. Therefore, I opted for nine participants, the number midway between six and twelve, but recognised that this meant that the ratio size of heads to deputies would be unequal within each category. At the time of selecting participants, I would have

preferred to interview two heads and two deputies per OFSTED category to get a more balanced perspective from these leaders, instead of recruiting different ratios. However, on reflection this was not such an important factor as I was not making comparisons between heads and deputies in my analysis. Nevertheless, due to work demands, I recognised that I did not have sufficient time to interview twelve senior leaders, made more demanding as I was going to interview each leader twice to allow sufficient discussion time around the themes of school change, teacher learning and resilience. I could have recruited senior leaders from the same school to undertake a joint head and deputy interview (two joint interviews per OFSTED category). However, paired interviews can prevent a researcher from exploring each participant's ideas in as much depth as individual interviews (Adler and Adler, 2012), and risks raising issues related to power relations, conflict between participants and lack of openness during interviews (Robson, 2011). I felt reassured to use nine participants because Ross, Van Dusen and Otero (2014) used nine participants in their study about the characteristics of the learning processes of science teachers within a professional research community. Meanwhile, Kandiko and Kinchin (2012) report research where students were guided to interview nine staff members (three researchers, three graduate teaching assistants and three academic staff with a teaching role) within their separate university schools to explore the role of research in students' learning.

An email with informed consent information (see Appendix 2) was sent to twelve heads and twelve deputies - four heads and four deputies per OFSTED category and each from different schools - to ascertain their interest in participating in my research. I deemed that this was a sufficient initial pool size. The potential participants were asked to contact me by return of email if they were interested in making further enquiries or wanted to commit to be a participant.

I received eleven responses from leaders in the following school categories:

- 4 deputies and 1 head ('requires improvement')
- 3 deputies and 1 head ('good')
- 2 heads ('outstanding')

The headteachers agreed to participate and the deputies, from the 'requires improvement' and 'good' categories, were selected according to those who had contacted me first. However, no deputies had responded from 'outstanding' schools. By fortuitous coincidence, one of the participating headteachers from an 'outstanding' school informed me that her deputy had expressed an interest in participating after she had told him about my research. I acknowledged that this committed the participant to selection under volunteer sampling methods, which limits the generalisability of the data or representativeness of the sample, since volunteers have a particular motive for volunteering (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) - in this case, expressing an interest in the research. I also acknowledged that this method of selection would limit the number of schools within each category involved in the research and reduce the variety of examples given about school improvement to draw upon in the data analysis stage. However, due to limited time constraints (governed by my professional demands being in a state of great flux) and the need to start my data collection phase, I decided to include this participant in my sample. However, I acknowledge that his inclusion had echoes of convenience sampling, i.e. where a participant is 'selected purely on the basis that they are conveniently available' (Gray, 2009, p.153). Moreover, I appreciated that I would compromise on confidentiality and anonymity in the 'key findings' report for these two leaders, at the conclusion of my doctoral studies. However, before agreeing to participate, both leaders informed me independently that they had an open and convivial professional relationship and valued each other's perspectives. Consequently, I felt reassured to interview both participants and that there did not appear to be any foundation for hostility, fuelled by power relations (Robson, 2011) between them in the post-research phase.

After the leaders committed to participating, I arranged (via email or phone) a convenient time to undertake the first interview. Details of the participants, their position and their school's OFSTED grade may be found in Table 1. One headteacher changed schools between interviews, from one judged 'requires improvement' to one judged 'good' in their last OFSTED. Although he did not meet my sampling criterion for the length of experience in his new position, I was anxious about my lack of time to recruit another head and re-interview from scratch. The leader commented that he was already involved in change in his new school, and I made the decision to continue to interview him.

Table 1 Senior leaders' details

Name	Position	School's OFSTED Grading
Phyllis	Head	Outstanding
Ken	Deputy	
Lila	Head	
Belinda	Deputy	Good
Daniel	Deputy	
Joel	Head	
Pearl	Deputy	Requires Improvement
Geoff	Head	Requires improvement
		Good
Shelagh	Deputy	Requires improvement

3.3.2 Data collection and research tool

My research was qualitative and used interviews for data collection. This enabled me to gather knowledge about the phenomena under investigation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) from participants sharing their ideas and perspectives (Robson, 2011; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) about change, teacher learning and resilience.

I employed semi-structured interviewing as my data collection method, because a fixed question format without latitude would have been constraining (Dowling and Brown, 2010). The semi-structured nature of these interviews provided flexibility over the order, alteration (Robson, 2011) or omission of questions (Simons, 2009) if participants appeared reticent to answer. Whilst this could result in different responses and limit comparability between participants (Gray, 2009), I was not seeking to compare or contrast participants' responses. However, alongside the use of supplementary questions (prompts) or probes to interrogate or clarify participants' responses, it enabled the questions asked of interviewees to cover comparable topics (Gillham, 2009; Basit, 2010; Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014). Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect rich data in McCrone *et al*.'s study (2008) of the management of change (including that undertaken in schools), and in Feriver *et al.*'s study (2016) which explored transformative learning. Semi-structured interviews

enabled me to explore in-depth perspectives from senior leaders, who were knowledgeable sources of relevant information (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014) about change, teacher learning and supporting teacher resilience. This data was then interpreted to identify themes, to help answer the main research question about leaders creating conditions for teacher learning related to change. These themes were then analysed against transformative learning theory to answer the sub-research question.

I conducted two semi-structured interviews with each participant, a decision influenced by three considerations. Firstly, I was providing a gap task for leaders to note any examples of teacher learning that they felt happened between the two interviews. This was a suggestion made by my upgrade panel and was intended to be used as a basis for further discussion about teacher learning in the second interview. Secondly, it permitted me to gain clarity, if necessary, about comments raised in the first interview, or over themes that I might have pondered during the transcription phase of data preparation for analysis. Thirdly, I was aware of the need to allow adequate time to enable a depth of discussion to develop with participants in response to my questions. Therefore, splitting the data collection up over two sessions seemed a sensible solution to allow me to collect meaningful data in a less pressurised way than in one interview.

I decided not to conduct more than two interviews as I felt that sufficient data could be collected about the areas of change, teacher learning and resilience, which could then inform data analysis to answer both research questions. The interview questions were intended to link to the main research question about how the leaders created the conditions to facilitate teacher learning associated with change. The set of questions posed in the first interview included a focus on changes which the leaders had initiated in their school. The second interview explored the leaders' ideas about how teachers understood themselves as learners when they engaged with change; how the leaders might have facilitated a culture of teacher learning; and leaders' perspectives of teacher resilience and nurturing teachers' resilience to support changes to their practice.

Each of the two interviews lasted between thirty and forty minutes. I acknowledge that the length of interviews was not detailed on the informed consent information and, in hindsight, should have been. However, indicative timings were discussed and agreed with participants when arranging the first interview and at the beginning of each interview. Less than thirty minutes would have been insufficient to have allowed adequate discussion in response to the interview questions, probes and prompts. Longer than one hour may have been too demanding for both parties and could have risked participant and interviewer fatigue and a reduction in data quality (Gillham, 2009).

Examples of the question schedules (the research tool) for both interviews are presented in Appendices 3 and 4. I undertook pre-piloting and piloting of questions within the first two interviews of both sets of interviews. This was intended to enable me to make relevant amendments to questions and prompts. I took verbal feedback during the first initial interview and asked the interviewee about the clarity of the questions (Gillham, 2009). I noted my management and execution of the interview schedule within the second interview. These interviews were interspersed with stages of transcription and an initial content analysis of the first interview. This analysis was done to identify substantive themes (see Appendices 5 and 6) and to categorise them (see Appendices 7 and 8) (Gillham, 2000; Gillham, 2009), to consider whether my questions were providing relevant data for my research. Insights gained from earlier interviews can impact upon and improve subsequent questions and schedules (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). This is pertinent to semi-structured interviews which can engender issues with keeping the interviewee on topic, and risk omitting relevant issues if they are not contained within the interview schedule (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014). For example, my first participant talked at length about teaching assistants (see highlighted comments in blue, Appendix 5, pp.184-186) rather than teachers. This prompted me, in subsequent interviews, to clarify that I was looking at teacher change. Since preliminary interviews can contribute useful data, researchers can use pilot data within their main research findings (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). I therefore merged my pre-pilot and pilot interview data with that collected from subsequent interviews as a collated ‘data set’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79) for analysis.

The interview questions should have related to the aims of my research and literature review, to facilitate analysis, data presentation and contribute to structural integrity (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014). As mentioned earlier, there were questions linked to the themes of senior leaders driving change, teacher learning and resilience. However, in hindsight, I acknowledge that the question schedules (and prompts) for the interviews (Appendices 3 and 4) had limitations which contributed to too much unfocused data and lacked clarity for my research focus. Having transcribed the preliminary interviews, I undertook an initial content analysis of each to identify themes and consider whether my questions were providing relevant data for my research (Gillham, 2000). However, I recognise that I should have been much more reflective and critical when doing this to inform the interview schedules. The limits of the questions have been particularly noticeable in relation to interview 1 (Appendix 3). For example, towards the end of this interview schedule, questions were planned about the leader's role transforming and altering over time. These questions were intended to direct conversations to the leader's role whilst change was occurring and to explore how this might have affected teacher learning. However, the questions I actually asked were misguided and could have been phrased more relevantly. Another example relates to the final question, 'What's the vision for the school?', which was added after my pre-pilot interview with Phyllis, having omitted to explore future change. However, this also contributed to unnecessary data collection, when a more relevant question, such as 'What needs to be put in place by you to support any future teacher learning as part of change?', might have yielded more relevant data. Furthermore, in hindsight, questions in the second interview schedule (Appendix 4) about the leaders' understanding and definition of resilience, and whether resilience can be taught or is something innate, needed to be sharper in relation to researching leaders' support of teacher resilience.

My first set of interviews was undertaken during the autumn term 2014, with the second set conducted during the spring term 2015. A gap of a term, between one mid-term and the next was left between interviews (with the intention to allow sufficient time for participants to undertake a gap task). However, I recognise that I did not indicate the specific gap of time between interviews in the informed consent information, except that the first interview would be conducted during the autumn term and the second during the spring. At the conclusion of the first interview, I mentioned

that the second interview would take place around the following mid-term. I informed participants, and via a subsequent email that I would be in contact to arrange a convenient time for the next interview (see Appendix 9).

I explained to participants that the gap task was to note any examples or reflections relating to teacher learning within the context of change at their school. I indicated that such notes could facilitate their recollection for discussion during the second interview and I provided participants with notepads for this task. I also referred to the gap task in an email sent to participants soon after completing the first interview (see Appendix 9). During their second interview, no participants commented on having made, or produced at the interview, written notes. Instead, I referred to the gap task by asking for their memories and reflections on any teacher learning they had observed since the last interview. I did not want to press them for any written details, in case this caused tension. I also acknowledge that undertaking a gap task had not been detailed in the informed consent information or consent form and should have been. In hindsight, requirements for the gap task should have been communicated formally to participants before the first interview commenced and their consent to continue reaffirmed. These omissions may therefore have reduced the task's relevance to participants and detracted from its being undertaken. Moreover, and on reflection, perhaps this lack of engagement was also due to the pressures facing leaders; school demands needed to be prioritised, and my requirements for interviews were unlikely to rank in prominence. This also seems to echo Nesbit's (2012) assertion that the use of journal writing and reflective analysis are problematic for a busy leader.

I chose not to ask participants questions during interview explicitly about transformative learning theory or transformative learning, or refer to language commonly associated with the theory. This was because there have been multiple interpretations of the concepts underpinning transformative learning theory (e.g. see Newman, 2012; Taylor and Cranton, 2012; Lundgren and Poell, 2016). Moreover, there have been historical shifts in terminology, e.g. distinguishing 'critical reflection' from 'critical self-reflection' (see Kitchenham, 2008), with Mezirow (1994; 2009) altering and refining his ideas and use of both concepts. If seminal writers and researchers did not share a coherent interpretation of the theory, I did not think that

senior leaders would have a sufficient depth of understanding or knowledge of its nuanced use, or even have knowledge about the theory. Moreover, I did not want to risk leaders feeling awkward during their interviews because of unfamiliar terminology. To answer my sub-research question, I interpreted the data analysis themes (used to answer the main research question and which were based upon the leaders' responses within the interviews) against key areas of transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory. I did not mention this process in the informed consent information but, in hindsight, should have, and provided a coherent, written explanation about the key ideas of the theory.

Voluntary informed consent is based on an individual agreeing to participate in research, where their decision is based on information provided by the researcher about the research (Wiles, 2013). In the informed consent information I provided (Appendix 2), the themes of the research were expressed as leaders making changes in schools as part of school improvement and the teacher learning and resilience associated with this. An indication of the questions' foci was suggested as being directed towards leaders facilitating educational change through conditions which supported teacher learning and resilience. Ethically, it might be deemed that I had deceived the participants because I had concealed the complete purpose of the research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) - the referencing of their answers against transformative learning theory. I had not detailed this within the informed consent information (see Appendix 2) or indicated this in the title of the consent form (see Appendix 10). Moreover, I had not informed participants of how I felt reference to transformative learning theory might develop their understanding of their leadership of change.

Whilst 'as a general rule, the greater the risk, the more important it is to gain informed consent' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011, p.78), the provision of limited information may be permitted within the concept of 'reasonably informed consent' (*ibid*.). The leaders would not be classed as vulnerable participants and any deception did not result in them being put into situations of undue stress (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). My research was not seeking to undertake a reflection of senior leaders' perceptions about transformative learning theory and its key areas, or prove that the stages of the theory had been initiated by senior leaders or experienced by

their teachers. Therefore, at the time, reference to the theory did not seem appropriate during the interviews or in documentation released to participants before interviews. Nevertheless, in hindsight, I acknowledge that I should have informed participants that I intended to interpret their responses against the theory. Moreover, I recognise that I could have posed questions around the theory without using its particular and unfamiliar terminology, but which could have still captured an essence about facilitating teacher learning. I also appreciate that had the types of questions linked to the theory, this could have supported data analysis.

As part of a 'key findings' report, scheduled to be sent to participants upon completion of my doctoral studies, I will explain the theory and how it has been applied to their responses, and why I did not share this information before. This aligns with Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2011) suggestion that a popular method of redressing potentially negative consequences of perceived deception is to provide adequate feedback through debriefing at the termination of research, e.g. by explaining reasons for deception and sharing the results.

To enhance confidentiality, interviews are best undertaken in private, quiet settings (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). To this end my interviews took place in the participants' offices where we were less likely to be disturbed. However, the head and deputy from the same school had arranged for their interviews to be in their shared office and they overheard segments of each other's discussion. I had not realised that they shared their office until I arrived to conduct the interviews. Nevertheless, they commented separately before beginning the interview that they were comfortable with the arrangements. I audio-recorded the interviews as I was collecting a substantial amount of detailed information (Burton, Brundrett and Jones, 2014) and to assist iterative, data analysis as part of a constructivist-interpretive approach. In my opinion, contemporaneous note-taking would have been cumbersome and could have impeded the flow of the interview conversation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). However, audio recordings can also distort the data and reduce the complexity of a social encounter because of its remoteness from the original interview and by losing contextual factors such as visual and non-verbal features (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). I was ready to write down, during or immediately after the interviews,

any such relevant contextual details in case they acquired significance during analysis (*ibid*.). However, there seemed nothing of pertinence to note.

3.3.3 Data preparation and analysis

I transcribed the interviews to become familiar with each individual 'data item' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79) and to facilitate subsequent data analysis (Denscombe, 2010; Bazeley, 2011). During the pilot interview stages, I also used the transcriptions to consider if the types of questions I was asking were enabling me to gather the type of data I required for my research (Gillham, 2000). However, I acknowledged earlier that I should have been more diligent with this procedure. There were two separate stages of analysis, directed towards the main and the subsidiary research questions respectively.

In stage one, I used thematic analysis, a qualitative analytic method, which may be used within a constructivist-interpretive methodological framework to identify, analyse and report themes within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This was relevant to my research as I wanted to interpret the leaders' accounts and perspectives, to explore how they created the conditions for teacher learning associated with changes to practice. I sought interpretation over the whole data set (*ibid.*) to capture rich, overall descriptions of the leaders' organisation of educational change in school, ideas about teacher learning, and support of teacher resilience. Additionally, guided by my constructivist-interpretive epistemology, I sought a more detailed, latent or interpretive level of analysis (*ibid.*). This meant that the analysis would go beyond mere description to 'where broader assumptions, structures and/ or meanings are theorized as underpinning what is actually articulated in the data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.85). Thematic analysis within a constructivist framework 'seeks to theorize the sociocultural contexts, and structural conditions' (*ibid.*). This approach, therefore, would support me with answering the main research question, to explore the conditions (with reference to the school's culture, context and structures) created by senior leaders for teacher learning within the context of school change. Moreover, this approach would also facilitate subsequent interpretation of the data to answer the sub-research question by applying theory (key areas and the stages of transformative learning theory) to the research topic.

I focused on letting the data speak for itself by using an inductive approach (Bazeley, 2011; Creswell, 2018). However, I acknowledged the 'active' role of the researcher and accepted that 'themes do not just 'emerge' [sic]' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.96). I was influenced by the data analysis procedures promoted by Miles and Huberman (1994). These incorporate continuous stages of data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and conclusion verification (*ibid*.). These strategies supported a reflective approach in my interpretation of the participants' comments made during the semi-structured interviews. This approach was also reflected in the thematic analysis guidance provided by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarizing oneself with the data, through transcribing verbal data, producing initial codes from the data and then sorting these into possible themes, refining the themes, 'identifying the 'essence' of what each theme is about (as well as the themes overall),… determining what aspect of the data each theme captures' (p.92), and naming the themes.

I used QSR NVivo (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013), a computer software tool. NVivo can facilitate efficient data analysis for coding, organising, sorting and locating transcribed interview data (Ozkan, 2004; Creswell, 2018) within a constructivist framework (Rich and Patashnick, 2002). It also assisted me in applying Miles and Huberman's (1994) and Braun and Clarke's (2006) procedures (above). 'Mechanical unthinking' (Gilbert, 2002, p.219) might occur when coding is undertaken through qualitative data analysis software. This happens when a researcher lacks a maintained focus on the area being researched. I guarded against this by leaning towards an inductive approach of analysis (Creswell, 2018). The use of two phases of analysis in which raw data was coded permitted data reduction and the organisation of an inherently complex narrative (Bazeley, 2011). First-level coding, or the 'free node' (Bazeley, 2011, p.32) level of analysis, enabled me to openly code the text and label it with words/ phrases and assign connotation to the transcripts. During second-level coding, I categorised the data into groups to develop patterns and themes (Miles and Huberman, 1994). These functioned as 'parent nodes' within 'hierarchical, branching structures', like tree diagrams, operating as links for the child (free) nodes which form 'subcategories or types of concepts' (Bazeley, 2011, p.83). Appendices 11 and 12 illustrate extracts of my data analysis during these two levels of coding.

As mentioned earlier, the inadequate focus of some of my interview questions generated too much unfocused data. Additionally, some responses to questions were off track, something I only realised after the event. For example, Phyllis talked about change with teaching assistants (see Appendix 5), when my focus was on teachers. Therefore, not all the data was analysed. Additionally, some of the themes from data analysis linked with impediments to senior leaders driving change and teacher learning. For example, in Shelagh's school, learning opportunities seemed limited as a result of leadership changes and proposals for the school's future direction. Whilst issues mentioned by leaders were interesting, because they would need to be resolved to nurture positive learning conditions, I do not have the scope to sufficiently detail these organisational challenges in my thesis due to word constraints. I recognise that I noted my interest in exploring challenges to educational change within the informed consent information. However, the focus in this thesis has been directed towards conducive, rather than inhibiting, conditions which facilitate teacher learning.

During stage two of the analysis, I used themes generated from the first stage of analysis to answer the sub-research question. I explored how an understanding of senior leaders supporting teacher learning as part of change might be developed with reference to key areas of transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory. I used a deductive approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006) in which key areas and stages of the theory represented 'a priori, or theoretically derived, codes' (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013, p.82). The key areas of the theory related to: meaning schemes, meaning perspectives, perspective transformation, types of adult learning, degrees of autonomy, and resilience (including emotion and commitment to change). The stages aligned with Mezirow's (1991) stages of transformative learning theory.

3.3.4 Validity and generalisability

Validity in qualitative research refers to good quality research undertaken to generate understanding (Golafshani, 2003) through the accuracy with which the findings (the participants' perspectives) are truthfully reflected by the data (Noble and Smith, 2015) and are genuinely 'about what they appear to be about' (Robson, 2011, p.77). Reliability is a consequence of validity (Golafshani, 2003) and in qualitative research relates to the consistency with which the analytical procedures are utilised, whilst methodological and researcher biases which may influence the findings are explicitly

acknowledged (Noble and Smith, 2015). This emphasises trustworthy procedures through which the methods are executed in a way that is reliant upon a researcher's decisions being clear and transparent (Shenton, 2004; Noble and Smith, 2015). These facets may be corroborated through an audit trail, involving a researcher who is unconnected to the research process in scrutinising the process, findings, interpretations and conclusions, and assessing the accuracy by which they are underpinned by the data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Houghton *et al*., 2013; Creswell, 2018). To this effect, I received critical feedback from a reader, acting as a proxy for an external auditor. My Ed.D supervisor also operated to peer debrief the thesis (Creswell, 2018).

Generalisability - also termed applicability, transferability or external validity - considers the extent to which findings may be applied to other contexts (Golafshani, 2003; Shenton, 2004; Noble and Smith, 2015). Since my semi-structured interviews were an interpersonal experience and sensitive to differences and nuances associated with meaning (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), translation between contexts has been facilitated through contextual description (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Turner, 2010) in my thesis. For example, I have provided relevant details about the interviews, the leaders and their schools' OFSTED grades, the research methods used and selections of raw data (leaders' direct quotes) to enable alternative interpretations to be contemplated (Shenton, 2004; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Houghton *et al*., 2013). Nevertheless, since qualitative findings relate to a restricted number of participants and their contexts, demonstrating their external validity - that is how generalisable (or transferable or comparable) the results are - is contentious (Shenton, 2004; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). However, Mertens (2014) concedes that if the context of the research is explained, then the onus is on the readers who may 'generalize subjectively from the case in question to their own personal experiences' (p.219). Although I acknowledge the uniqueness of the participants' perspectives, others in similar professional situations to my participants may find it has relevance for them (Golafshani, 2003; Shenton, 2004).

3.3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are aligned to ensuring morally correct decision-making and actions in relation to research (Wiles, 2013). This was pertinent to my research, an

interview inquiry, which was underpinned by social interactions and which would affect interviewees by placing personal accounts into a shared domain (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

I adhered to the Institute of Education's ethical guidelines (IOE, no date 'a'), which required the British Educational Research Association's (BERA, 2011 – now updated, see BERA, 2018) code of practice to be followed and the submission of an ethics approval form and associated information (IOE, no date 'b') (see Appendix 1). The values within BERA's (2011) code included an emphasises on autonomy, i.e. individuals volunteering their willingness to participate in research without coercion, and the stipulation of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity (Wiles, 2013). Although the questions detailed on the ethics form were different to those finally used, the research area and other research considerations generally remained the same, and so I did not complete a new ethics form.

When I emailed potential participants, I provided information (see Appendix 2) to explain my research and the research process, as well as clarifying inherent delineations of anonymity and confidentiality. The purpose of this was to help them decide whether or not they wished to participate in the research, without being under any compulsion (Wiles, 2013). However, as explained earlier, the informed consent information was limited because it did not mention a research focus on transformative learning theory. The ethical implications of this have already been discussed.

Voluntary informed consent is central to an ethical framework and is founded on an individual consenting to participate in research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Wiles, 2013). This then underpins the relationship between the researcher and researched (McNamee, 2001; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Nevertheless, it cannot be a 'one size fits all' because the researcher cannot predict how consent might relate to every individual circumstance (Wiles, 2013). Sometimes it is permissible for aspects of ethical issues to be negotiated with individual participants, so long as it will not impair the integrity and safety of the researcher, the researched or the content of data (*ibid.*). For example, as explained earlier, a headteacher and deputy (both participants from the same school) shared an office and were in the office at different points during each other's interviews. However, prior to commencing the interview,

they both independently expressed that they were comfortable with this arrangement. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that this compromised confidentiality and anonymity for these participants.

Confidentiality in research encompasses a principle of privacy such that participant identity is protected through anonymity procedures (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Wiles, 2013). This entails not disclosing what has been discussed during data collection in a way that would enable others to identify a participant (Smyth and Holian, 2008). Within the informed consent information, I assured participants that I would adhere to this tenet of confidentiality alongside anonymity, as long as comments made by them did not relate to professional malpractice or counteract a legal duty of care within education (Robson, 2011). I was explicit in the informed consent information (Appendix 2) that pseudonyms (Robson, 2011) would be used for leaders and their schools in any reports, and that no revealing details about their institutions would be divulged. Anonymity was also assured for any discussion with my research supervisor. However, participants were made aware that extracts of their comments might be referenced or referred to in this thesis.

I was mindful of asymmetry within power relations (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009); participants might have had perceptions of there being a differential of power between themselves, in a vulnerable position as interviewees, and me, as a researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). This could cause participants to provide cautious replies when being interviewed and impact negatively upon the credibility of the research. Therefore, within the informed consent information, I was open about my professional and scholarly status. I sought to decrease barriers by positioning my role as a doctoral student undertaking research, akin to a 'researching professional' (student) rather than a 'professional researcher' (Wellington and Sikes, 2006, p.725). Simultaneously, my revealed status as a deputy might have had the effect of making those who were in a similar professional position to myself feel on a more equal standing, whilst those in a more senior role might not have felt threatened at all.

The informed consent information indicated that I wished to audio-record the interviews for the purposes of making transcripts and subsequent analysis. Nevertheless, I was aware that interviewees might have felt vulnerable with me using

a recording device to produce an electronic record (British Psychological Society, 2014). Therefore, I indicated that the complete interview would only be accessible to my research supervisor and myself, neither of whom had authority over the participants. Moreover, I provided reassurance that the data, along with any transcripts, would be stored securely on my home computer and erased on conclusion of my doctoral studies (Gillham, 2009). If participants had expressed reluctance to be recorded at any stage of the interview process, even after signing a consent form to participate, then I would have withdrawn them from the research. Taking detailed notes of their responses during their interview would have been impractical and hindered the interview dynamics (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

Although I was asking participants to consent to being audio recorded for the interview, I recognised that conversations could occur before and after. There were instances when participants made pertinent comments relevant to the research after the main discussion; on such occasions I asked permission to continue recording as a memoire aide (Opie, 2004). Additionally, whilst I clarified to participants that their responses would not be used against them, I was aware that they might ask for some comments to be kept confidential. As long as these were not related to professional malpractice or counteracted a legal duty of care within education, I would have acceded to their request (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). I also informed participants that should they feel uncomfortable responding to any of the questions, then they could decline to answer (*ibid*.). Additionally, I advised participants of their right to withdraw from the research process at any time without redress and, that if they withdrew, then their data would not be included in my research (*ibid*.).

Prior to the interview stage, participants completed and signed a consent form (see Appendix 10), which delineated the key tenets underpinning their agreement to participate. However, I reiterated key points from the informed consent information verbally (Robson, 2011) (see Appendix 13) before commencing the interview. This served as a safeguard in case participants had not had sufficient time to properly read and digest the informed consent information, and reminded participants of the purpose, nature and process of the research in case they wanted to withdraw.

I made a decision to not ask for respondent validation. Respondent validation may involve participants reviewing the ways in which their data has been interpreted by the researcher in relation to research findings (Mason, 2018). It is a process that can provide an opportunity for participants to corroborate or refute the interpretation (*ibid.*). In this respect, it is an acknowledgement to neither the researcher nor participant having epistemological privilege (*ibid.*) over the validity of data interpretation. Also called member checking, it is suggested that its use increases the research credibility (Shenton, 2004; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

Although I was aware that respondent validation could enrich the data, e.g. by contributing additional layers of interpretation, I did not apply it for the following reasons. I was apprehensive that participants' reactions to reading the draft analysis (Sandelowski, 1993; Morse, 1994; Angen, 2000) could potentially risk them disputing (Mason, 2018) or retracting statements (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) which I might have considered to be of illustrative value in relation to my research focus. Nevertheless, in cases of dispute, I appreciate that I could have made subsequent modifications in response to participants' suggestions and any disagreements over the interpretations could have been detailed by including participants' comments (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). I could have asked participants to agree to the accuracy of the content of their transcripts (Mason, 2018). However, I was anxious that there might be a danger that participants would withdraw from the research if they read, reflected upon and became anxious about their comments in the transcripts (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) which had touched on sensitive school-based issues linked to the leaders' approaches to change.

Since I did not use respondent validation, I took other precautions to limit researcher bias and misinterpretation (Gubrium and Holstein 2002; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011) of the qualitative data. I took audio recordings of the interviews (Opie, 2004) to assist with my interpretation of the data during the analysis phase. Additionally, transcribing the interviews provided me with an opportunity to highlight any remarks made by participants (see Appendix 14 for extracts) which might have gained significance when reporting the findings, or that I could mark for further discussion with the participants if needed. Comments on transcripts from the first set of interviews were made with the intention of informing discussion with the participants in the

second interview, or in case they gained significance when reporting the findings. However, during the second interview I was more eager to pursue the line of enquiry from the interview schedule, rather than explore other areas relating to the initial interview. With regard to follow-up procedures after the second interview, although I transcribed the interviews during data collection, I did not undertake detailed data analysis until much later because of work demands. As six months had elapsed, I did not get back to any of the senior leaders. Perhaps these weaknesses may be contextualised by the time constraints and work demands of me being a 'researching professional' (student) rather than a 'professional researcher' (Wellington and Sikes, 2006, p.725). Nevertheless, I engaged in audit trails (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Mertens, 2014) with my research supervisor and a reader for cautionary and reflective purposes to limit researcher bias and misinterpretation.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has justified the research considerations I made that related to my methodological decisions. I positioned the research paradigm within the constructivist-interpretive framework, which used semi-structured interview techniques to gather examples and opinions from primary school senior leaders about change, teacher learning, and supporting teacher resilience. I chose leaders as participants because I wanted to explore how they created the conditions to support teacher learning related to improved teaching practice as part of school improvement; this resonated with my then professional roles. The selection of nine leaders was based upon a consideration of data saturation (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006) and the time constraints for data collection balanced against my professional demands.

I explained that I purposefully retracted from asking questions explicitly about transformative learning theory during the interviews. This was because I considered it likely that senior leaders would be unfamiliar with phrasing about transformative learning theory and its nuanced use, and I did not want to risk them feeling awkward during their interviews. Moreover, my research did not seek to undertake a reflection of senior leaders' perceptions about transformative learning theory or look for proof of instances of transformative learning in practice. I also reflected on the ethical decision not to inform participants that, as part of data analysis, their responses to questions would be interpreted against transformative learning theory, but conceded that in

hindsight I should have. This second stage of data analysis was undertaken to explore how the theory might develop an understanding of how leaders created the conditions for teacher learning as part of school change. I stated that my decision to avoid respondent validation was related to concerns about participants retracting statements or withdrawing from the research (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The next chapter presents extracts from the interviews to illustrate themes emerging from data analysis. These are presented as the conditions created by the participant leaders to facilitate teacher learning to benefit improved teaching practice.

Chapter 4 Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the themes emerging from the data analysis that relate to the main research question: 'How do English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning within the context of change?' In Chapter Five, these themes will be used to inform discussion about the main research question, and will be further explored against the key areas of transformative learning theory and the ten stages of the theory in relation to the sub-research question.

For reference, an overview of the data analysis themes is presented in Table 2 (below). I consider the themes to encapsulate the conditions that senior leaders created to support teachers' professional learning as part of school improvement.

Table 2 Overview of data analysis themes

understanding the need for change: • supporting teachers to see the bigger picture • putting the child at the heart of change • having expectations to be a lifelong learner • having discussions in an environment for open dialogue • having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums
practical activities: • internal collaboration • external collaboration
supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change): • establishing trust and professional relationships • protecting teachers and role-modelling • structuring and prioritising tasks • nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience

It will be noted that the themes in the table have been grouped under three headings:

- *Understanding the need for change* generally resonated with how senior leaders shared their rationale for change with teachers and set up expectations for change with them.
- *Practical activities* pertained to initiatives which senior leaders had initiated or facilitated in relation to collaborative activities for their teachers, which occurred internally or externally to their schools, within the context of school improvement.
- *Supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change)* captured the conditions which I felt senior leaders established to support teachers' resilience, their emotions and commitment to change, and, in so doing, would increase the likelihood for teachers to be engaged with relevant learning opportunities.

Whilst the themes have been categorised under headings for this chapter, I do not consider that they are mutually exclusive. For example, 'establishing trust and professional relationships' to support 'teacher resilience' would also be conducive for internal and external collaborative activities categorised under 'practical activities'. However, for the purpose of this chapter and the discussion in the next chapter, the themes from the data analysis have generally been considered within just the one particular category I felt they were best suited to.

Not all of the data collected during the interviews was coded and analysed. This was because some of the questions used in the interviews did not contribute sufficiently to an understanding about the conditions which senior leaders created to support teacher learning. In particular, the first interview had limitations which contributed to too much unfocused data being collected because of insufficient clarity of the questions. For example, two questions asked in the first set of interviews were 'If you were Education Minister, what would the education system be like?' and 'Is there anything from educational systems abroad which you would like to adopt?'. Originally, they had been posed to explore leaders' ideas about education more broadly. I had initially believed that responses might, during the data analysis, have had relevance to a rationale for leaders creating conditions to nurture teacher learning as part of change. This data, for example, might then have contributed to the themes categorised within

'understanding the need for change'. However, during the data analysis phase, I realised that these questions lacked clarity and yielded data of little value for my study. Moreover, some question prompts, such as those linked to leaders' views on the standards agenda and the national curriculum, generated data which did not contribute sufficiently to the research focus.

Whilst the questions asked overall within the second interview seemed stronger, those that asked directly about resilience ('How do you define teacher resilience?' and 'Do you think (teacher) resilience can be taught or is it something innate?') could have been more targeted to explore the leaders' support of teacher resilience. Moreover, prompts used in some interviews to explore the impact of teacher resilience on the children, or about the resilience of the leaders, yielded data that was not analysed because it lacked the focus about the leaders' support of teacher resilience that I required.

Nevertheless, the leaders' responses did generate some useful ideas about the conditions they created for teacher learning which is associated with improvements in teaching practice within the context of school change. I present extracts from the interviews to illustrate the themes emerging from the data analysis.

4.2 Conditions created by senior leaders for teacher learning

Understanding the need for change

Some leaders' comments suggested that teachers' understandings about the need for change was an important factor in school improvement. The ideas were structured around five key themes, which I believed could contribute to an environment in which leaders could enable teacher learning to strengthen teaching practice as part of change. The themes were:

- supporting teachers to see the bigger picture
- putting the child at the heart of change
- having expectations to be a lifelong learner
- having discussions in an environment for open dialogue
- having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums

Supporting teachers to see the bigger picture

Leaders considered that if their teachers had an awareness of their school's bigger picture, then this could contribute to change. Some comments related to the accountability framework and raising academic standards. For example, Belinda emphasised that *"In order to have permanent change, you need to have staff on board with you. They need to see what you are seeing"*. Specifically, Belinda emphasised that supporting teachers to see the bigger picture could be enabled by teachers interpreting and understanding their pupils' class-based academic data, and that this could act as a trigger for them to decide what practical action they needed to initiate in class. She promoted the idea of teachers learning to consider the *"small steps"* they could *"make in the classroom at grassroots level to change how children are learning. And when you start implementing those small steps, then you start to see a difference in terms of data"*. She commented that, through the processes of monitoring, evaluating and modifying practice, teachers could come to understand how class priorities could inform whole school priorities.

Daniel and Ken remarked that sharing their schools' improvement plans involved all teachers and supported them to see the bigger picture. For example, Daniel commented that the plans enabled teachers to *"be clear [about] expectations and feel valued that they do have a role to play and that they are going to make a difference"*. Ken described that copies of improvement plans were left on staffroom tables, so teachers could provide *"feedback in terms of what they think needs to happen next"*. Ken also described the plans as *"signposts in terms of priorities where the school is heading"*.

Meanwhile, Joel provided an example of where discussing the bigger picture had supported teachers to reflect and engage with change. He illustrated it through reference to staff training, where the focus was on teachers working more effectively with teaching assistants to ensure better outcomes for pupils. Joel approached the task *"from a bigger picture vision – what is it we want and why is it we want that?"* He adopted a similar approach when he introduced the current national curriculum and explored its purpose.

Putting the child at the heart of change

Senior leaders centralised the purpose of educational change around the pupils, an idea which was also associated with a degree of teacher accountability and a need for teacher learning. For example, Ken considered that the school's curriculum altered because *"we're much more as teachers now seeing education from the perspective of the client, which is the child, and what engages and what stimulates children"*. The curriculum focus had been amended to *"broadening out the opportunities and experiences for the children"* beyond classroom-based lessons. Ken highlighted that *"We're much more reflective and having that element of reflection and evaluating our role in that"*. Ken referred to taking children out on trips, and Lila recalled pupils visiting Anne Frank's House and attending evacuee nights at the school to bring history alive. In this illustration of enhancing the curriculum, the teachers could be regarded as learners who were reflecting upon and developing their teaching pedagogy.

Ken also referred to changes in the expectations which the senior leaders had about how they expected staff to conduct themselves with children. This had been developed through the positive behaviour policy, focusing on:

> *the care of children. I suppose one indicator is how you look after your most vulnerable children in the school... because it can be in a school like this one that children with difficulties are seen as a problem, and they are a good gauge in terms of where you are as a caring school and loving school.*

Ken recalled that:

> *Children with learning difficulties, behaviour issues, were educated in part of the corridor where the learning assistants would gather and chat and where there was a bank of computers. And the children were just contained*.

He reflected that there was subsequent training focused on the teachers' direction of their learning support assistants. This suggested that a form of teacher learning had occurred when revised ideas were put into practice.

Finally, Phyllis commented upon her school's visioning day, which foregrounded the needs of the children and their right to reach their academic potential, enabled by

better quality teaching. She explained that *"Not every child was accessing and achieving to their potential because they weren't being given the opportunities".* Phyllis considered that:

> *the transformation was enabling them [the pupils] to get that higher challenge and pitch, and taking them to where they could actually go and making sure they were getting the opportunities to do so through the teaching and facilitating of learning that was going on.*

Having expectations to be a lifelong learner

Some of the leaders' comments related to teachers and leaders as lifelong learners. For example, Ken remarked that there was an expectation of lifelong learning shared with prospective teachers being shown around the school. He emphasised that teachers *"know when they come to this school that learning never stops... and we are always trying to improve ourselves, so that ultimately we improve the experience for the children"*. Ken also stressed the importance of colleagues sharing new learning from courses which they had attended, as well as senior leaders demonstrating that *"we [as leaders] are constantly learning"* from each other and sharing *"things that we've seen in other schools or through training that we've been on"*. He asserted that this was for *"the greater good, it's for the journey of the school, and we all play a part in that"*. Meanwhile, Daniel regarded teachers as lifelong learners because:

> *You're always learning new things... and I really want people to go to a staff meeting and think this is my ideal, this is an opportunity for me; I'm really going to develop my thinking and my learning, rather than oh there's so much marking to do*.

Having discussions in an environment for open dialogue

Belinda valued open dialogue to promote engagement with learning. She considered that:

> *having a professional platform for staff to openly oppose viewpoints and openly debate about something that is controversial is important, because that is your learning, that is where the learning is coming from... We learn from one another, instead of openly accepting oh that's what we're going to have to do.*

She also advised that this was contingent upon the leadership team and if they did:

> *not allow staff to talk about opposing views and to debate... you will get a climate in a school that is toxic... because everyone is not trusting one another, and trust is important to have for a school to go on its learning journey*.

Belinda's comments suggested that features of teacher autonomy and empowerment, and establishing trust and relationships, were important in allowing debate about the reasons for change.

Having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums

In some cases, learning opportunities associated with change seemed to resonate with senior leaders delivering wake-up calls and ultimatums, and/ or taking actions after, which alerted teachers to the need for alterations to occur in their practice. Leaders could use the message as a trigger to facilitate a teacher's self-reflection and their buy-in to change, or conversely for teachers to leave the school if they were unhappy. Having a wake-up call generally served as a warning sign to teachers that changes to their practice were necessary; ultimatums represented a final chance. For this reason, I consider them separately.

Wake-up calls: Pearl referred to two teachers whose lessons were normally graded 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'[1]. She noted huge changes with their demeanour because:

> *They had to swallow their pride; they had to listen to what people were saying; and they had the guts to stick with it and take on board what needed to be put into place. And I think through encouragement, through modelling, demonstrating, praise, they have actually changed. They recognised they needed to change.*

Pearl explained how one of the teacher's perceptions about her practice altered when she engaged in self-reflection. The teacher realised that she was not as good at teaching mathematics as she thought and recognised *"that she needed to learn some*

[1] Whilst schools might use the OFSTED evaluation schedule to undertake internal observations, there is no expectation for them to do this (OFSTED, 2018). OFSTED (2013; 2018) do not grade individual lessons.

more". This seemed to have acted as a moment of sudden realisation and a catalyst for change, because the teacher became *"switched on"* and *"it made her sit up and listen and start to learn"*. The teacher started *"challenging herself"*.

Further examples of wake-up calls emerged in relation to senior leaders emphasising the importance of the children's education and teachers coming to appreciate this. For example, Daniel reflected on teachers' habits of detaching their emotion, after receiving observational feedback, to advance their practice. Underpinning this reflection was the ability to self-reflect, which Daniel considered to be what *"makes you a good learner"*. Daniel seemed to indicate that the learning experience would be twofold: taking on board what had to improve, and appreciating that the feedback was to support improved practice for the sake of children's education. He emphasised:

> *When I've spoken to teachers who have really moved their teaching on, they said that what has made a difference to them is feedback, where they come to appreciate that was a valid point and now I'm going to do this*.

Daniel confirmed that *"they detach the emotion, learn from it and then look at it with a clear head".* He acknowledged that it *"takes time... [for teachers] to lose the emotional attachment"* and make the spotlight about the children's learning. Daniel felt that this style of reaction showed a mature response, appreciating that these could be tough messages to hear. He continued that sometimes allowing for a short interval of time after the feedback enabled the teachers to come to an understanding of what he had advised. Daniel promoted teacher autonomy because he explained that he could have follow-up discussions with the teacher, a week after the observational feedback, to consider next steps, *"giving them ownership of it"*. He continued, *"Some teachers can say o.k., I get it was to do with questioning – I'm going to do this as a result" or "I've reflected on it, I'm already doing this".* Phyllis also referred to the theme of bouncing back and acting upon feedback, linking it with the quality of possessing resilience.

Meanwhile, Geoff commented about the collaboration undertaken between some of his weaker teachers, who *"needed support to help them wake up to reality"*, and

Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs)[2]. Geoff also referred to the conclusion of a local authority review which *"felt the school was going to go special measures[3]"*. This judgement should have acted as a wake-up call; the teachers, however, were disbelieving of the predicted grade until *"OFSTED told them they were special measures"*. Geoff continued that it *"was a scare moment for a lot of staff"* because suddenly they realised that they would be associated with the school's grading. *"Teachers are going to meet up with other teachers and they're all going to go, oh, they work in that school. You can't hide from that"*.

Shelagh's school was at the beginning of a learning journey and she described a teaching and learning audit undertaken by the local authority. She reflected, *"We all felt crushed, but if you're honest you knew [what the outcome would be] already"*. Nevertheless, she perceived it as an opportunity to alert the teachers because they needed to appreciate the school's precarious situation. Meanwhile, Joel commented that those teachers at his school who had taught elsewhere *"knew the mess"* which the school was in prior to his arrival as headteacher *"and were accepting of the need to change"*.

Phyllis and Ken recalled how their schools needed to raise their pupils' academic achievement when it was insufficient. For example, Phyllis told of how she started at the school and identified a requirement for better quality teaching to support the pupils to reach their potential. After identifying this, Phyllis held a staff development day which she called a *"visioning day"*. The main focus directed the staff to the needs of the children and could have acted as a wake-up call. Phyllis said that:

> *I was telling them what I felt was necessary; where I saw the school needed to go; and then the rest was over to them... And we had an awful lot of joined-up thinking... and a lot of consensus on what was necessary.*

[2] ASTs demonstrated effective practice within their own classroom and were then able to share this with teachers in other schools who needed support (see DfES, 2001; DfES, no date). The AST designation was ended in September 2013 (DfE, 2013b), though a position with a different role was created for middle or senior leaders called Specialist Leaders in Education (see National College for School Leadership, 2011; DfE, 2014).

[3] A 'special measures' judgement is the lowest grade within an 'inadequate' outcome from an OFSTED inspection, e.g. see OFSTED (2013; 2018).

Teachers also had *"a few shocks"* because Phyllis had identified that pupils were underachieving academically within different year groups across the school. She saw the day as one *"that was the kind of starting point, it was kind of like a shock"*. On a subsequent occasion, Phyllis felt enabled to make changes on the back of an OFSTED inspection because *"an outside agency lay it on the line"*. The report, as a trigger for action, *"was completely and utterly open and honest with them where the school was at… said it exactly as it was"*. This provided her with ammunition as a *"launchpad to make sure that everybody was clear on the work to be done"*. Similarly, Ken and Lila referred to OFSTED inspection grades driving the need for change at their school. Ken commented that a key message for teachers was the need to work at a fast pace because *"this is children's education that we're talking about, and we cannot afford to take our time over this, because every day, every week and every month is precious in lost time, in lost learning time"*.

Ultimatums: The ultimatums, mentioned by senior leaders, were associated with more serious triggers for change, and linked to accountability mechanisms underpinning the educational system, such as OFSTED standards (similar to wake-up calls). Nevertheless, they triggered some positive outcomes. For example, Pearl referred to changes of direction initiated by her headteacher who joined the school soon after it was judged 'requires improvement' by OFSTED. The teachers at Pearl's school were shocked by the OFSTED judgement because they thought their practice was acceptable. Pearl recalled that teachers were *"very resistant"* to the changes implemented by the head and *"didn't like it at all because they were very comfortable"*, with *"well behaved… quite passive learners; the teachers could get away with it"*. She mentioned that the head started to *"bring in changes"* and *"started to do different INSETs, for example, [on] quality first teaching, and the teachers began to be made to feel uncomfortable".* Pearl recollected that the head ensured that teachers made an informed decision to remain or leave by using an analogy of a journey: "*right we've got a journey to go on and you are either on… or you are off the bus. And sometimes… people get off the bus and that's ok, because they can get off and go".*

Pearl continued that *"an awful lot of people… left because they had to get off the bus, because they weren't part of the vision that the senior leaders had for the school"*. The critical moment for teachers was when monitoring procedures commenced. The

teachers *"began to see that our head wasn't going to back down and the message was consistent, and they saw that the head was supportive, but wouldn't stand any nonsense"*. However, Pearl concluded that *"now all the people, who are here, are all in it to win it. And that is the atmosphere within the school, which wasn't the case a year and a term ago"*. The *"enthusiasm, [and] the excitement,.. when the new people came, overpowered the negativity of those people"* who had been at the school previously. This suggested that those who remained were indirectly supported by those who left, because they presumably took with them negative attitudes and resistance to change.

Ken described a similar episode of teachers needing to leave the school because they were not accepting of the need to be engaged with school-based change. He explained:

> *We had people who began to understand what we were trying to do and for the members of staff that didn't understand and weren't willing, then this wasn't the school for them... We had to work hard on encouraging them to find schools that suited their educational beliefs…*

Geoff also admitted that he had teachers who would never run with change *"because they believe that their way is the right way... And for those teachers, it's pretty much this is the way you're doing it, and if you don't like it, then you know where the door is"*. He deemed this a critical factor to *"help teachers to change their mindset - come with me or goodbye"*. Moreover, Geoff highlighted that a school requiring change could not have teachers who would *"drag morale down"* and *"change the meaning and the purpose of every staff meeting you do, and the very feeling, the very atmosphere"*.

Lila recognised that a school graded 'special measures' by OFSTED could mean that some teachers conceded that the school was *"just not for them at that time"*. She continued that turnover occurred when her school was once graded 'special measures', soon after she became head. Lila asserted her authority to make it clear that changes were necessary and it was for teachers to decide whether or not they wanted to stay. Putting children's education at the heart of her rationale for change, Lila commented:

> *I have a little saying, I have blood on the walls the first few weeks. They will know exactly what I am about. I am very open and I tell them and if they don't like it, they don't have to stay... There's going to be no repercussions. You do what you want to do, it's your life. Children have to be here, you don't. You make the decision.*

Belinda also referred to the fact that teachers needed to accommodate change and that it was acceptable for teachers to leave if they felt the pressures to maintain standards. She declared, *"If there's any point where people feel that it is too much or they're getting stressed, then it's their decision to make... And if you can't cope, then you're out"*. Belinda asserted, *"You don't want unhappy staff"*, but continued:

> *There's no other way you can give some teachers leeway and others not. It's got to be fair and the expectation has got to be set from the very beginning - this is how it's going to be done; if you don't like it, that's the door.*

Belinda had those honest conversations with teachers and reflected, *"And that's why we've had people leave".* However, she reported that *"the majority of the staff are [now] with us in terms of what we see"*. Belinda continued:

> *If you cannot engage with the change, you will find yourself isolated because there's nobody who's going to support you anyway... you can draw up action plans for people, you can try to support them, but if they, themselves, are blocking it and being negative, there's no way people will support you.*

<u>Practical activities</u>

Senior leaders described some practical activities, associated with school improvement initiatives, which they had initiated or facilitated. The data analysis themes related to:

- internal collaborations
- external collaborations

Some of the leaders' comments seemed to suggest that collaborative activities, occurring within and outside of the school, could help them to facilitate teacher learning to enhance teaching practice associated with school improvement. Both internal and

external collaborations incorporated the following: modelling of good practice, empowering teachers with certain degrees of autonomy, establishing trust and relationships between colleagues, and supporting professional learning and development.

Internal collaborations

Opportunities for internal collaborations occurred in relation to peer collaborations, trialling initiatives, and leaders modelling practice to teachers

Pearl and Geoff referred to peer collaborations in which teachers with weaker practice were supported by stronger colleagues. Pearl talked about a local authority review which identified teachers with *"strengths in particular year groups"*, after which they were matched up with weaker teachers and directed to work on specific tasks. Whilst this collaboration had been imposed, Pearl reported a positive vibe to the developments within the school and, eventually, a degree of teacher empowerment. She explained that colleagues were collaborating through *"planning together and... wanting to find things out together more. There is a greater buzz than ever before"*.

Geoff talked about using team teaching to support change. For example, he had utilised this within a lesson study[4] approach where more effective teachers collaborated with their less effective colleagues. He commented that the effective practice rubbed off on the less able teachers and, simultaneously, gave the weaker colleagues *"someone else in the school to talk to"* about improving their teaching in *"a supportive way, rather than it being top-down"*.

Moreover, Geoff mentioned that after being supported by Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs), some of his teachers felt subsequently empowered:

> *to support others [within the school], and actually that's when they came into their own, because they took responsibility for leading and supporting someone else. And I think that's when you could see a transformation. It was not them being done to; they gripped it so much that they could help others with it.*

[4] The lesson study entails peer collaboration supporting a learning process, e.g. where two teachers might collaboratively plan, team teach or observe one another and have post-lesson discussions to improve practice (see DCSF, 2009).

Daniel described *"professional learning groups"* which illustrated how changes in teaching practice were trialled and then led by teachers. The collaboration entailed teachers from different year groups exploring solutions to pedagogical issues identified within the school. Daniel related an example in which one group improved feedback marking and:

> *set up a new marking scheme, and that's completely come from the teachers; something that they trialled; played around with; found out what worked; led a staff meeting on it; whole school trialled it; and then they went back to it again with these are the things that we need to fine tune.*

In this way, he suggested, teacher empowerment and autonomy were enabled. Daniel commented, *"It's not just leadership saying we want this, it's class teachers saying remember we discussed this, and this is what was agreed. So, they feel they've got more ownership of it"*.

Ken provided another example of initiatives trialled to improve practice. He explained that since his school had been graded 'outstanding' by OFSTED it had created a safety zone and that *"there's lots of new things that you can trial, and staff come to us to say... can we have a go at this?"* This could also be considered an example of how leaders empowered the teachers and created autonomy, and which Ken referred to as *"developing the [teacher] voice"*.

Pearl and Lila indicated that they directly modelled practice to teachers, which was an example of internal, peer support. Pearl identified that she supported a teacher who realised that she needed to improve her delivery in mathematics. She did this by *"working alongside her"* to demonstrate practice, believing in her and motivating her. Pearl set goals in the form of practical tasks for the teacher to undertake with the children and the teacher acknowledged these made *"a difference with her children"*. Pearl also noted that the tasks developed the teacher's self-confidence and, subsequently, the teacher attended training which gave her more ideas and enthused her further. Pearl summarised the changes as resulting from *"inspiration [and] encouragement, but recognising that she had a need to learn"*. Pearl concluded, *"We've just recently observed her teach, and actually she's good to outstanding in*

maths. And her children are loving it". In this instance, Pearl seemed to have empowered the teacher to eventually have some autonomy for her journey of improvement. Pearl also commented about modelling the process of self-reflection to help teachers engage as learners. She reflected that sometimes *"you've actually got to... demonstrate to a teacher that you* [as a senior leader] *have also got things to learn"*. She continued:

> *Just like you would role model things to children, you've got to do the same thing to adults... And through discussion..., by looking at the children's books, by talking to them about their children and by saying I wonder why your children are not progressing? What could it be?*

Meanwhile, Lila related that she might go into lessons and intervene to model how teachers could improve practice. She justified this: *"You have to show them what the standard is"*, because they might not have known, *"and then they start to do it. And then the more they do it, the more you praise them... and then they're independent and learning from each other"*.

External collaboration

Opportunities for external collaborations linked to the following themes: working with partner schools, activities with ASTs, and activities undertaken within a learning network, including lesson study.

Shelagh and Geoff reflected on teachers visiting partner schools as positive learning experiences. For example, Shelagh was enthused *"for people to get out of our school and go to other schools… and seeing how they use targets [for children]"*. Meanwhile, Geoff reported how a Reception teacher changed the learning environment in her classroom after she visited another school and she suddenly recognised: *"Oh, this is what it's supposed to be like, I hadn't realised!"* The change was rapid, completed within three weeks, and seemed to indicate some form of eventual empowerment.

Geoff recollected the learning experiences of two teachers who were signed up to the school's vision *"but they didn't know how to get better"*. They had identified learning activities which were not relevant to the national curriculum and so Geoff organised

for them to have AST support *"for 6 months, literally doing a day a week. Their change was a very slow, progressive change but it changed their mindset".* However, Geoff acknowledged that they still had improvements to make and more training had been arranged for them. Geoff also suggested that changes in perspective occurred in his school when he organised for teachers to observe practice demonstrated by ASTs with the teachers' own pupils. He continued that when they saw this with their own eyes, *"they go, oh, that's what you meant, that's what you're talking about!"* Moreover, Geoff mentioned that after being supported by ASTs, some of his teachers felt subsequently empowered to support others in the school.

Lila commented on a learning network with which her school was involved; her Year 5 teachers and the maths subject leader were working with other schools, a local authority and a university to explore a different style of teaching mathematics. Lila mentioned how a lesson study approach was being used to facilitate this exploration. The teachers *"had to plan collaboratively... deliver [the lesson], observe each other"*, video the lesson and discuss results. The initiative also involved external training and visitors to the school to watch lessons. Involvement in the network, which supported teachers' professional development and learning, seemed to have granted teachers degrees of autonomy and empowerment.

<u>Supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change)</u>

If senior leaders nurture teachers' resilience and attend to their emotions, I consider that this could contribute to a conducive environment in which teachers are more likely to be committed to the professional learning opportunities associated with improving their practice. Comments about senior leaders supporting teacher resilience related to:

- establishing trust and professional relationships
- protecting teachers and role-modelling
- structuring and prioritising tasks
- nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience

Whilst some of the comments did not directly relate to school improvement, they still suggested that leaders nurtured teachers' positive states of mind and wellbeing as

well as a caring school atmosphere, all of which could also be supportive of teachers during school improvement initiatives.

Trust and professional relationships

I consider that establishing trust and professional relationships underpin the other data analysis themes linked to resilience, as well as some other themes detailed within other categories. For example, Daniel commented on the sensitivity needed to facilitate teachers responding to observational feedback to improve their practice; Pearl detailed how she believed in, supported and empowered a teacher to improve her mathematical teaching; and Belinda explained how trust was important between teachers to allow them to engage in a professional dialogue and openly debate. Examples of trust and professional relationships linked to resilience are illustrated below.

Pearl seemed to develop her teachers' resilience when she used positively phrased language for advice and support. She explained that:

> *You can say to people well done, you've done this really, really well, and you move on to the next thing... As long as you actually... have that positive language, this is an area to develop, you're more likely to develop that resilience*.

However, Pearl cautioned that for some teachers a sterner approach with *"hard talking"* would be needed. Meanwhile, Belinda highlighted the benefits of looking after teachers to support their resilience:

> *It's about making sure that we think about them as human beings with feelings... and to have a good work-life balance is important... So, I'm picturing staff having... a particular day [when] the school closes early… a health class or something like that, or a platform for hobbies to be shared. Something else that's not just school-driven… something that builds the character's mind. And we've got that here.*

Belinda exemplified this with reference to her previous head leading meditation before INSETs and staff briefings and that activities like this were important because:

> *Yes, it is a job, but we need to start helping staff to build their resilience by doing things like this, so that they enjoy coming to school, not just work. It's more than that, I think, and that's when you get people who enjoy what they do, and they start enjoying themselves, and they feel valued, worth everything they do as a person. And then I think you will see people wanting to change for themselves. And it's coming from inner-change, so to speak. When it's inside, you want to change because you want to become a better person; you want to become a better teacher; you want to become a better colleague. All of that comes from people having to think for themselves how they can make those changes and, if they feel valued, they are more likely to do that.*

Daniel, like Belinda, commented on teachers' welfare and promoted the importance of *"looking after teachers with their physical health"* and ensuring that they were working sustainable hours.

Protecting teachers and role modelling

Ken defined teacher resilience as *"the drive to be the best that you can be in a culture of huge demands and not being blown off track by all the things that can come and impact negatively on what teaching is all about"*. He commented on teachers trusting the senior leadership to support them to become the best they could be, by protecting them and *"ensuring that there are the systems and the procedures in school to help"*. Ken illustrated this with reference to the way senior leaders organised training and modelled for teachers how to undertake challenging meetings and engage with difficult parents. This effectively empowered the teachers if they encountered such situations.

Daniel commented that leaders could act as role models through discussions which they had with teachers about perseverance. He commented:

> *It's being that role model for a start, the leadership as a role model to staff [that] it's tough for all of us at the moment, but we're all resilient, and we'll get through it and we're going to be better for it, and show that we have to persevere with things - to be honest, we tried this, it didn't work, so now we're going to try that.*

Phyllis similarly referred to developing teachers' resilience *"through leaders' modelling"* it in practice and through the school's support structures *"so that teachers know who they can go to, to ask if they have a problem"*.

Structuring and prioritising tasks

Geoff claimed that teacher resilience could be supported by senior leaders structuring or prioritising key tasks for teachers who were already motivated towards change, and he suggested that there was a degree of establishing mutual trust to support the change process. Geoff stated that ***"****if you can see which teachers have the potential, then it is building that trust; letting them know that they can come and see you"* and then structuring their targets linked to school improvement targets. He emphasised that this allowed senior leaders *"to build their [the teachers'] resilience by giving them small targets, bit by bit"*.

Daniel also emphasised the need to prioritise tasks for teachers if they were consistently overworking and staying late unnecessarily. He argued that teachers needed to know the school's priorities and focus on the key tasks, otherwise *"they'll get to the stage where they're not doing anything properly anyway. I think that's an important thing, it shows that you value them".*

Nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience

Phyllis emphasised that senior leaders could facilitate teachers' resilience by reminding them who they could go to if they had a problem. She also highlighted a collective responsibility to support resilience in relation to behaviour management, where support from various agencies had been cut and *"the school has had to become more resilient... to finding ways to address what's been taken away"*. Consequently, all teachers needed to follow agreed protocols for behaviour management and this built resilience internally, with teachers *"collectively working together"* and the leaders making sure that everybody was clear about the procedures. Phyllis related a further example of resilience being a collective endeavour. Virtually all her teachers had various responsibilities, and:

> *with that responsibility and sense of belonging comes trust, because you build up and work on relationships, and then it comes full circle with teachers feeling able to cope, because you know you can trust people and that supports resilience too*.

Daniel drew on a similar theme of unity and trust, commenting that it was important to ensure that teachers were *"supported within their year group – we're a four-form entry,*

there should be that level of support; [it] shouldn't be one person carrying everybody, everybody has something to offer". Moreover, Daniel acknowledged that in times of change it was important to reassure teachers that they recognised the challenges and that *"we're all going through it together, but there is a plan to improve things"*. He felt that this helped teachers to *"feel supported in the meantime. And I think that's a major thing for resilience"*.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed themes emerging from the data about the conditions which senior leaders could create for teacher learning to improve the quality of teaching practice as part of school development. The themes captured some of the complexities of senior leaders being autocratic, on the one hand, and granting degrees of autonomy on the other. For example, this tension could be illustrated with reference to leaders enabling an environment for open dialogue, in which teachers could openly discuss and debate different views about school improvement, as opposed to situations involving leaders delivering wake-up calls and ultimatums, which acted as catalysts to prompt teachers that alterations needed to occur in their practice. This dichotomy echoes the tensions, described earlier in the thesis, between leaders having to *direct* change in response to the educational accountability landscape and *facilitating* the processes of teacher learning and change, so that teachers feel supported and in control with a degree of autonomy. However, whilst wake-up calls and ultimatums linked more to autocratic leadership styles and a sombre style of direction, I feel that they simultaneously offered teachers a degree of autonomy. This was because senior leaders placed the locus of control ultimately with the teachers, by presenting the teachers with an option to remain at their school and engage with change, or leave. Moreover, conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums can still be part of professional dialogue

In Chapter Five, the themes emerging from data analysis will be analysed against the literature relevant to the main and subsidiary research questions. This is with reference to how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning to strengthen teaching practice within the context of school change, and how these processes can be further understood against transformative learning theory.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter integrates and discusses three areas in relation to the data analysis themes and relevant literature. The first area, relating to the main research question, considers how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning which is associated with developing teaching practice within the context of school change. The second and third areas consider how knowledge of this aspect of senior leadership might be further interpreted against the key areas of transformative learning theory and the stages of transformative learning theory. These areas relate to the sub-research question which explores how transformative learning theory contributes to an understanding about how senior leaders develop conditions for teacher learning as part of school-based change. The teacher learning which is discussed is associated with a teacher's transformative change, or transformative learning – i.e. learning associated with a change in perspective about teaching practice, pedagogy or views about education, and taking relevant actions, as 'Learning includes acting on these insights' (Mezirow, 1990a, p.xvi).

The key areas of transformative learning theory referred to are:

- meaning schemes – how senior leaders could have attended to teachers' understanding of change, associated with, for example, particular aspects of their teaching practice
- meaning perspectives – how senior leaders could have aligned teachers' broader world views about education with the national and school's perspective about school improvement
- triggers for a perspective transformation - how senior leaders could have supported the critical reflection or critical self-reflection of teachers' practice, pedagogy, or educational world views, to trigger change relevant to school improvement
- perspective transformation – how senior leaders' actions could have promoted alterations in teachers' perspectives about their teaching practice and/ or pedagogy and/ or views about education, linked to school improvement
- types of adult learning – how senior leaders could have promoted instrumental (technical) and/ or dialogic (communicative) learning as part of change

- degrees of autonomy – how and to what degree senior leaders could have granted teacher autonomy within school improvement initiatives
- resilience – how senior leaders could have supported teachers' resilience, including their emotions and commitment to change

The stages of transformative learning theory referred to are:

1. Having a disorienting dilemma
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame
3. A critical reflection of one's assumptions
4. Relating feelings of discontent to others sharing similar views
5. Exploring avenues for new behaviours
6. Planning a line of action
7. Gaining knowledge and skills to implement one's plans
8. Experimenting with new roles
9. Building one's confidence and competence in these new roles
10. Reintegrating oneself back into society with one's altered perspective

(Adapted from Mezirow,1991, pp.168-169.)

There is recognition by some commentators that the stages may be treated with flexibility and that some stages may be omitted (e.g. see Taylor, 1997; Percy, 2005; and Kitchenham, 2008). I have treated the stages flexibly by combining stages and in some instances I refer to stages 5-7 as 'preparations for action', and stages 8-10 as 'taking action' because they share many similarities. Stages 1-4 are associated with 'triggers for action'; however, each of these stages are referred to discretely in the first part of the discussion. The chapter concludes with an overview of how the themes emerging from data analysis have been interpreted against transformative learning theory.

5.2 Conditions for teacher learning and developing an understanding with reference to the key areas and stages of transformative learning theory

The emerging data themes, associated with the conditions senior leaders established to support teacher learning as part of change, were categorised within the following

areas: understanding the need for change, practical activities and supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change). In each section below, I consider the data and literature in terms of the conditions that the senior leaders established in their schools and the relevant key areas and stages of transformative learning theory which may be associated with these conditions.

Understanding the need for change

Some leaders' comments suggested that supporting teachers' understanding of the need for change was important when introducing school improvement. This had relevance for leaders acknowledging the accountability mechanisms which underpin national academic standards as part of the criteria power (aims and purposes) of education (Simkins, 2010), and sharing this with teachers as part of leading change. The themes emerging from data analysis were:

- supporting teachers to see the bigger picture
- putting the child at the heart of change
- having expectations to be a lifelong learner
- having discussions in an environment for open dialogue
- having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums

Data grouped under these themes demonstrated the ways in which leaders promoted a 'shared commitment to the goals and learning outcomes' (Munro, 2005, p.2) of teachers' professional learning.

Supporting teachers to see the bigger picture

The conditions established by senior leaders to support teachers to see the bigger picture could be seen in the work of several participants. Belinda, for example, commented about supporting teachers to understand the importance of their classes' academic data, which could inform and trigger class-based action (i.e. changes in their teaching practice) to impact upon whole school progress. These comments demonstrated the importance of senior leaders being aware of, and sharing with teachers, their school's current academic achievement and future trajectory. This would be based on the leaders' knowledge of their school's context (Southworth, 2004), and the external factors, e.g. 'pressures and expectations from broader policy

context, such as OFSTED ratings' and 'league table positions' (Braun *et al.*, 2011, p.588). Moreover, when Belinda shared with teachers how each of their class' academic data could inform and trigger changes to their teaching practice to effect whole school progress, this could well have supported teachers to make links between their own school's context and the wider, national educational context to understand where the school was headed as part of school improvement. This would also suggest that future instrumental (technical) learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) would be necessary to bring about the changes in teacher practice. Mezirow (1991) suggested that our understanding of situations is validated through communication, or critical discourse, with others. When Belinda shared the information with teachers to guide school improvement, peer discussion could have been used as a productive medium to stimulate teacher learning as suggested by Kitchenham's (2008) review of transformative learning theory.

Similarly, peer discussion could have occurred when Daniel and Ken shared school improvement plans with teachers and encouraged their teachers to be involved in the writing of them. Daniel and Ken's references to empowering and involving staff in the writing of the plans suggested they were encouraging a degree of teacher autonomy. Degrees of autonomous decision-making are deemed important within transformative learning theory to support change (Cranton, 1996; Illeris, 2014). Moreover, Daniel and Ken also stressed that the plans supported a clarity of leadership expectations, the directions in which their schools were heading, and enabled teachers to feel valued about their role with implementing the plans. This suggests that a conducive environment for change was being established by leaders through: building positive relationships with their teachers; nurturing a positive school culture; enhancing teacher motivation and commitment (Day and Sammons, 2013).

Peer discussion was also promoted by Joel when he led meetings with teachers to improve their work when working with teaching assistants, as well as implement the national curriculum (DfE, 2013). He referred to using a bigger picture approach of *"what is it we want and why is it we want that?"* This could have motivated teachers and driven discussion, especially about the rationale behind the school's development of the curriculum. This resonated with Cranton and King's (2003) discussion that

autonomy to develop the curriculum, as professional learning, can engender transformative learning through new insights.

In sharing the bigger picture of their schools with teachers, Belinda, Daniel, Ken and Joel could be seen to promote aspects of collaborative reflection and dialogic (communicative) learning associated with professional learning communities (PLCs). A PLC might be considered a conducive environment to nurture communicative (dialogic) peer learning because it involves collaborative, critical and reflective interrogation of practice to support teacher learning and growth (Bolam *et al.*, 2005; Stoll *et al*., 2006; Fullan, 2016). In such situations, Munro (2005) and Senge (2012) suggest, this could support leaders to provide a rationale for professional learning as part of a learning community involved with school improvement, and for a bigger picture vision to become distributed and owned. In doing so, this could then help garner teachers' commitment to change (Senge, 2006; Crossley and Corbyn, 2010; Senge, 2012) and help leaders to nurture teacher resilience (Day and Gu, 2014).

Transformative learning theory suggests that learners (teachers) may have insufficient information to proceed with making change (Mezirow, 1990b). However, this issue may have been minimised when Belinda, Daniel, Ken and Joel shared their own school's bigger picture with teachers. As Mezirow's (1990b; 1991) work has shown, obtaining wider knowledge (the bigger picture) could prompt learners (teachers) to explore their own meaning schemes (particular attitudes or beliefs related to specific pedagogical areas of the teachers' practice), or their meaning perspectives (the teachers' broader world views about education). When leaders shared the school's vision and bigger picture with teachers, this could have triggered perspective transformations for teachers by initiating disorienting dilemmas, prompting teachers to reconsider their educational philosophy and their role within the educational system (Kitchenham, 2008). This may have been followed by the stages of teachers examining their beliefs with feelings of guilt or shame and critical reflection of their assumptions about the educational areas under discussion.

Putting the child at the heart of change

Some of the senior leaders' comments suggested that the rationale they gave to teachers for change was that it served to benefit pupils. One example was Phyllis's

explanation that children should be enabled to reach their academic potential. This indicated her understanding of the need for better quality teaching and highlighted the leader's role in contextualising the school's priorities and interests within the national and international landscapes of educational change (Southworth, 2004; Fullan, 2016; Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016). This also demonstrated how a leader's rationale for change could become shared with and owned by teachers, thereby potentially garnering teacher commitment to school improvement initiatives (Senge 2006; Crossley and Corbyn, 2010; Senge, 2012) and developing their resilience (Day and Gu, 2014).

Through her visioning day, Phyllis highlighted a lack of pupil achievement across the school; this triggered discussion, reflection and next steps actions by teachers. She acknowledged that *"I was telling them what I felt was necessary, where I saw the school needed to go"*. This was associated with dialogic (communicative learning), where the teachers came to understand the meaning of Phyllis's ideas, and with future instrumental learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) which would be relevant to improvements needed by teachers in their practice. Phyllis's visioning day illustrated a characteristic of a professional learning community (PLC): leaders support their teachers' understanding of how change can occur through collaborative, critical and reflective interrogation of practice associated with teacher learning and growth (Bolam *et al.*, 2005; Stoll *et al*., 2006; Fullan, 2016) to benefit pupil outcomes (Louis, 2006; Fullan, 2016). When Phyllis raised the issue of insufficient pupil achievement with teachers, she illustrated Timperley's (2011) suggestion that this awareness raising could be done through the presentation of statements or inquiry questions to stimulate discussion. This also resonated with Southworth's (2009) assertion that professional dialogue underpins teacher learning and that increasing opportunities for reflection are professional learning opportunities. Moreover, it illustrated Kitchenham's (2008) suggestion from transformative learning theory that peer discussion could be used as a vehicle for learning. Phyllis's encouragement of teacher discussion also echoed transformative learning theory's claim that change might be engendered by bracketing our preconceived ideas and critically reviewing the evidence and arguments we might have (Mezirow, 1990b) against other information. From this position, the communicative learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) that underpinned Phyllis's message to teachers and the subsequent peer discussions could have enhanced the

teachers' appreciation that the rationale of change was to benefit the pupils. These discussions could also have facilitated teachers' interpretation of new meaning schemes and perspectives, as part of a learning organisation. This could have triggered teachers' perspective transformations through disorienting dilemmas, linked to the purpose of education and the rationalisation that educational change was for the benefit of children. In line with the stages of transformative learning theory, this could have led to teachers' self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame and critical reflection of their assumptions about the educational themes under discussion.

Phyllis's actions aligned with Hallinger's (2011) suggestion for an assertive, authoritative leadership style because of an 'urgent need for improvement, a lack of demonstrated success, and uncertain confidence' (p.135). Phyllis's authoritative leadership style resonated with part of Watkins, Marsick and Faller's (2012) transformative learning theory model of facilitating learning in organisational change. This model could account for senior leaders presenting expectations to teachers in a top-down fashion. Whilst this relies on 'conformity and compliance' (p.383) and is therefore a strategy which can meet with resistance, it could also be argued that teachers had independent (autonomous) choice to decide whether or not to become engaged as learners within school-based change. An independence of choice to engage as a learner and commit to change could be interpreted as a personal, participatory decision (Henderson, 2002; Day and Gu, 2014), rather than merely conforming.

Having expectations to be a lifelong learner

Some of the senior leaders' comments suggested that they promoted an expectation to teachers that they behave as lifelong learners. Ken, for example, emphasised that teachers *"know when they come to this school that learning never stops... and we are always trying to improve ourselves, so that ultimately we improve the experience for the children"*. He mentioned also that colleagues or senior leaders shared their learning and ideas from courses or what they had seen in other schools, which he believed was for *"the greater good, it's for the journey of the school, and we all play a part in that"*. Ken's comments reflected the literature on 'learning how to learn' (Tusting and Barton, 2003, p.24) This literature links to the idea of establishing cultural expectations for learning under which senior leaders can recognise and value

teachers' professional experiences by encouraging reflection about them and sharing worthwhile practices with others (Kruse and Louis, 2009; Munro, 2011). It also relates to ideas in the literature about PLCs which suggest that leaders support their teachers to learn continuously and collectively as a team through dialogue and with an understanding of how change can occur to benefit pupil outcomes (Louis, 2006; Fullan, 2016). The shared community learning would also support a shared commitment to learning and change (Munro, 2005), which echoes Day and Gu's (2014) claim that senior leaders could nurture teacher resilience by encouraging their emotional commitment to drive student achievement Literature on lifelong learning also highlights the self-direction (Smith, 1990; Munro, 2011) and autonomy (Tusting and Barton, 2003; Keisler, 2017) of the adult learner.

The sharing of practice between colleagues, facilitated by Ken, could have involved instrumental (technical) and dialogical (communicative) learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991), and have prompted changes in teachers' meaning schemes or perspectives, and triggered perspective transformations through disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow, 1991). As suggested through the stages of transformative learning theory, this could have further led to teachers' self-examination and critical reflection of their assumptions about the educational topics under discussion. Additionally, when senior leaders shared ideas with teachers from training they had attended or what they had seen in other schools, this could have encompassed opportunities for the senior leaders to have been regarded as lifelong learners or co-learners by their teachers (Nixon, 2016). This is a behaviour recognised as beneficial in transformative learning theory literature (e.g. Mezirow, 1997; Cranton, 2016; Feriver *et al*., 2016).

Having discussions in an environment for open dialogue

Belinda emphasised the importance of having a *"professional platform"* for open dialogue to debate controversial issues in relation to school improvement initiatives. She identified this as important, *"because that is your learning, that is where the learning is coming from".* The literature on transformative learning theory recommends that leaders should promote collaborative communication (critical discourse) with others as part of critical self-reflection (Mezirow, 1991). It is acknowledged by academic scholars, including Kitchenham (2008), that peer discussion maximises

opportunities for learning in the context of interpreting new perspectives and meaning schemes. Therefore, opportunities for open dialogue, such as those suggested by Belinda and recommended by Mezirow (1991), could have resulted in teachers experiencing dialogic (communicative) learning during their conversations with one another and acknowledging any implications for their practice.

Opportunities to question viewpoints and openly debate controversial issues, as described by Belinda, could have triggered teachers to experience changes to their meaning schemes and perspectives, and acted as disorienting dilemmas for perspective transformations. This could develop subsequent stages of transformative learning theory for the teachers: self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame and critical reflection of their assumptions about the educational areas which were being discussed. This also aligns with the suggestion from the theory that a perspective transformation necessary for change and learning involves a capacity to attend to alternative points of view initially considered discordant to our own (Marsick, 1990; Mezirow, 1991; Yorks and Marsick, 2000). Opportunities for open dialogue and reflection, such as those described by Belinda, can be challenging. However, educators (senior leaders) can nurture a culture of support in which their learners (teachers) can resolve issues relevant to their real-life experiences (Tusting and Barton, 2003) and see situations from different perspectives to develop their pedagogy (Loughran, 2017). The ability for teachers to do this might be facilitated if the environment is experienced as safe, such as through the establishment of trust recommended by Belinda.

Belinda considered opportunities for open dialogue to be important for enriching feelings of trust among staff and supporting conditions for change. She explained that *"trust is important to have for a school to go on its learning journey"*. Belinda's comments resonated with Munro's (2011) discussion about a school culture promoting trust through honesty, openness and regard for others. Additionally, they echoed Nias, Southworth and Campbell's (1992) suggestion that a collaborative culture could facilitate debate and enable teachers to face challenges in an open and trusting environment. Through her comments about allowing for debate about the educational issues relevant to a school, Belinda reflected Day and Sammons's (2013) discussion about 'making teachers feel valued and involved' (p.17) and where nurturing a positive

school culture can help garner teachers' motivation and commitment. This, in turn, mirrors Day and Gu's (2014) claim that senior leaders could support teacher resilience by garnering their emotional commitment.

It is also possible that leaders could capture their teachers' internal motivation and commitment to learning associated with change initiatives by granting degrees of teacher empowerment and autonomy to engage and participate in debate. This would be in line with Cranton's (1996) emphasis on the importance of learner ownership. It also reflects that freedom to engage with critical reflection about one's perspective is central to professional development and learning (Mezirow, 1991; Cranton, 1996; Cranton and King, 2003). Finally, when she suggested that opportunities for open dialogue could also enrich the feeling of trust between teachers, Belinda demonstrated an intuitive awareness of the trust associated with the emotive dimensions of learning and which is highlighted within transformative learning theory (e.g. see Mezirow 2000; Illeris, 2014; Taylor, 2015).

Having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums

Examples of wake-up calls and ultimatums were referred to by senior leaders and represented opportunities to develop teacher learning. Wake-up calls generally served as warning signs to teachers that alterations needed to occur in their practice; ultimatums represented a final chance. Therefore, each of these two themes is explored separately below when considering the conditions established by senior leaders for teacher learning. However, there is a high degree of similarity between wake-up calls and ultimatums in relation to the key areas and the stages of transformative learning theory. Therefore, I have combined the referencing of wake-up calls and ultimatums in relation to transformative learning theory, where relevant.

The situations in which wake-up calls and ultimatums presented themselves varied. Sometimes they were given directly by senior leaders, whilst at other times they came from outside agencies as part of school inspections, providing senior leaders with a rationale for school improvement. The examples of wake-up calls and ultimatums illustrated the senior leaders' roles as change agents in initiating and leading school improvement strategies (Muijs, 2012; Day and Sammons, 2013) and supporting their teachers to improve pupils' academic outcomes. They also had

relevance to Caldwell and Spinks's (2013) idea of 'self-managing' schools, which have autonomy 'to make decisions within a centrally determined framework of goals, policies, standards and accountabilities' (p.30). The examples presented in this section also resonated with reflective and experiential models of adult learning (Tusting and Barton, 2003). This could position wake-up calls and ultimatums as triggering events for the process of reflective learning in which 'people encounter problems and issues in their real lives and think about ways of resolving them' (Tusting and Barton, 2003, p.5).

Wake-up calls: Phyllis recalled how she identified and revealed to teachers that pupils were not reaching their potential, claiming *"it was kind of like a shock"*, which served as a wake-up call before teachers planned appropriate actions. Phyllis also used the outcomes of an OFSTED inspection as a *"launchpad"* to make change; the report was *"open and honest with them where the school was at".* These examples alluded to an assertive style of leadership described by Hallinger (2011) as warranted because of an 'urgent need for improvement, a lack of demonstrated success, and uncertain confidence' (p.135). Similarly, Geoff referred to a 'special measures' outcome from a local authority review, but the vulnerable status of the school was not appreciated by staff until they received an identical outcome from an OFSTED inspection. He commented that the OFSTED grade *"was a scare moment for a lot of staff"* because suddenly they realised that they would be associated with the school's grading and *"you can't hide from that"*. His comments suggested that the OFSTED report acted as an alarm for the teachers. Geoff also organised collaborative activities between some of his weaker teachers and Advanced Skills Teachers because the teachers *"needed support to help them wake up to reality"*.

Meanwhile, Pearl described two teachers whose lessons did not demonstrate good practice, but they had *"to swallow their pride; they had to listen to what people were saying; and they had the guts to stick with it and take on board what needed to be put into place".* Pearl commented that one of the teacher's perceptions altered (presumably after feedback from previous monitoring or observation) when she recognised *"that she needed to learn some more"* and self-reflected and acknowledged that her teaching practice in mathematics was not as good as she thought. It acted as a moment of sudden realisation and a catalyst for change,

because the teacher became *"switched on"* and *"it made her sit up and listen and start to learn"*; Pearl described how she subsequently demonstrated practice to the teacher and set her tasks. These tasks made a difference to the pupils and developed the teacher's self-confidence. This aligned with senior leaders supporting teachers through the stages associated with transformative learning theory as 'preparations for action' (stages 5-7) and 'taking action' (stages 8-10). These latter stages corresponded with a focus of supporting teachers to integrate their new professional practices, based upon their new perspective, in their everyday teaching. In this way, these processes echoed one of Mezirow's (1990a) tenets of transformative learning theory that 'learning includes acting on these insights' (p.xvi). Pearl's instructional leadership also promoted discussion and dialogue which resonated with Southworth's (2004) explanation that this can enable teacher reflection for insight and enquiry into their practice

Phyllis, Geoff and Pearl's examples of wake-up calls (above) provided teachers with alternative points of view which were initially regarded as discordant to their own (Marsick, 1990; Mezirow, 1991; Yorks and Marsick, 2000), prompting them to question their educational world views and their practice. The senior leaders' delivery of wake-up calls (and ultimatums) acted as emotive, eye-opening, thought-provoking conversations to challenge teachers' presuppositions. These events might well have triggered changes in the teachers' meaning schemes and perspectives and initiated perspective transformations from the disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow, 1991). Moreover, in line with the stages of transformative learning theory, teachers could have self-examined their ideas with feelings of guilt or shame and critically reflected. These occurrences would echo Mezirow's (1990b; 1991) claim that this process could involve questioning personal values and themes underpinning one's self-concept, and disregarding ideas once held close. This procedure could be regarded as threatening as it exposes vulnerabilities (Taylor 2015), making it potentially painful and emotive (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). Nevertheless, these emotive experiences could form the basis of disorienting dilemmas and could therefore have led to 'personal development, learning and growth' (Lundgren and Poell, 2016, p.23). This also mirrors Halpin's (2003) and Kruse and Louis's (2009) explanations about how senior leaders could prompt teachers to critically evaluate assumptions, beliefs, values and outlooks,

which underpin the ways in which teachers think and hold perceptions of themselves and what may be achieved.

Another example of teachers' reflections was provided by Daniel, who gave feedback to teachers after observing lessons. Daniel explained that he could leave a period of time to enable the feedback to sink in and then have subsequent conversations with the teacher to consider appropriate next steps. Daniel stated that *"they detach the emotion, learn from it and then look at it with a clear head"*, although he appreciated that it took time for this style of reaction to develop because these could be tough messages to hear. This suggested that Daniel acknowledged the affective dimensions of teacher learning; understanding teachers and their situations allowed him to help resolve issues (Ryan and Tuters, 2016) and enabled respectful but challenging conversations for the benefit of improving student outcomes (Timperley, 2011). Clarke and O'Donoghue (2016) suggest that it is important for teachers to have their emotions understood and resilience supported by senior leaders to facilitate their commitment to change. This may be illustrated by Daniel's comment (above) about the way he gave observational feedback to teachers. His comment suggested that he had emotional intelligence to appreciate the affective dimensions of teacher learning and recognise that teachers needed space and time to acknowledge and respond to tough messages. Moreover, this reflects Mezirow's (1990c) explanation about the importance of leaders' supporting their learners emotionally, which fosters the trust required for critical self-examination and expressing feelings.

When Daniel explained the method of how he delivered feedback to teachers, he commented that some teachers would say *"O.k., I get it was to do with questioning – I'm going to do this as a result" or "I've reflected on it, I'm already doing this".* Daniel believed that this process gave the teachers *"ownership"* of their improvement. This echoed Tusting and Barton's (2003) argument that there is a need for senior leaders to grant their teachers a degree of autonomy associated with 'learning how to learn' (p.24). This way of working could promote learning from reflection about everyday professional experiences with an emphasis on self-responsibility for self-education and autonomy (Tusting and Barton, 2003). Alongside the teachers' dialogic (communicative) learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) to critically review what Daniel meant within feedback and the validity of his comments, this experience could

also have led to instrumental (technical) learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) for teachers to make improvements in their practice.

Pearl and Daniel's supportive work with teachers to improve their practice also illustrated Munro's (2011) argument that leaders could facilitate a culture of trust through honesty, openness and regard for others. Their work also resonated with Southworth's (2004) claim that monitoring procedures might be regarded as positive by teachers if they invite constructive feedback and learning opportunities. The cultures nurtured by Pearl and Daniel could have enabled 'classroom observation, feedback, collegial challenge and frank discussions about performance and pupil progress without staff becoming defensive or moving into denial' (Southworth, 2004, p.129).

Wake-up calls (and ultimatums) generally suggested authoritarian, top-down power exchanges to direct school improvement. However, Watkins, Marsick and Faller's (2012) model of facilitating learning is based on transformative learning theory and accounts for senior leaders dictating expectations, though this can meet with resistance. Nevertheless, it could be argued that teachers had independent (autonomous) choice to decide whether or not to become engaged as learners within school-based change. Mezirow's (1997) theory proposes that a locus of control and self-determination can be experienced through a process of autonomous thinking as part of the critical self-reflection on which change is based. Autonomy and freedom to engage with critical self-reflection about one's perspective (as described by Mezirow (1991) and Cranton (1996)) could also have characterised the wake-up calls in Daniel and Pearl's descriptions of teachers gradually taking control of their own learning. Pearl claimed that a teacher's change in her mathematical practice resulted from the teacher's own realisation *"that she had a need to learn"*. Meanwhile, Daniel wanted to give teachers ownership of their next steps to consider how they would respond to his observational feedback. An independence of choice to engage as a learner and commit to change or leave a school, even in response to a wake-up call (or ultimatum), could be interpreted as a personal, participatory decision (Henderson, 2002; Day and Gu, 2014), rather than merely conforming.

In most cases, using wake-up calls as a rationale for change supported the senior leaders to create a culture for change by helping rally staff commitment and unifying whole school direction (Crossley and Corbyn, 2010; Senge, 2012). This intrinsic motivation and emotional commitment could also have enhanced teacher resilience, as suggested by Day and Gu (2014).

Ultimatums: An authoritarian style of leadership inspired by an urgency to improve, a lack of previously demonstrable success and a concern about confidence for future performance (Hallinger, 2011) were evidenced in the events which served as ultimatums. For example, Lila described that her school received a 'special measures' outcome from an OFSTED inspection soon after she joined the school. She recalled that she asserted her authority to make it clear that changes were necessary and it was for teachers to decide whether or not they wanted to stay:

> *I am very open and I tell them and if they don't like it, they don't have to stay... There's going to be no repercussions. You do what you want to do, it's your life. Children have to be here, you don't. You make the decision.*

The conversation underpinning Lila's ultimatum (and discussions involving other wake-up calls and ultimatums) demonstrated dialogic (communicative) learning, because of the interaction between the person communicating and those attending to the conversation (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). Leaders make themselves understood and teachers learn to understand and evaluate the validity of the meaning behind the conversations. In this instance, after Lila emphasised that teacher change was necessary to improve children's education, teachers could have critically reviewed their positions of understanding. Lila acknowledged that teachers had left and Ken, Lila's deputy, recollected that for teachers who *"didn't understand and weren't willing, then this wasn't the school for them... We had to work hard on encouraging them to find schools that suited their educational beliefs… ".*

Meanwhile, Pearl commented on her headteacher's clarity with the school's leaning journey, made in the wake of a 'requires improvement' OFSTED inspection outcome: "*right we've got a journey to go on and you are either on… or you are off the bus. And sometimes… people get off the bus and that's ok".* Whilst it was a comment about the

leadership of her headteacher, Pearl would presumably have aligned herself with supporting the leadership of change through her role as deputy. The ultimatum seemed similar to Crossley and Corbyn's (2010) analogy of a school's learning journey for school change and having the 'right people on the bus' (p.63) to do the right things.

Pearl recalled that many teachers left, getting *"off the bus, because they weren't part of the vision that the senior leaders had for the school"*. She continued that monitoring procedures started and that the teachers *"began to see that our head wasn't going to back down… and they saw that the head was supportive, but wouldn't stand any nonsense"*. This suggested that Pearl's headteacher had challenged teachers 'to get on the bus or get off it' (Crossley and Corbyn, 2010, p.63) and to make decisions about their commitment to school improvement. In this way, the ultimatum described by Pearl to drive change also echoed Day and Gu's (2014) suggestion that senior leaders could develop teachers' resilience by garnering their emotional commitment to drive student achievement. Pearl referred to a positive outcome of the ultimatum: *"now all the people, who are here, are all in it to win it. And that is the atmosphere within the school, which wasn't the case a year and a term ago"*. This suggested that the teachers' exodus was conducive to creating a positive learning atmosphere for teachers joining and/ or remaining at the school. This also echoed Guerra and Nelson's (2009) emphasis on the importance of changing teachers' beliefs, not just their behaviours. This could occur through senior leaders providing a rationale and vision for change to garner teachers' commitment (Crossley and Corbyn, 2010). This would also support an argument that senior leaders' delivery of wake-up calls and ultimatums could prompt teachers to experience the stages of disorienting dilemmas, self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame, and critical self-reflection of assumptions about the educational elements under discussion.

Practical activities

There are lots of similarities between the data relating to internal and external collaborations categorised under 'practical activities'. Therefore, these themes are combined and discussed together. Senior leaders referred to opportunities for internal and external collaborations for their teachers in relation to: working with partner schools, peer collaboration work with stronger colleagues from the teachers' school or

with Advanced Skills Teachers[5] (ASTs), leaders modelling practice to teachers and directly supporting them, teachers working in professional learning groups and trialling initiatives, and activities undertaken within a learning network.

Shelagh and Geoff reflected on teachers visiting partner schools to look at good practice as positive learning experiences and which enabled teachers to learn from external sources (Nias, Southworth and Campbell, 1992). For example, Shelagh valued teachers visiting a school to see how children's targets were set. Meanwhile, Geoff explained that a Reception teacher transformed her classroom's learning environment after she visited another school and suddenly recognised, *"Oh, this is what it's supposed to be like, I hadn't realised!"* The change was rapid, completed within three weeks, and seemed to indicate some form of empowerment. The episode was indicative of instrumental learning about technical knowledge (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) and appeared to promote a deep level of reflection by the teacher. This light-bulb moment may have acted as a catalyst for shifts in the teacher's meaning schemes and perspectives, to trigger a disorienting dilemma and perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991). This may very well have also led to the other stages of transformative learning theory with the teacher having a period of self-examination about her practice with feelings of guilt or shame, engaging with critical self-reflection, making 'preparations for action', and 'taking action'. The latter phase reflects Mezirow's (1990a) assertion that 'learning includes acting on… insights' (p.xvi) from critical self-reflection.

Pearl and Geoff organised peer collaborations in which teachers with less successful practices were supported by stronger colleagues. Pearl reflected that teachers with *"strengths in particular year groups"* were paired with weaker teachers after a local authority review. She explained that colleagues were subsequently collaborating through *"planning together and... wanting to find things out together more"*. Meanwhile, Geoff referred to using team teaching to support change. He recalled that after initial support from ASTs, some teachers felt empowered *and "took responsibility for leading and supporting someone else".* He explained that *"you could see a*

[5] Although the AST status no longer exists (DfE, 2013b), it was the senior leaders *arranging* for their teachers to receive support by ASTs, as part of professional learning, that I regarded as being relevant to my research.

transformation" because *"they gripped it so much that they could help others with it"*. This could suggest that these teachers engaged with instrumental and/ or dialogic learning (through their initial work with ASTs), and had shifts in their meaning schemes and perspectives (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). Such actions could, according to transformative learning theory, have triggered disorienting dilemmas and perspective transformations through the content (the what), process (the how) or premise (the why) reflections on practice (Cranton and King, 2003), as well as leading to stages of self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame, and critical self-reflection about practice. The collaborations also resonated with senior leaders enabling their teachers to prepare for and take actions relevant to change, again illustrating Mezirow's (1990a) claim that learning from reflection includes taking action.

At Geofff's school, the support subsequently given by the more capable teachers (after their practice developed) to other weaker teachers was delivered as part of an organised lesson study approach in *"a supportive way, rather than it being top-down"*, and echoed the practices of peer leadership (Southworth, 2009). This gave his weaker teachers *"someone else in the school to talk to"* about improving their teaching in a supportive and non-hierarchical way. This acted as delegated self-direction in professional learning, which could have simultaneously supported the development of school improvement initiatives (Munro, 2011) and resilient qualities for change by drawing upon teachers' intrinsic motivation and emotional commitments to making improvements (Day and Gu, 2014). These characteristics echoed the theory of andragogy, 'the art and science of helping adults learn' (Knowles, 1980, p. 43), because they promoted the motivated self-direction (Tusting and Barton, 2003) of teachers as learners. The activities that Geoff arranged were associated with school structures and systems for professional learning (Southworth, 2004), including peer demonstration and coaching (Joyce and Showers, 2003). This echoed that 'teachers' professional learning lies at the heart of school improvement' (Southworth, 2004, p.128) and a conducive culture for improvement 'scaffolds a systematic set of professional learning opportunities' (Munro, 2011, p.57). Moreover, the peer support would have promoted opportunities for the teachers to have discussion and dialogue to allow for 'reflection, insight and enquiry into… [their] practice' (Southworth, 2004, p.105).

Geoff also employed ASTs for half a year to support two teachers who were signed up to the school's vision and ready to engage with change but *"they didn't know how to get better"*. He recognised that although *"their change was a very slow, progressive change… it [the collaborative work with ASTs] changed their mindset".* It could be suggested that the teachers made their own decisions to engage with learning because they had a certain readiness to learn, supported by internal motivators (Cranton, 1996). This could be understood in terms of transformative learning theory, which emphasises the autonomy (independent choice) of the individual to engage with the learning about their practice (e.g. Cranton, 1996; Illeris, 2014). Meanwhile, the gradual mindset changes of the teachers aligned with Kitchenham's (2008) and Cranton's (2016) descriptions of disorienting dilemmas as a gradual, cumulative process of everyday experiences. Additionally, Geoff suggested that other teachers had undergone a perspective change after he organised for teachers to observe ASTs visiting their school to teach their classes. He continued that when they saw this with their own eyes they realised *"oh, that's what you meant, that's what you're talking about!"* Overall, the different ways in which Geoff organised the AST support for teachers suggested that he was aware of individual needs and provided bespoke support based on each teacher's existing knowledge (Munro, 2011). It also illustrated instructional leadership through a hands-on approach indirectly through delegation, to influence teacher practice (Hallinger, 2009; Muijs, 2012; Day and Sammons, 2013).

Another type of support was illustrated by Pearl and Lila, who modelled practice to teachers. Pearl reflected that she did this for a teacher *"by working alongside her"*, after the teacher realised that she needed to improve her mathematical teaching. This suggested that Pearl was aware of the teacher's competency and provided bespoke support for professional learning based upon her existing knowledge (Munro, 2011). Pearl also referred to modelling the process of self-reflection about practice for teachers. She would look at children's books and question the teachers, asking *"I wonder why your children are not progressing? What could it be?"* Meanwhile, Lila explained in her interview that she would intervene in lessons to suggest how teachers could improve. She commented, *"You have to show them what the standard is"*, through praise and practice, *"and then they're independent and learning from each other"*. These actions aligned with literature about instructional leadership (e.g. Hallinger, 2009; Muijs, 2012; Day and Sammons, 2013) in which leaders have a

pedagogical vision and use a direct, hands-on approach to influence teacher instruction and practice to ultimately support student learning. Lila's modelling of practice in class was indicative of instrumental learning, whilst Pearl's modelling the process of self-reflection about practice was indicative of instrumental and dialogic learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991). These strategies by leaders could have also prompted their teachers' content (the what), process (the how) or premise (the why) reflections about practice (Cranton and King, 2003), triggered changes in the teachers' meaning schemes and perspectives, and initiated perspective transformations from disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow, 1991).

Some leaders referred to how autonomy featured in their school improvement initiatives. For example, Ken commented about staff wanting to trial out initiatives and which he referred to as *"developing the* [teacher] *voice"*. Meanwhile, in Daniel's school *"professional learning groups"* were established to trial and improve teaching practice. They were indicative of instrumental learning (Mezirow, 1990b; Mezirow, 1991) and content reflection about practice (Mezirow, 1991; Lundgren and Poell, 2016). Daniel explained that one group trialled a new approach designed to improve feedback marking, delivered training to other teachers on it and monitored the effectiveness of the marking. Teacher empowerment and autonomy were enabled because Daniel commented that the initiative had *"completely come from the teachers" and "It's not just leadership saying we want this, it's class teachers saying remember we discussed this, and this is what was agreed. So, they feel they've got more ownership of it"*. This supported Harris, Jones and Huffman's (2018) description of a 'professional learning team' leading improvement as part of a 'within school model' (p.5) of a professional learning community. Establishing the learning group also suggested that senior leaders valued their teachers' professional experiences by encouraging them to share worthwhile practices with others (Kruse and Louis, 2009; Munro, 2011). This also mirrored Munro's (2011) suggestion that professional learning opportunities for teachers should allow them to engage in learning episodes with and from each other, as part of school improvement.

Moreover, the professional learning group could illustrate the autonomy - the independent choice of individual teachers to engage with the learning about their practice - which is relevant to transformative learning theory (Cranton, 1996; Illeris,

2014). This aligns with the bottom-up mode of change in Watkins, Marsick and Faller's (2012) transformative learning theory model of facilitating change. This is because the group's actions resonated with a collaborative, autonomous and empowered approach, with change at the team level that filtered throughout the organisation (*ibid.*). Such actions also illustrated literature about how senior leaders could develop their teachers 'as professionals with autonomy over their professional goals for self-improvement' (Keisler, 2017, p.5), and value their teachers as self-directed (Smith, 1983; Smith, 1990; Munro, 2011) and lifelong learners (Tusting and Barton, 2003; Senge, 2006; Senge, 2012).

In line with the other examples of collaborations so far described, work undertaken within the professional learning groups (whether being directed by or leading colleagues) could have prompted changes in teachers' meaning schemes or perspectives and triggered disorienting dilemmas and perspective transformations (Mezirow, 1991). This could have also accompanied stages of self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame and critical self-reflection about practice. Teachers were also enabled by senior leaders to prepare for and take actions relevant to change, echoing that taking action is a fundamental element of learning (Mezirow, 1990a).

Autonomy was also a theme which underpinned Lila's reference to her school's engagement within a learning network involving internal and external collaborations. Lila had given consent for the Year 5 teachers and the maths subject leader to collaborate with other schools, a local authority and a university to trial a different teaching style in mathematics. They used a lesson study approach *"to plan collaboratively... deliver [the lesson], observe each other"*, video the lesson and discuss results. The initiative also involved external training and visitors to the school to watch lessons. There seemed to be degrees of teacher autonomy and empowerment supporting teachers' professional development and learning. This illustrated key tenets of andragogy ('the art and science of helping adults learn' (Knowles, 1980, p. 43)) to promote the motivated self-direction of learners (Tusting and Barton, 2003) and support professional learning as part of school improvement (Munro, 2011). Moreover, an external network would have enhanced the teachers' professional learning through their exposure to a wider pedagogical base than that existing in their own school, as suggested by Kruse and Louis (2009). Degrees of

autonomy, deemed important by transformative learning theory to support change (Cranton, 1996; Illeris, 2014), had been granted to teachers. The teachers made their own decisions to engage with learning because, supported by internal motivators, they had a certain readiness to learn, (Cranton, 1996).

Generally, the ways in which collaborative activities were organised suggested that leaders were promoting a culture which valued the characteristics of 'learning how to learn' (Tusting and Barton, 2003, p.24), including group learning and a degree of eventual autonomy. The activities also illustrated characteristics of 'learning enriched' (Telford, 1996, p.20; Stoll, 2011, p.106) schools in which leaders facilitated teacher collaborations and mutual support for continuous learning. These structures and systems could have guided their teachers' professional learning through mentoring (e.g. peer-to-peer support where practice was respected and shared between colleagues) and coaching to support improved practice (Kruse and Louis, 2009) and school transformative change (Timperley, 2011). The peer collaborations also illustrated comments in the literature about 'distributed leadership practices' in which teachers 'significantly influence their colleagues' practice' (Volante, 2012, p.14) and 'learning-centred leadership' where all teachers 'support and shape the quality of teaching and learning' (Southworth, 2004, p.162). Moreover, the collaborative characteristics were illustrative of Hallinger's (2011) description of 'leadership for learning' (p.126), which is initiated by senior leaders to ultimately improve their pupils' outcomes and which recognises the importance of teacher learning.

The themes described in this section were underpinned by social constructivist theories of adult learning, highlighting for senior leaders that learners (teachers) benefit from interaction with others (Tusting and Barton, 2003) through collaborations. This would be relevant to senior leaders promoting collegiate inquiry as part of a learning community, as suggested by Hord and Sommers (2008), to engage with change, and Stoll *et al.'s* (2006) descriptions of professional learning partnerships and openness to learning from various sources. The themes also related to reflective and experiential models of adult learning, which describe learning as being 'generated when people encounter problems and issues in their real lives and think about ways of resolving them' (Tusting and Barton, 2003, p.5).

Success of collaborations seemed indicative of leaders promoting a culture of trust and relationships for positive, emotional experiences between the teachers and their partners. This had facilitated teacher growth and development (Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond, 2004) because the collaborations had enabled 'peer analysis, classroom observation, feedback, collegial challenge and frank discussions about performance and pupil progress without staff becoming defensive or moving into denial' (Southworth, 2004, p.129). This again highlights the need to attend to the affective dimensions of learning deemed important according to transformative learning theory (see Mezirow 2000; Illeris, 2014; Taylor, 2015). It also reflects the need to support learners' resilience described by Mezirow (1991) because change is also contingent upon emotional strength and steely determination.

Supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change)

Conditions for promoting resilience, which included supporting teachers' emotions and commitment to change, were associated with the following data analysis themes: establishing trust and professional relationships, structuring and prioritising tasks, protecting teachers and role-modelling, and nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience. Since there is a lot of similarity between these themes, particularly in relation to establishing trust and professional relationships, they will be discussed together. Some of the comments made by leaders within these themes did not directly relate to learning opportunities or school improvement initiatives. However, they were indicative of fostering a teacher's positive state of mind and wellbeing and enhancing a positive, caring school atmosphere (Bingham and Bubb, 2017). Literature suggests that this would also be supportive of teachers and of their commitment during school improvement initiatives (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014).

Senior leaders created the conditions for establishing trust and professional relationships. Comments coded for this reflected the importance of leaders' emotional intelligence - their understanding of teachers and their situations - to help resolve issues (Ryan and Tuters, 2016), support school improvement (Day and Sammons, 2013; Clarke and O'Donoghue, 2016), and shape 'teachers' commitment, resilience and effectiveness' (Day and Sammons, 2013, p.39). They also mirrored Munro's (2011) suggestion that leaders can facilitate a culture of trust through honesty, openness and regard for others. For example, Daniel commented on the sensitivity

needed by leaders to enable teachers to hear and respond to observational feedback to improve their practice. The monitoring procedures to which he referred gave teachers space and time to reflect on messages which could be difficult to hear. However, they were indicative of being a positive endeavour because they involved constructive feedback and learning opportunities (Southworth, 2004), with the culture enabling respectful but challenging conversations for the benefit of improving student outcomes (Southworth, 2004; Timperley, 2011). Additionally, Pearl described how she believed in, supported and empowered a teacher to improve her mathematical teaching. Moreover, similar, respectful conversations were reflected in her description of using positively phrased language when she offered advice and support. She explained that *"As long as you... have that positive language, this is an area to develop, you're more likely to develop that resilience"*. Daniel and Pearl's examples (above) reflect Mezirow's (1991) assertion that change for learners is also dependent upon affective dimensions: 'It is not enough to understand intellectually the need to change the way one acts; one requires emotional strength and an act of will in order to move forward' (p.171). This emotional strength was facilitated by Daniel and Pearl and further relates to transformative learning theory because, as Mezirow (1990c) asserts, educators (senior leaders) can provide emotional support as part of 'a secure environment that fosters the trust necessary for critical self-examination and the expression of feelings' (pp.359-360).

When senior leaders structured and prioritised tasks for their teachers, this also suggested that conditions of trust were established to support resilience. Geoff commented about leaders *"building that trust"* with teachers by *"letting them know that they can come and see you"* and then structuring their targets linked to school improvement. Geoff claimed that this enabled him to strengthen his teachers' resilience *"by giving them small targets, bit by bit"*. Meanwhile, Daniel considered that it was important to provide guidance to prioritise tasks for teachers if they were regularly overworking and staying late.

Other types of support conducive to resilience included senior leaders protecting their teachers by ensuring procedures were in place, by acting as role models, and by simultaneously empowering them. Ken referred to resilience as *"the drive to be the best that you can be in a culture of huge demands and not being blown off track by all*

the things that can come and impact negatively on what teaching is all about". He commented that teachers trusted the senior leaders to support them with this by ensuring that there were *"systems and the procedures in school"* to protect them. Ken commented that this had been facilitated through leaders' organising training and role modelling on how to undertake challenging meetings and engage with difficult parents. These activities illustrated that a characteristic of resilience is that it is continuous. Resilience is 'more than the ability to bounce back in response to acute challenges. It is the ability to sustain quality and renew commitment over time' (Day and Gu, 2014, p.85). Sustaining commitment was also pertinent to Daniel's comment that those in leadership could act as role models through the discussions which they had with teachers about perseverance:

> *It's… leadership as a role model to staff [that] it's tough for all of us at the moment, but we're all resilient, and we'll get through it and we're going to be better for it, and show that we have to persevere with things - to be honest, we tried this, it didn't work, so now we're going to try that.*

Daniel further acknowledged that, in times of change, it was important to reassure teachers that the leadership team recognised the challenges and that *"we're all going through it together, but there is a plan to improve things"*. He felt that this helped teachers to *"feel supported in the meantime. And I think that's a major thing for resilience"*.

Daniel also indicated that it was a collective responsibility to support teacher resilience. He explained that it was important to ensure that teachers were *"supported within their year group"* since it was a four-form entry school and it *"shouldn't be one person carrying everybody, everybody has something to offer"*. Phyllis also referred to a collective responsibility. She reflected that most of her teachers had responsibilities and:

> *with that responsibility and sense of belonging comes trust, because you build up and work on relationships, and then it comes full circle with teachers feeling able to cope, because you know you can trust people and that supports resilience too*.

Attending to the wellbeing and welfare of teachers also highlighted the ways in which

leaders nurtured professional relationships and trust so they could support teacher resilience. For example, Belinda described her previous head leading meditation before INSETs and staff briefings as part of a holistic support of teachers. Daniel also commented on teachers' welfare and promoting the importance of *"looking after teachers with their physical health"* and ensuring that they were working sustainable hours. The conditions, established by the senior leaders for supporting resilience and emotional commitment to change, contributed to the development of collaborations and positive internal school relationships relevant to a professional learning community (Kruse and Louis, 2009) engaged with change initiatives and collegiate inquiry (Hord and Sommers, 2008).

There is no stage in transformative learning theory which relates directly to educators (leaders) fostering learners' (teachers') resilience. However, I suggest that conditions for resilience could facilitate the stages of the theory through fostering emotional commitment, wellbeing, trust and relationships. The examples detailed in this section were illustrative of transformative learning theory literature, detailing how leaders can attend to and support learners' (teachers') emotions and commitment to change (Mezirow, 1991) within environments promoting resilience (Mezirow 2000; Illeris, 2014; Taylor, 2015).

5.3 Overview of relating the data analysis themes to transformative learning theory

This section presents a summary about how the themes emerging from data analysis were referenced against transformative learning theory. Tables 3 (Key areas of transformative learning theory) and 4 (Stages of transformative learning theory) present a visual overview. A tick in the table indicates that at least one reference has been made between the theme and a particular key area or stage of the theory.

Table 3 references the data analysis themes against key areas associated with transformative learning theory, where relevant. It will be noted in the table that all of the data analysis themes, except for senior leaders supporting teacher resilience, were interpreted against all or virtually all of the key areas. The data analysis themes represented the conditions created by senior leaders for teacher learning to improve teaching practice within the context of change, noticeably school improvement. These

Table 3 Relating the data analysis themes to key areas of transformative learning theory

			Key areas of transformative learning theory							
			meaning schemes	meaning perspectives	triggers for a perspective transformation (disorienting dilemma)	perspective transformation	types of adult learning: instrumental (technical)	types of adult learning: dialogic (communicative)	degrees of autonomy	resilience (including emotion and commitment to change)
Themes emerging from data analysis	understanding the need for change	supporting teachers to see the bigger picture	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		putting the child at the heart of change	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		having expectations to be a lifelong learner	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		having discussions in an environment for open dialogue	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
		having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	practical activities	internal collaboration; external collaboration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change)	establishing trust and professional relationships; protecting teachers and role modelling; structuring and prioritising tasks; nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience	would be conducive to an environment fostering the key areas							

conditions were examples of opportunities, established by leaders, that could trigger the thought processes for teachers' learning (indicating shifts in teachers' meaning schemes and perspectives, to trigger disorienting dilemmas, and to experience perspective transformations), that could develop aspects of instrumental and/ or dialogic learning for teachers, and that could promote degrees of teachers' autonomy. They also linked to leaders promoting conditions to support teachers' resilience including their emotions and commitment to change. One reason that might help

explain these findings is that the conditions for teacher learning were generally created in response to a driving urgency for school improvement. As reflected in the discussions, the key areas of transformative learning theory may be deemed conducive to supporting conditions for teacher learning associated with an urgent need for change.

In relation to senior leaders supporting teachers' resilience (including their emotional states and commitment to change) the following conditions were developed: establishing trust and professional relationships, protecting teachers and role-modelling, structuring and prioritising tasks, and having a joint responsibility to support resilience. These elements were deemed to be conducive to an environment fostering the key areas associated with transformative learning theory and support the conditions for teacher learning associated with changes in practice. These conditions enhance a teacher's positive state of mind and wellbeing and enhance a positive, caring school atmosphere (Bingham and Bubb, 2017); these aspects are highlighted within literature as being supportive of teachers and of their commitment during school improvement initiatives (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014).

Table 4 presents an overview of the themes emerging from data analysis which are referenced against Mezirow's (1991) stages of transformative learning theory. It will be noted in the table that reference to the stages of transformative learning varied according to the theme. Themes categorised within 'understanding the need for change' were referenced against the first three stages – the 'triggers for action'. These stages were: a disorienting dilemma, self-examination and critical (self-) reflection. This could be considered logical, since an understanding about needing change could have been conducive to triggering the thought processes for change. Senior leaders having conversations with their teachers involving wake-up calls and ultimatums were also referenced against the stages associated with 'preparing for action' and 'taking action'. This could be because they seemed to have acted as more sombre prompts that change needed to occur in teachers' practices and could have had greater impact to motivate teachers. The internal and external collaborative tasks, categorised under 'practical activities', were also referenced against the stages linked to 'triggers for action', 'preparations for action' and 'taking action'. It could be suggested that the

Table 4 Relating the data analysis themes to the stages of transformative learning theory

			Stages of transformative learning theory									
			triggers for action				preparations for action			taking action		
			disorienting dilemma	self-examination (guilt or shame)	critical reflection (this includes critical self-reflection)	discontent shared with others	exploring options for new behaviours, relationships and actions	planning action	knowledge and skill acquisition to implement plans	experimenting with new roles	confidence/ competence building in new roles/ relationships	reintegration based upon perspective
Themes emerging from data analysis	understanding the need for change	supporting teachers to see the bigger picture	✓	✓	✓							
		putting the child at the heart of change	✓	✓	✓							
		having expectations to be a lifelong learner	✓	✓	✓							
		having discussions in an environment for open dialogue	✓	✓	✓							
		having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		
	practical activities	internal collaboration; external collaboration	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		
	supporting teacher resilience (including their emotions and commitment to change)	establishing trust and professional relationships; protecting teachers and role modelling; structuring and prioritising tasks; nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience	would be conducive to an environment fostering the stages									

referencing of them against the 'triggers for action' – the initiating thought processes for learning – was relevant because most of them were associated with improving practice with a sense of urgency. The referencing of these collaborative tasks against the 'preparations for action' and 'taking action' had relevance to Mezirow's (1990a) assertion that 'Learning includes acting on… insights' (p.xvi) from critical reflection.

Meanwhile, it was suggested that when senior leaders supported teachers' resilience, which would include their emotions and wellbeing, this would simultaneously be conducive to an environment nurturing teachers' commitment, during school improvement initiatives (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014).

The stage relating to sharing discontent with others was not represented in my findings. However, it should be recognised that senior leaders were describing episodes of school improvement and ideas about teacher learning, and commenting about supporting teacher resilience. They were not describing initiatives undertaken to engender their teachers' transformative learning or how their comments related to the theory. There were no expectations in my research to interpret leaders' comments against every stage of the theory. Either way, the omission of some stages is permissible in transformative learning theory (Taylor, 1997; Percy, 2005; Kitchenham, 2008), though a disorienting dilemma and critical reflection are key components (Cranton, 2016). As discussed earlier, no stage in transformative learning theory directly relates to leaders nurturing learners' resilience. However, I feel that conditions created by senior leaders associated with supporting teacher resilience would be conducive to a learning environment promoting the stages of transformative learning theory.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the emerging themes from my analysis of the data, drawing on relevant literature to address my focus on the ways in which senior leaders create conditions for teacher learning associated with school change. The themes were further interpreted, where relevant, with reference to literature about key areas associated with transformative learning theory and Mezirow's (1991) ten stages of the theory. I felt that this analysis could be relevant to senior leaders, who might draw on it to strengthen their leadership of school improvement initiatives. This will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

All of the data analysis themes, except for senior leaders supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change), were interpreted against all or virtually all of the key areas. However, I consider that the conditions described by senior leaders to support teachers' resilience would be conducive to an environment

fostering the key areas associated with transformative learning theory, and enhance teachers' commitment to their professional learning associated with changes in their practice.

Chapter 6 Conclusions and Future Implications

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter begins by acknowledging key limitations of my research, focussing on the methodology, and I recommend improvements if the study were to be repeated. Following this, I answer the research questions, after which I reflect on the contribution of my research to knowledge. Next, I comment on the proposed research dissemination. Finally, I suggest that future investigation through action research could further explore the ways in which transformative learning theory might contribute to our understanding of the ways in which senior leaders can create the conditions to support teacher learning in the context of change.

6.2 Limitations and improvements

In this section, I reflect upon the limitations of my research and suggest ways in which I would make changes if I were to repeat the study.

Sampling, confidentiality and anonymity

In hindsight, instead of recruiting leaders according to OFSTED categories, I could have recruited from schools demonstrating evidence of school change and implementation, such as those from learning networks. I might also have developed questions to ask leaders about these key examples of school improvement, as well as any additional examples of change which they had initiated.

My small sample size was chosen as a compromise between working towards data saturation and enabling me to manage my research and my professional roles simultaneously. The compromises that pragmatism foisted upon me might have limited the generalisability of my study. Additionally, I recognise that decisions over the ratio size of heads to deputies within each OFSTED category did not seem to affect the quality of the data I collected, and my research was not seeking to make comparisons between OFSTED categories or between leadership roles. Moreover, reflections about teacher learning might be considered as being limited, during the second interview, from the participant who changed schools during the interim period between interviews.

Finally, the time constraints to undertake my research led me to interview two leaders from the same school who shared an office and were present at different points during each other's interviews. This limited confidentiality and anonymity for these participants.

If I were to repeat the study, I would:

- seek to interview a larger number of participants
- select senior leaders (irrelevant of whether they are heads or deputies) from schools (irrelevant of whether they are graded 'outstanding', 'good' or 'requires improvement' by OFSTED), such as those from learning networks, which are involved with school improvement initiatives
- withdraw participants who change schools during the data collection phase
- decline participation from senior leaders working within the same school to enhance anonymity
- make greater efforts to check beforehand that interviews will occur in a private setting to enhance confidentiality (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009)

Voluntary informed consent

Unfortunately, I did not inform participants, within the informed consent information or interviews, that a sub-element of my research was focused on transformative learning theory, and that, as part of data analysis, their responses to questions would be interpreted against the theory. I am also aware that I did not specify the exact duration of the interim period between the two interviews or refer to the gap task. Finally, I acknowledge not gaining participants' consent to my publishing or presenting extracts of the report further than the needs of producing my thesis.

If I were to repeat this study, I would amend the following within the informed consent information:

- inform participants that I was going to interpret their responses around transformative learning theory, and provide a coherent explanation of the theory which they could understand
- provide specific details about the duration of the interim period between the interviews

- make reference to the gap task in the voluntary consent information and consent form
- indicate how the data would be used to gain the participants' approval for data use, or utilise an end-of-interview document indicating future data use (Kaiser, 2012)

Interview schedule and interviews

The question schedules (and prompts) for the interviews had limitations which contributed to too much unfocused data and lacked clarity for my research focus. Several questions were misguided and should have been more relevantly phrased. I was not seeking to explore senior leaders' perspectives about transformative learning theory or to prove that they had engendered transformative learning within their teachers. However, I could have still asked questions relevant to the theory about leaders promoting opportunities for teachers' reflection to support teacher learning.

If I were to repeat this study, I would:

- be more reflective and critical when undertaking the pre-piloting and piloting of questions to inform the interview schedules relevant to the research focus
- undertake a more thorough data analysis (in addition to a cursory content analysis) of preliminary interviews to inform the interview schedules
- consider asking questions relevant to transformative learning theory, using appropriate language which would have meaning for participants and support data analysis
- explore past, present and future change over the course of three interviews and the opportunities that senior leaders could provide for teacher learning

Off-track responses and following up questions from participants' responses

I realised too late that some responses to questions asked during interviews were off-topic. For example, Phyllis talked about change with teaching assistants when my focus was on teachers. It was only when I revisited the interview during the initial transcription that I realised the errors (see blue highlighted text, Appendix 14, Phyllis's interview one, extracts 2-4, pp. 209-210) and made efforts in subsequent interviews to clarify that I was asking questions of senior leaders related to their teachers'

learning. Examples of my other reflections about Phyllis, her responses and potential follow-up questions, as well as that about others, may be found in Appendix 14 (see green highlighted text, pp. 209-212)**.** However, I recognise that I did not pursue conversations in the second interview to probe further about responses given in the first interview. Furthermore, analysis of transcripts and consideration of follow-up questions from the second interview were not undertaken until six months had elapsed, because of work demands; I did not get back to any of the senior leaders.

It may also be considered that Joel and Shelagh's voices were not fully illustrated in this thesis. This is because at the data analysis stage, I realised that most of their responses in interview represented impediments to senior leaders driving change and supporting teacher learning. Due to word constraints, my thesis has deliberately refocused upon reporting conducive conditions, rather than inhibiting factors, to facilitate change and teacher learning.

If I were to repeat this study, I would:

- be more alert to interviewees' responses to questions during the interview to keep interviewees on track
- undertake analysis and follow up questions after interviews with participants within a timely manner to ask for clarification or to probe further
- allow more time to develop answers and understandings with each participant
- keep focused during interviews about conditions conducive to teacher learning, to collect more meaningful data relevant to the research question

Gap task

Senior leaders did not engage with the gap task I gave them which was to make notes of any teacher learning which occurred in the period between interviews. I assume this because they did not refer to it or produce any documentation during the second interview. This lack could have limited the richness of the data I collected.

If I were to repeat this study, I would:

- detail any requirements regarding a gap task within the informed consent information (and the consent form) and discuss this with potential participants, prior to them volunteering
- email additional reminders about the gap task between interviews
- verbally remind participants about the gap task at the beginning of the second interview

Respondent validation

I did not seek respondent validation as part of the data analysis due to concerns about participants retracting statements (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), disputing the transcripts (Mason, 2018), or withdrawing from the research if they read their transcripts (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) or a draft analysis (Angen, 2000). I am aware that had I asked for the validation it could have enriched the data with additional layers of interpretation, and limited researcher bias and misinterpretation (Gubrium and Holstein 2002; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011).

If I were to repeat this study, I would:

- engage with respondent validation
- make subsequent modifications in response to participants' suggestions with any disagreements over the interpretations detailed, by including participants' comments and criticisms (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011)

6.3 Answering the research questions

The main purpose of my research was to explore aspects of the leadership of change. This section answers the main and subsidiary research questions, about the conditions created by senior leaders to support teacher learning, for improvements in teaching practice as part of school change, and how this might be further interpreted with reference to key areas and stages of transformative learning theory.

The main research question posed was:

> How do English primary school senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning within the context of change?

The data analysis themes were categorised under three areas: understanding the need for change, practical activities, and supporting teacher resilience (including emotions and commitment to change). These analytic themes positioned the senior leader as central to creating a culture in which learning opportunities could be seen to have arisen as part of a change process. In this way, my research has confirmed perspectives found in the literature which argue that leaders must provide a supportive environment for teacher learning to occur (Hoban, 2002; Gu and Day, 2013; Cranton, 2016). I comment below about the 'actions' employed (i.e. the conditions established) by senior leaders for teacher learning. These actions represent the data analysis themes.

Actions that related to senior leaders developing teachers' 'understanding the need for change' indicated leaders undertaking the following:

- sharing the bigger picture about school improvement
- putting the child at the heart of change
- promoting an expectation to be a lifelong learner
- having discussions in an environment to openly debate controversial issues about school improvement initiatives
- having conversations involving wake-up calls and ultimatums

These actions were illustrative of how senior leaders drove teacher learning by sharing a rationale for change with teachers and fostering a 'shared commitment to the goals and learning outcomes' (Munro, 2005, p.2) related to their professional learning (Senge, 2012). The examples demonstrated the importance of leaders acknowledging the accountability mechanisms underpinning national academic standards and sharing these with teachers as part of leading change. This also suggested that leaders supported their teachers to make links between their school's context and its improvement pathway and the broader, national educational context and vision.

The actions falling under the theme of 'practical activities' related to school improvement initiatives which senior leaders had initiated or facilitated and which involved both internal and external collaborations. These activities were illustrative of senior leaders promoting collaborative activities associated with their school's cultural

structures and systems for teachers' professional learning (Southworth, 2004). This echoed Southworth's (2004) assertion that 'teachers' professional learning lies at the heart of school improvement' (p.128), and Munro's (2011) suggestion that a conducive culture for improvement 'scaffolds a systematic set of professional learning opportunities' (p.57).

Senior leaders referred to opportunities for internal and external collaborations for their teachers in relation to: working with partner schools, peer collaboration work with stronger colleagues from the teachers' school or with Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs), leaders modelling practice to teachers and directly supporting them, teachers working in professional learning groups and trialling initiatives, and activities undertaken within a learning network.

The actions through which senior leaders nurtured 'teacher resilience (including emotional wellbeing and commitment to change)' related to undertaking the following:

- establishing trust and professional relationships
- protecting teachers and role-modelling
- structuring and prioritising tasks
- nurturing a joint responsibility to support resilience

Some of these actions did not directly relate to learning opportunities or school improvement initiatives. However, they aligned with the conditions which I felt senior leaders established to enhance teachers' commitment to change and, in so doing, would increase the likelihood for teachers to engage with relevant learning opportunities. The actions were indicative of enhancing a teacher's positive state of mind and wellbeing and the development of a positive, caring school atmosphere (Bingham and Bubb, 2017), which would also be supportive of teachers and of their commitment to school improvement initiatives (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014).

The sub-research question posed was:

How might knowledge about the ways in which senior leaders

organise teacher learning be developed with reference to key areas and the stages of transformative learning theory?

I have explored two dimensions of transformative learning theory. The first related to some of its key areas to consider how the theory might contribute to an understanding about how senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning associated with change. The second dimension explored the staged nature of the theory. This dimension considered the stages that a learner might experience when change is seen as necessary, when preparations for action are taken, and when action is taken.

To answer my sub-research question, the themes that emerged during data analysis - the conditions established by senior leaders for supporting the teacher learning associated with change - were interpreted against the following key areas:

1. meaning schemes – associated with leaders' awareness of teachers' understanding of change, for example, in their teaching practice
2. meaning perspectives – associated with leaders aligning teachers' world views about education with the national and school's perspective about school improvement
3. triggers for a perspective transformation (a disorienting dilemma) - associated with senior leaders supporting teachers' critical (self-) reflection about their practice, pedagogy or educational world views, as triggers for change
4. perspective transformation – where senior leaders could have engendered changes in teachers' perspectives about their practice, pedagogy or educational views
5. types of adult learning – where senior leaders could have promoted instrumental (technical) and/ or dialogic (communicative) learning
6. degrees of autonomy - granted to teachers by senior leaders
7. resilience – how leaders could have supported teachers' resilience, emotions and commitment to change

These key areas are relevant to how the theory might develop our understanding of teacher learning associated with change; they are conducive to supporting conditions for learning.

All of the activities described by the leaders, except those for supporting resilience, were referenced against all or virtually all of the key areas. These key areas were associated with senior leaders' actions which could:

- trigger a teacher's thought processes that underpinned a need for them to learn as part of school improvement (to promote shifts in a teacher's meaning schemes and perspectives, and to trigger a disorienting dilemma as a basis for perspective transformation)
- support instrumental (technical) and/ or dialogic (communicative) learning about teaching practice
- be conducive to teachers being granted some degree of autonomy with learning as part of the process of change
- be conducive to senior leaders supporting teachers' resilience, attending to their emotional wellbeing and garnering their commitment to change

The senior leaders' actions were generally made within the context of an urgent need for change. These actions, associated with the key areas of transformative learning theory, could help senior leaders create the conditions for teacher learning associated with an urgent need for improvements in teacher practice.

The conditions that senior leaders established to support teachers' resilience (including their emotional wellbeing and commitment to change) were:

- establishing trust and professional relationships
- protecting teachers and role-modelling
- structuring and prioritising tasks
- having a joint responsibility to support resilience

They could be deemed to be conducive to an environment which foster the other key areas of transformative learning theory, and which in turn would support the conditions for teacher learning associated with change. These actions to nurture resilience simultaneously support a teacher's positive state of mind and wellbeing and enhance a positive, caring school atmosphere - these elements are noted within literature as being supportive of teachers and of their commitment during school improvement initiatives (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014).

The second dimension of transformative learning theory is its staged nature. Despite that, the referencing of the conditions conducive for teacher learning (described above) against the stages could be of use to senior leaders. They could use the examples presented to develop opportunities to trigger their teachers' actions, and to help them prepare for and take action, in relation to professional learning associated with changes in teaching practice.

The opportunities senior leaders provided which could have enabled teachers to experience the 'triggers for action' (disorienting dilemmas, self-examination, and critical (self-) reflection) were highlighted within each data analysis theme, except for those categorised under 'supporting teacher resilience'. For actions categorised within 'understanding the need for change', this seemed appropriate since this understanding was considered conducive to triggering mental processes for change. In addition, examples of senior leaders having conversations with teachers involving wake-up calls and ultimatums were also referenced against the stages associated with 'preparing for action' and 'taking action'. I felt that this was appropriate because these conversations appeared to serve as sombre warnings that changes needed to occur in teachers' practices and could have motivated them to prepare for and take action.

The practical tasks involving internal and external collaborations, organised by senior leaders for teachers, were referenced against the first three stages associated with 'triggers for action' and the stages associated with 'preparing for action' and 'taking action'. In relation to referencing these against the 'triggers for action' – the initiating thought processes for learning and change – this seemed pertinent since most of the collaborations were associated with an urgent need to improve practice. The referencing of the collaborative tasks against 'preparing for action' and 'taking action' resonated with Mezirow's (1990a) assertion that 'Learning includes acting on… insights' (p.xvi) from critical (self-) reflection.

No activity was referenced against the stage relating to sharing discontent with others. This may be explained by appreciating that the leaders were discussing in interview: school improvement, ideas about teacher learning, and supporting teacher resilience. They were not describing activities they had provided to engender their teachers' transformative learning or how their comments were associated with the theory.

Therefore, there was no expectation that every stage would be represented; indeed, it has been acknowledged that not every stage is necessary within transformative learning theory (see Taylor, 1997; Percy, 2005; Kitchenham, 2008). There is no stage in the theory which was directly relevant to leaders nurturing teacher resilience. However, it could be suggested that conditions supportive of resilience (including emotional wellbeing and commitment to change) might connect to the stages of transformative learning theory because they would be conducive to the environment in which the stages played out.

In summary, I have found that the conditions established by senior leaders for teacher learning associated with improvements in teaching practice within the context of change are: supporting teachers to understand the need for change; initiating or facilitating internal and external collaborations between their teachers and a variety of partners; and supporting teachers' resilience, which also encompasses attending to their emotional wellbeing and commitment to change. I have also found that these conditions may be interpreted against key areas of transformative learning theory and some aspects of the stages of the theory. This can help to explain the conditions provided by leaders for teacher learning, and how the learning may occur through stages of triggering mental processes to take action, preparations for taking action and the actual taking action.

6.4 Contribution of my research to knowledge

To answer my two research questions, this research has explored two areas. Firstly, it has made links, where relevant, between literature on the context and culture of leadership and change, and the themes emerging from my data about the conditions which senior leaders created for teacher learning as part of change. I proposed that teacher learning could be facilitated by senior leaders when they undertook the following: developed teachers' understanding about the need for change; initiated or facilitated internal and external collaborative activities as part of school improvement strategies; and supported teachers' resilience, including their emotions and commitment to change.

Secondly, it has examined how an understanding of this topic may be developed with reference to key areas and the stages of transformative learning theory. The research

used this theory about 'adult learning addressed to those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) as a conceptual framework. This was to further an understanding about the role of English primary senior leaders in developing teachers' professional learning which 'lies at the heart of school improvement' (Southworth, 2004, p.128). I had been unable to find previous studies which made use of this theory to understand how senior leaders could support teachers' professional learning in English primary schools; my work, therefore, marks a unique contribution to knowledge.

Transformative learning theory acknowledges that it is 'not enough to understand intellectually the need to change the way one acts; one requires emotional strength and an act of will in order to move forward' (Mezirow, 1991, p.171). This suggests that change is also dependent upon the emotional strength and determination associated with resilience. My research has explored the value of senior leaders supporting the conditions for teachers' resilience, including their emotional wellbeing and commitment to change. The themes that emerged in relation to resilience were indicative of promoting a teacher's positive state of mind and wellbeing, and a caring school atmosphere (Bubb and Bingham, 2017). These areas could support teachers' commitment during school improvement initiatives (Day and Sammons, 2013; Day and Gu, 2014).

Extracts from leaders' interviews were used to illustrate the data analysis themes (the conducive learning conditions) and were interpreted against key areas and the stages of transformative learning theory. These could help inform other senior leaders who wish to develop conditions to support teachers' professional learning associated with improvements to teaching practice and could strengthen their leadership of change.

6.5 Dissemination

Upon completion of my Ed.D, I will provide a brief explanation of transformative learning theory and a 'key findings' report for the participants. This report will incorporate an executive summary, conclusions and recommendations, as recommended by Burton, Brundrett and Jones (2014), to enable the leaders to reflect on any relevance for their leadership where they facilitate teacher learning as part of change. Further to this, I will use my thesis as a basis to write journal articles, e.g.

within the area of transformative learning theory and adult learning, and to present at research conferences such as BERA. This is in line with my employer's drive to disseminate my research to a professional audience.

6.6 Future research

As I develop my research in the future, I could examine senior leaders' perspectives about transformative learning theory and report on specific programmes of school improvement associated with transformative learning. Given that one of my new professional roles is to support teachers as researchers, this could be conducted through cycles of action research, which have been linked to transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991; Christie *et al*., 2015). Nixon (2016) has presented research about how senior leaders participated on an equal level as their teachers to advance action research strategies to benefit student outcomes. If senior leaders were to experience/ gain an understanding about transformative learning, e.g. within an action research context, they might consider more conscious or deliberate use of its stages (Illeris, 2014; Cranton, 2016) as part of their leadership of teacher learning to support school improvement.

Commonalities between transformative learning theory and action research include: active participation to develop an action plan, promotion of dialogue, undertaking action, observing and analysing the consequences, and critical reflection on the results to inform further successive cycles of planning, action and reflection (Mezirow, 1991; Taylor, 2007; Christie *et al*., 2015). However, the body of literature which links transformative learning theory with educational action research (e.g. see Taylor, 2007; Christie *et al*., 2015) is small and is limited to adult and higher education, rather than the primary sector. In the future then, my future research might contribute to exploring how a relationship between action research and transformative learning theory could support primary school senior leaders to develop teacher learning associated with change. Such a project might be undertaken through monitoring teacher-led action research projects (Lambirth and Cabral, 2016) as part of a situated learning approach, rather than solely relying on self-reported-incidents of the occurrence of transformative learning, which is a weakness ascribed to previous research (Lundgren and Poell, 2016). In any such future project, I could include an examination of the inherent tensions between the autonomy and the jurisdictions of teachers involved in action

research projects (Bubb, 2010; Lambirth and Cabral, 2016; see also Nixon, 2016). Not only is this pertinent for those who advocate the importance of free choice within action research (Lambirth and Cabral, 2016), but it also resonates with discussions about the individual freedoms underpinning transformative learning theory (e.g. Mezirow, 1991; Cranton, 1996; Cranton, 2016). Moreover, a dilemma in an individual's professional practice can act as a catalyst for action research, echoing how a disorienting dilemma can trigger individual transformation (Christie *et al*., 2015). Therefore, it could prove worthwhile to explore whether teachers experience transformative learning when engaging with action research, to examine the difference it makes to how they see themselves as learners and the ways in which they engage with professional learning relevant to school improvement.

6.7 Conclusion

My thesis has explored how English primary school senior leaders create conditions for teacher learning, associated with improvements to practice, within the context of change, and how this might be interpreted with reference to transformative learning theory. Identifying the conditions for learning was based on themes that emerged from leaders' responses to interview questions about leading change, teachers as learners and supporting teacher resilience. Reference to transformative learning theory was undertaken because the theory is addressed to 'those involved in helping adults learn' (Mezirow, 1991, p.33) within the context of change. I feel that my research has highlighted the important role that senior leaders undertake as the educators and facilitators involved with teacher learning as part of change. I believe that my research could benefit leaders wishing to deepen and strengthen their leadership of change by considering the conditions they create for teacher learning.

My contribution to knowledge has been presented around three areas: exploring links between the context and culture of leadership and the conditions senior leaders create to develop teacher learning which is associated with change; referencing the conditions necessary to support teacher learning against the key areas and stages of transformative learning theory; and exploring the value of senior leaders supporting the conditions for teacher resilience.

> ‘Teacher change is the key to educational change and the way children’s learning will happen in the future. Without creating a positive learning environment for teachers, we cannot hope to create educational change on a wider scale’
> (Walker, 2002, p.142).

I have shown that senior leaders can nurture teacher learning positively, even against the demands of an accountability framework, within a culture of providing professional learning opportunities via appropriate support mechanisms, structures and systems. I believe an understanding of how the conditions are created by senior leaders for this learning as part of school-based change, including opportunities for critical reflection and/ or critical self-reflection, may be developed with reference to transformative learning theory. This is because it is a theory addressed to those supporting adult learners making change (Mezirow, 1991).

References

Adler, P. and Adler, P. (2012). 'Types of Sample Pool Sizes'. In S. Baker and R. Edwards, *How many qualitative interviews is enough? Expert voices and early career reflections on sampling and cases in qualitative research. National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper.* [Online]. Available at: http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/2273/. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Angen, M. (2000). 'Evaluating interpretive inquiry: reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue'. *Qualitative Health Research,* 10(3), 378-395.

Baker, S. E., and Edwards, R. (2012). 'Introduction'. In S. Baker and R. Edwards, *How many qualitative interviews is enough? Expert voices and early career reflections on sampling and cases in qualitative research. National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper.* [Online]. Available at: http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/2273/. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Ball, S. (2013). *The Education Debate.* Bristol: Polity Press.

Ball, S. (2015). 'Education, governance and the tyranny of numbers'. *Journal of Education Policy,* 30(3), 299-301.

Barnett, B. and Stevenson, H. (2016). 'Leading high poverty urban schools'. In S. Clarke and T. O'Donoghue (Eds.), *School Leadership in Diverse Context.* Oxon: Routledge.

Basit, T. (2010). *Conducting Research in Educational Contexts*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Bazeley, P. (2011). *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Bazeley, P. and Jackson, K. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

BERA (2011). *BERA Ethical Guidelines*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf?noredirect=1. [Last accessed 19th February 2017.]

BERA (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018. [Last accessed 26th June 2018.]

Biesta, G. (2017). 'Education, Measurement and the Professions: Reclaiming a space for democratic professionality in education'. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 49:4, 315-330. [Online]. Available at: https://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/00131857.2015.1048665?needAccess=true. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Bingham, D. M., and Bubb, S. (2017). 'Leadership for wellbeing'. In P. Earley and T. Greany (Eds.), *School Leadership and System Reform in the 21st Century.* London: Bloomsbury.

Blaikie, N. (2000). *Designing Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Boddy, C. (2016). 'Sample size for qualitative research'. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 19(4), 426-432. [Online]. Available at: https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/QMR-06-2016-0053. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Stoll, L., Thomas, S., Wallace, M., Greenwood, A., Hawkey, K., Ingram, M., Atkinson, A. and Smith, M. (2005). *Creating and sustaining effective professional learning communities. Research Report 637*. London: DfES and University of Bristol.

Braun, A. , Stephen J. Ball , Meg Maguire and Kate Hoskins (2011). 'Taking context seriously: towards explaining policy enactments in the secondary school'. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 32(4), 585-596. [Online]. Available at: https://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/01596306.2011.601555. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). 'Using thematic analysis in psychology'. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.

British Psychological Society. (2014). *Code of Human Research Ethics*. Leicester: British Psychological Society.

Bubb, S. (2010). 'Engaging teachers in action research'. In P. Earley and V. Porritt (Eds.), *Effective Practices in Continuing Professional Development: Lessons from Schools*. London: Institute of Education Press.

Burton, N., Brundrett, M. and Jones, M. (2014). *Doing your Educational Research Project*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Caldwell, B. and Spinks, J. (2013). *The Self-Transforming School*. London: Routledge.

Calleja, C. (2014). 'Jack Mezirow's conceptualisation of adult transformative learning: A review'. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 20(1).

Christie, M., Carey, M., Robertson, A. and Grainger, P. (2015). 'Putting Transformative Learning Theory into Practice'. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 55(1), 9-30.

Clarke, S. and O'Donoghue, T. (2016). 'Leading schools in diverse contexts'. In S. Clarke and T. O'Donoghue (Eds.), *School Leadership in Diverse Context.* Oxon: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. Oxon: Routledge.

Cranton, P. (1996). *Professional Development as Transformative Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Cranton, P. (2016). *Understanding and Promoting Transformative Learning: a guide to theory and practice*. Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing LLC.

Cranton, P. and Kasl, E. (2012). 'A response to Michael Newman's Calling transformative learning into question: some mutinous thoughts'. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 62(4), 393–398.

Cranton, P., and King, K.P. (2003). 'Transformative learning as a professional development goal'. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 98*, 31-37.

Creswell, J. (2018). *Research Design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Crossley, D. and Corbyn, G. (2010). *Learn to Transform: Developing a 21st century approach to sustainable school transformation.* London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Crotty, M. (1998). Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Davies, B. (2009). *The Essentials of School Leadership*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Day, C. and Gu, Q. (2014). *Resilient Teachers, Resilient Schools*. Oxon: Routledge.

Day, C. and Lieberman, A. (2018). 'Foreword'. In A. Harris, M. Jones and J. Huffman (Eds.), *Teachers Leading Educational Reform: The power of professional learning communities*. Oxon: Routledge.

Day, C. and Sammons, P. (2013). *Successful leadership: a review of the international literature (CfBT Trust).* [Online]. Available at: http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED546806.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DCSF. (2009). *Improving Subject Pedagogy Through Lesson Study: handbook for leading teachers in mathematics and English*. [Online]. Available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130323063658/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Improving%20subject%20pedagogy%20through%20Lesson%20Study.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good Research Guide: for small-scale social research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Denzin, N. And Lincoln, Y. (2005). 'Introduction'. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

DfE. (2013a). *The National Curriculum in England: Key Stages 1 and 2 framework document.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-primary-curriculum. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE. (2013b). *Teachers' pay: changes since September 2013*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/teachers-pay-changes-since-september-2013. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE. (2014). *Specialist leaders of education: a guide for potential applicants*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/specialist-leaders-of-education-a-guide-for-potential-applicants. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE. (2015a). *Consultation outcome: Intervening in failing, underperforming and coasting schools.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/intervening-in-failing-underperforming-and-coasting-schools. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE. (2015b). *Policy paper. 2010 to 2015 government policy: teaching and school leadership*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-teaching-and-school-leadership/2010-to-2015-government-policy-teaching-and-school-leadership. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE. (2016). *Educational Excellence Everywhere.* [Online]. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508447/Educational_Excellence_Everywhere.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE. (2018). Primary School Accountability. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability. [Last accessed 4th September 2018.]

DfE. (no date). *School and college accountability.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/school-and-college-accountability. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfE and Gibb, N. (2017). *Nick Gibb: The power of greater freedom and autonomy for schools.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/nick-gibb-the-power-of-greater-freedom-and-autonomy-for-schools. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfEE and QCA (1999). *The National Curriculum Handbook for primary teachers in England. Key stages 1 and 2.* [Online]. Available at: http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/1999-nc-primary-handbook.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfES. (2001). *Advanced Skills Teachers: promoting excellence*. [Online]. Available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120107081400/https://www.education.g

ov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DfES-0755-2001.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

DfES. (no date). *This is the Advanced Skills Teachers 'Standards' website*. [Online]. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20081218215341/http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/ast/. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Dirkx, J. (1997). 'Nurturing soul in adult education'. In P. Cranton (Ed.), *Transformative learning in action: Insights from practice*, New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 74, 79-88. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Dirkx, J. (2012). 'Self-formation and transformative learning: a response to "Calling transformative learning into question: some mutinous thoughts," by Michael Newman'. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 62(4), 399–405.

Dowling, P. and Brown, A. (2010). *Doing Research/ Reading Research: re-interrogating education*. Oxon: Routledge.

Drew, C.J., Hardman, M.L. and Hosp, J.L. (2008). *Designing and Conducting Research in Education*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Feriver, Ş., Teksöz, G., Refika, O. and Reid, A. (2016). 'Training early childhood teachers for sustainability: towards a 'learning experience of a different kind''. *Environmental Education Research*, 22(5), 717-746.

Fullan, M. (2016). *The New Meaning of Educational Change. Fifth Edition.* London: Routledge.

Gilbert, L. S. (2002). 'Going the distance: 'closeness' in qualitative data analysis software'. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology,* 5(3), 215-228.

Gillham, B. (2000). *The Research Interview*. London: Continuum.

Gillham, B. (2009). *Research Interviews: the range of techniques*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Glatter, R. (2010). 'Governance, autonomy and accountability in education'. In M. Preedy, M., R. Glatter, R. and C. Wise (Eds.), *Strategic Leadership and Education Improvement*. London, SAGE Publications Ltd.

Gleeson, D. and Husbands, C. (2001) 'Introduction'. In D. Gleeson and C. Husbands (Eds.), *The Performing School: managing teaching and learning in a performance culture*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Golafshani, N. (2003). 'Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research'. *The Qualitative Report,* 8(4), 597-607.

Gov.uk. (no date). *Types of school*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Gray, D. (2009). *Doing Research in the Real World*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Gu, Q. and Day, C. (2013). 'Challenges to teacher resilience: conditions count'. *British Educational Research Journal*, 39(1), 22-44.

Guba, E. (1990). 'The alternative paradigm dialog'. In E. Guba (Ed.), *The Paradigm Dialog*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Gubrium, J. and Holstein, J. (2002). *Handbook of Interview Research: context and method.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Guerra, P.L. and Nelson, S.W. (2009). 'Changing professional practice requires changing beliefs'. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 90(5), 354-359.

Guest, G., Bunce, A. and Johnson, L. (2006). 'How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability'. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59–82.

Guskey, T. (2002). 'Professional Development and Teacher Change'. *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, 8(1), 381-391. [Online]. Available at: http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.473.2693&rep=rep1&type=pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Hallam, P., Smith, H., Hite, J., Hite, S., and Wilcox, B. (2015). 'Trust and Collaboration in PLC Teams: Teacher Relationships, Principal Support, and Collaborative Benefits'. *NASSP Bulletin*, 99(3), 193-216.

Hallinger, P. (2009). *Leadership for 21st Century Schools: From Instructional Leadership to Leadership for Learning*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.invalsi.it/invalsi/ri/vales/documenti/04102012/03a_Leadership_21st_century_schools.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Hallinger, P. (2010) *Leadership for learning: what we have learned from 30 years of empirical research*. Paper presented at the Hong Kong School Principals' Conference 2010: Riding the Tide, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, China.

Hallinger, P. (2011). 'Leadership for learning: lessons from 40 years of empirical research'. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49(2), 125-142. [Online]. Available at: https://www-emeraldinsight-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/09578231111116699. [Last accessed 1st July 2018].

Halpin, D. (2003). *Hope and Education: The Role of the Utopian Imagination*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Hargreaves, A. (2007). 'Sustainable professional learning communities'. In L. Stoll and K.S. Louis (Eds.), *Professional Learning Communities: divergence, depth and dilemmas.* Berkshire: Open University Press.

Hargreaves, D. (2010). *Creating a self-improving school system.* [Online]. Available at:

http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/2093/1/download%3Fid%3D133672%26filename%3Dcreating-a-self-improving-school-system.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Harris, A. (2003). 'Teacher leadership and school improvement'. In A. Harris, C. Day, D. Hopkins, M. Hadfield, A. Hargreaves and C. Chapman (Eds.), *Effective Leadership for School Improvement*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Harris, A., Jones, M. and Huffman, J. (2018). 'Introduction'. In A. Harris, M. Jones and J. Huffman (Eds.), *Teachers Leading Educational Reform: The power of professional learning communities*. Oxon: Routledge.

Hattie, J. (2015). 'High impact leadership'. *Educational Leadership*, 72(5), 36-40.

Henderson, G. (2002). 'Transformative learning as a condition for transformational change in organizations'. *Human Resource Development Review,* 1(2), 186-214.

Higham, R. and Earley, P. (2013). 'School autonomy and government control: school leaders' views on a changing policy landscape in England'. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership,* 41(6), 701–717.

Hoban, G. (2002). *Teacher Learning for Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Hoggan, C. (2016). Transformative Learning as a Metatheory: Definition, Criteria, and Typology. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 66(1), 57-75.

Hopkins, D. (2001). *School Improvement for Real*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Hopkins, D. (2003). 'Instructional leadership and school improvement'. In A. Harris, C. Day, D. Hopkins, M. Hadfield, A. Hargreaves and C. Chapman (Eds.), *Effective Leadership for School Improvement*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Hord, S. and Sommers, W. (2008). *Leading Professional Learning Communities. Voices From Research and Practice.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D. and Murphy, K. (2013). 'Rigour in qualitative case-study research'. *Nurse Researcher*, 20(4), 12-17.

Illeris, K. (2014). *Transformative Learning and Identity*. London: Routledge.

IOE (no date a). *Ethics Review Procedures for Student Research.* [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policiesProcedures/42253.html. [Last accessed 14th May 2014.]

IOE (no date b). *Research Degree Student Ethics Application Form.* [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/documents/About_Policies/EthicsForm_Doctoral_3.1.doc. [Last accessed 14th May 2014.]

Joyce, B. and Showers, B. (2003). *Student achievement through staff development. National College for School Leadership*. [Online]. Available at:

https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/cm-mc-ssl-resource-joyceshowers.pdf. {Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Kaiser, K. (2012). 'Protecting confidentiality'. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti and K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, California, USA: SAGE Publication.

Kandiko, C. and Kinchin, I. (2012). *Student Perspectives on Research-Rich Teaching*. London: King's Learning Institute, King's College London.

Keisler, G. (2017). 'Leading A Learning Community'. In K. Smith and J. Loughran (Eds.), *Quality Learning: Teachers changing their practice*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

King, N. and Horrocks, C. (2010). *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Kitchenham, A. (2008). 'The evolution of John Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory'. *Journal of Transformative Education,* 6(2), 104-123.

Kligyte, G. (2011). 'Transformation narratives in academic practice'. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 16(3), 201–213.

Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy.* New York: Cambridge Books.

Kreber, C. (2012). 'Critical reflection and transformative learning'. In E. Taylor and P. Cranton (Eds.), *The Handbook of Transformative Learning: theory, research and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kruse, S. and Louis, K. (2009). *Building Strong School Cultures.* CA: Corwin Press.

Kruse, S., Louis. K.S. and Bryk, A. (1994). 'Building Professional Community in Schools'. *Issues in Restructuring Schools,* 6, 3-6. [Online]. Available at: http://dieppestaff.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/66176267/Professional%20Learning%20communities.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Kumi-Yeboah, A. and James, W. (2012). 'Transformational teaching experience of a novice teacher. A narrative of an award-winning teacher'. *Adult Learning,* November, 170-177.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Lambirth, A. and Cabral, A. (2016). 'Issues of agency, discipline and criticality: an interplay of challenges involved in teachers engaging in research in a performative school context'. *Educational Action Research,* August, 1-17. [Online]. Available at: https://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/09650792.2016.1218350. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Lang, J. (2014). *Six Lesson Study projects have been successful in receiving funding from the London Schools' Excellence Fund.* [Online]. Available at: http://lessonstudy.co.uk/2014/04/six-lesson-study-projects-have-been-successful-in-receiving-funding-from-the-london-schools-excellence-fund/. [Last accessed 10th April 2018.]

Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Enquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Logan, L. and Sachs, J. (1991). 'Which Teacher Development Project?' *School Organisation*, 11(3), 303-311.

Loughran, J. (2017). 'Professional Learning That Matters: A Whole School Approach'. In K. Smith and J. Loughran (Eds.), *Quality Learning: Teachers changing their practice*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Louis, K.S. (2006). 'Changing the culture of schools: professional community, organizational learning and trust'. *Journal of School Leadership, 16(*4), 477-489.

Lundgren, H. and Poell, R. (2016). 'On Critical Reflection: A Review of Mezirow's Theory and Its Operationalization'. *Human Resource Development Review*, 15(1), 3–28.

Marlow, N. (no date). *London Borough of Barnet LSEF Project.* [Online]. Available at: http://lessonstudy.co.uk/london-borough-of-barnet-lsef-project/. [Last accessed 10th April 2018.]

Marsick, V. (1990). 'Action learning and reflection in the workplace'. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: a guide to transformative and emancipatory learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mason, J. (2018). *Qualitative Researching*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

McCrone, T., Teeman, D., Featherstone, G., Rudd, P., Ahmad, S. and Thompson, H. (2008). *Change Engagement Comparative Study: final report*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/OPM01/OPM01.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

McNamee, M. (2001). 'Introduction: whose ethics, which research?' *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35 (3), 309-327.

Merriam, S. (2001). 'Andragogy and Self-Directed Learning: Pillars of Adult Learning Theory'. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 89, Spring. 2001. [Online]. https://onlinelibrary-wiley com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/epdf/10.1002/ace.3. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Mertens. D. (2014). *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Mezirow, J. (1990a). 'Preface'. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: a guide to transformative and emancipatory learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (1990b). 'How critical reflection triggers transformative learning'. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: a guide to transformative and emancipatory Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (1990c). 'Conclusion: Toward Transformative Learning and Emancipatory Education'. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: a guide to transformative and emancipatory Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (1994). 'Understanding transformation learning'. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 44(4), 222-232.

Mezirow, J. (1996). 'Contemporary paradigms of learning'. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 46(3), 158-172.

Mezirow, J. (1997). 'Transformative learning: theory to practice'. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education,* 74, 5-12.

Mezirow, J. (1998a). 'Cognitive processes: Contemporary paradigm of learning'. In P. Sutherland (Ed.), *Adult learning: A reader*. Stirling, VA: Kogan Page.

Mezirow, J. (1998b). 'On critical reflection'. *Adult Learning Quarterly*, *48*(3), 185-198.

Mezirow, J. (2000). 'Learning to think like an adult: core concepts of transformation theory'. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Learning As Transformation: critical perspectives on a theory in progress.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mezirow, J. (2009). 'An overview on transformative learning'. In K. Illeris (Ed.), *Contemporary Theories of Learning: Learning Theorists… in their own words.* Oxon: Routledge.

Middlewood, D, and Abbott, I. (2015). 'Effectiveness in professional learning and CPD'. In D. Middlewood and I. Abbott, *Improving Professional Learning through In-House Inquiry*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Miles, M. and Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: an expanded source book.* California: Thousand Oaks.

Morgan, N. (2016). 'Foreword by the Secretary of State for Education'. In DfE. *Educational Excellence Everywhere*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508447/Educational_Excellence_Everywhere.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Morse, J. (1994). 'Designing funded qualitative research'. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Muijs, D. (2012). 'Responsibility in a High-Accountability System: Leading Schools in England'. In L. Volante (Ed.) *School Leadership in the Context of Standards-Based Reform: International Perspectives*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands

Munro, J. (2005). *Building the capacity for professional learning: A key component of the knowledge of effective school teachers in the twenty-first century*. Seminar paper 148. Jolimont, Victoria: Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria.

Munro, J. (2011). 'Successful school improvement needs powerful professional learning'. In D. Hopkins, J. Munro, and W. Craig (Eds.), *Powerful Learning: a strategy for systemic educational improvement*. Camberwell: ACER Press.

National College for School Leadership. (2011). *Specialist leaders of education Prospectus.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.ncetm.org.uk/public/files/13894961/sle-prospectus%5B2%5D.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

National College for Teaching and Leadership. (no date). *Section 3: Exploring adult learning; Transformative learning.* [Online]. Available at: https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/transfer/open/advanced-facilitation/advfac-s03/advfac-s03-t2.html. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Nesbit, P. L. (2012). 'The role of self-reflection, emotional management of feedback, and self-regulation processes in self-directed leadership development'. *Human Resource Development Review*, 11, 203-226.

Newman, M. (2012). 'Calling transformative learning into question: some mutinous thoughts'. *Adult Education Quarterly,* 62(1) 36–55.

Nias, J., Southworth, G. and Campbell, P. (1992). *Whole School Curriculum Development in Primary Schools*. London: Falmer.

Nixon, R. (2016). 'Principals and teachers as partners in critical, participatory action research'. *Educational Action Research*, 24 (3), 404-423.

Noble, H. and Smith, J. (2015). 'Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research'. *Evidence Based Nursing*, 18, 34-35.

OFSTED (2013) *School Inspection Handbook*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/pdfs/2013-ofsted-inspection-handbook.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

OFSTED. (2014). *Raising Standards, Improving Lives: The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) Strategic Plan 2014 to 2016*. [Online]. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attach

ment_data/file/379920/Ofsted_20Strategic_20Plan_202014-16.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

OFSTED 2018 *School Inspection Handbook*. [Online]. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/699810/School_inspection_handbook_section_5.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

OFSTED. (no date). *About us*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted/about. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Opie, C. (2004). 'Research methods'. In C. Opie (Ed.), *Doing Educational Research. A Guide to First Time Researchers*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Ozkan, B. (2004). 'Using NVivo to analyze qualitative classroom data on constructivist learning environments'. *The Qualitative Report*, 9(4), 589-603. [Online]. Available at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.co.uk/&httpsredir=1&article=1905&context=tqr. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Parker, D. and Sefton-Green, J. (2010). 'Foreword'. In P. Thomson, *Whole School Change: a literature review*. Newcastle: Creativity, Culture and Education.

Percy, R. (2005). 'The contribution of Transformative Learning Theory to the practice of participatory research and extension: theoretical reflections'. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 22, 127-136.

Rich, M., and Patashnick, J. (2002). 'Narrative research with audiovisual data: video intervention/prevention assessment (VIA) and NVivo'. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology,* 5(3), 245-261.

Robson, C. (2011). *Real World Research*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Ross, M., Van Dusen, B. and Otero, V. (2014). *Becoming Agents of Change through Participation in a Teacher-Driven Professional Research Community. (International Conference of the Learning Sciences Proceedings 2014)*. [Online]. Available at: https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/1408/1408.2502.pdf. Last accessed 21st August 2018.]

Ross-Gordon, J., Gordon, S., Alston, G., Dawson, K. and Van Aacken, C. (2015). 'Efforts to transform learning and learners: the first decade of an innovative doctoral program'. *Journal of Thought, Spring-Summer,* 52-70.

Ryan, J. and Tuters, S. (2016). 'Promoting social justice'. In S. Clarke and T. O'Donoghue (Eds.), *School Leadership in Diverse Context.* Oxon: Routledge.

Sandelowski, M. (1993). 'Rigor or rigor mortis: the problem of rigor in qualitative research revisited'. *Advances in Nursing Science,*16(2), 1-8.

Schwandt, T. A. (1994). 'Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry'. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Senge, P. (2006). *The Fifth Discipline. The Art and Practice of The Learning Organisation*. London: Random House Business Books.

Senge, P. (2012). *Schools that learn: a fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Shenton, A. (2004). 'Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects'. *Education for Information,* 22, 63–75. [Online]. Available at: https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/452e/3393e3ecc34f913e8c49d8faf19b9f89b75d.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Simkins, T. (2010). 'Reform, accountability and strategic choice in education'. In M. Preedy, R. Glatter, and C. Wise (Eds.), *Strategic Leadership and Education Improvement*. London, SAGE Publications Ltd.

Simons, H. (2009). *Case Study Research in Practice*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Smith, R. M. (1983). *Learning How to Learn: Applied Learning Theory for Adults.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Smith R.M., (ed.) (1990). *Learning to Learn Across the Lifespan*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Smyth, A. and Holian, R. (2008). 'Credibility issues in research from within organisations'. In P. Sikes and A. Potts (Eds.), *Researching Education from the Inside.* Oxon: Routledge.

Social Mobility Commission (2017). Social mobility policies between 1997 and 2017: time for change. [Online]. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/622214/Time_for_Change_report_-_An_assessement_of_government_policies_on_social_mobility_1997-2017.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Southworth, G. (2004) *Primary School Leadership in Context; Leading Small, Medium and Large Sized Schools*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Southworth, G. (2009). 'Learning-centred leadership'. In B. Davies (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Spillane, J., Halverson, R., and Diamond, J. (2004). 'Towards a theory of leadership practice: a distributed perspective'. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(1), 3-34

Stevens, L. (2017). *Evidence-based teaching:advancing capability and capacity for enquiry in schools. Case study. The Wroxham Transformative Learning Alliance.*

National College for Teaching and Leadership. National College for Teaching and Leadership. [Online]. Available at: https://www.tscouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/The-Wroxham-Transformative-Learning---Alliance-for-publishing-READY.DOCX. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Stoll, L. (2010). 'School culture and improvement'. In M. Preedy, R. Glatter, and C. Wise (Eds.), *Strategic Leadership and Education Improvement*. London, SAGE Publications Ltd.

Stoll, L. (2011). 'Leading professional learning communities'. In J. Robertson and H. Timperley (Eds.), *Leadership and Learning.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M. and Thomas, S. (2006). 'Professional learning communities: a review of the literature'. *Journal of Educational Change, 7*(4), 221-258.

Taylor, E.W. (1997). 'Building upon the theoretical debate: a critical review of the empirical studies of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory'. *Adult Education Quarterly,* 48(1), 34-59.

Taylor, E.W. (2001). 'Transformative Learning Theory: A Neurobiological Perspective of the Role of Emotions and Unconscious Ways of Knowing'. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 20(3), 218–236.

Taylor, E.W. (2007). 'An update of Transformative Learning Theory: a critical review of the empirical research (1999-2005)'. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 26, 173-191.

Taylor, E.W. (2015). 'Teacher transformation: a transformative learning perspective'. *Italian Journal of Educational Research*, 15, 17-26.

Taylor, E.W. and Cranton, P. and Associates (Eds). (2012). *The Handbook of Transformative Learning: theory, research and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Teijlingen, E.R. van and Hundley, V. (2001). 'The importance of pilot studies'. In N. Gilbert (Ed.), *Social Research Update, Department of Sociology, University of Surrey*, 35. [Online]. Available at: http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU35.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Telford, H. (1996). *Transforming Schools Through Collaborative Leadership*. London: Falmer.

Thomson, P. (2010). *Whole School Change: a literature review*. Newcastle: Creativity, Culture and Education.

Timperley, H. (2011). *Realizing the Power of Professional Learning*. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Turner III, D. W. (2010). 'Qualitative interview design: a practical guide for novice investigators'. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(3), 754-760. [Online]. Available at:

https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1178&context=tqr. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Tusting, K. and Barton, D. (2003). *Models of Adult Learning: a literature review*. [Online]. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Karin_Tusting/publication/265993925_Models_of_adult_learning_a_literature_review/links/55f0145208ae199d47c048a1/Models-of-adult-learning-a-literature-review.pdf. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Vangrieken, K., Meredith, C., Packer, T. and Kyndt, E. (2017). 'Teacher communities as a context for professional development: A systematic review'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 61, 47-59. [Online]. Available at: https://www-sciencedirect-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/science/article/pii/S0742051X16304681. [Last accessed 1st July 2018.]

Volante, L. (2012). 'Educational Reform, Standards, and School Leadership'. In L. Volante (Ed.), *School Leadership in the Context of Standards-Based Reform: International Perspectives.* Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walker, R. (2002). 'A reflective cycle for teacher learning: the Christchurch ICT Cluster project.' In G. Hoban, *Teacher Learning for Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Watkins, K., Marsick, V. and Faller, P. (2012). 'Transformative learning in the workplace'. In E. Taylor, P. Cranton and Associates (Eds.), *The Handbook of Transformative Learning: theory, research and practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wellington, J. and Sikes, P. (2006). 'A doctorate in a tight compartment: why do students choose a professional doctorate and what impact does it have on their personal and professional lives?'. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(6), 723-734.

Wiles, R. (2013). *What are Qualitative Research Ethics?* London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Wills, J., and Sandholtz, J. (2009). 'Constrained professionalism: dilemmas of teaching in the face of test-based accountability'. *Teachers College Record,* 111(4), 1065–1114.

Wilshaw, M. and Morgan, S. (2014). '*Introduction'.* In OFSTED (Ed.), *Raising Standards, Improving Lives: The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) Strategic Plan 2014 to 2016.* [Online]. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/379920/Ofsted_20Strategic_20Plan_202014-16.pdf. [Last accessed 1st February 2018.]

Wood, D., Bruner, J., and Ross, G. (1976). 'The role of tutoring in problem solving'. *Journal of Child Psychology and Child Psychiatry*, 17, 89−100.

Yorks, L. and Marsick, V. (2000). 'Organizational learning and transformation'. In J. Mezirow and Associates (Eds.), *Learning as Transformation. Critical Perspectives on a Theory in Progress.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Ethics approval form

Leading education and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

Section 1 Project details			
a.	Project title	How might teachers' thinking and practice be transformed by leaders of English primary schools?	
b.	Student name	Ashley Brett	
c.	Supervisor	Sue Rogers	
d.	Advisory committee members	Lyn Ang, Elaine Hallet, Guy Robert Holmes and Iram Siraj	
e.	Department	Department of Early Years and Primary Education	
f.	Faculty	Faculty of Children and Learning	
g.	Intended research start date	September 2014	
h.	Intended research end date	April 2016	
i.	Funder (if applicable)	N/A	
j.	Funding confirmed?	N/A	
k.	Country fieldwork will be conducted in *If research to be conducted abroad please check www.fco.gov.uk* *If the FCO advise against travel, a full travel risk assessment form should also be completed and submitted:* *http://intranet.ioead/ioe/cms/get.asp?cid=14460&14460_0=22640*	England	
l.	All research projects at the Institute of Education are required to specify a professional code of ethics according to which the research will be conducted. Which organisation's research code will be used?	BERA	
m.	*If your research is based in another institution, then you may be required to submit your research to that institution's ethics review process. If your research involves patients recruited through the NHS then you will need to apply for ethics approval through an NHS Local Research Ethics Committee. In either of these cases, you don't need ethics approval from the Institute of Education.*		
	Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?	Yes ☐	No X☐ ⇨ *go to Section 2*

Appendix 1 continued Ethics approval form

Section 2 Research Summary

Please provide an overview of your research. This can include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, data collection, reporting and dissemination. *It is expected that this will take approximately 200-300 words, and you may write more if you feel it is necessary.*

Purpose of research

Given my professional, educational panorama, contextualised by the national demands for raised academic standards and international competition, I want to make *current* school improvement as palatable as possible for my colleagues. I am hoping my questions will foster a consideration about the stages, phases and contradictions linked to change. I wish to explore how teachers' thinking and practice might be transformed by leaders of English primary schools and how they can engender change within their institutions. One popular tenet of driving change is Mezirow's (1991) conception of transformative learning and seeing oneself as a learner in the process of change. I deem it prudent to explore this as part of my future research, whilst examining ideas about environmental and contextual structures that help staff to fully engage with professional learning.

Simultaneously, I am interested in considering whether participants' ideas encompass a more holistic, educational approach which aims to nurture the 'whole' child. Themes and ideas might extend ideas about prevalent, English educational paradigms beyond pupil achievement in statistical league tables to consider the nature and intentions of, and future possibilities and implications for, educationalists, education and ultimately opportunities for future society. Ideas might be suggested which can enhance professional practice for myself, my workspace and for practitioners in similar positions. To my knowledge, no one has explored the utility of Mezirow's theory for primary school educationalists to improve practice within the *current* English educational landscape.

Main research questions

- What are leaders' conceptions of education and school transformation?
- In what ways can senior leaders instigate change in their school?
- What do senior leaders think might underpin approaches to school improvement to simultaneously impact upon academic achievement within the current standards agenda?

Research design

I will be employing a small scale, qualitative enquiry into the perceptions of deputy headteachers and headteachers. The raw data will comprise of interviewees' in-depth verbal responses, and contextual details about the interview noted by the researcher. I will use a constructivist, interpretive approach to data analysis.

Participants and Sampling

I will use purposive sampling to identify participants for the research. Although this sampling limits external validity, 'it does not pretend to represent the wider population'. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.115). This procedure will enable me to meet particular requirements of a project (Robson, 2002), specifically to access those who have 'in-depth knowledge' because of their 'professional role' (Cohen, 2007, p.115). By conducting interviews, I wish to examine the perceptions of those who are responsible for and involved in the strategic management of change within schools, specifically headteachers and deputy headteachers. Purposive sampling aligns itself to the interpretive/constructivist paradigm (Mertens, 1998), which I will be adopting for my research.

I will be recruiting nine leaders, from primary state schools in urban environments in the south-east of England, by writing to them (see attached 'letter for participants and consent information'). Suburban schools in the south-east of England, which includes my setting, have certain similarities, for example economic, social and cultural diversity; pupils entering the English education system from abroad; pupil mobility linked to immigration and migration; English as an additional language. These aspects can impact upon a school's academic standards.

Appendix 1 continued Ethics approval form

Schools will be selected from those that have had their inspection based upon the current 2012 Ofsted framework (see Ofsted, 2014), when the last major raft of watchdog changes occurred. I intend to have a sample of three leaders from each of the following OFSTED school inspection outcome categories: 'outstanding', 'good' and 'requires improvement'.

Data collection

Semi-structured interviews will be used to examine the perceptions of headteachers and deputy headteachers who are responsible for and involved in the strategic management and implementation of change within their schools. Semi-scripted interviews will be employed because I am planning to use an interpretive paradigm to guide my research and wish to explore perspectives in depth. I will use a semi-scripted format to have guided conversations underpinned by fluid rather than rigid questions, providing flexibility over the order, alteration or omission of questions (Robson, 2002; Simons, 2009) should participants feel reticent to answer. It also enables me to interrogate or clarify participants' responses as part of an interpretive approach. Semi-scripted interviews were utilised to gather additional, relevant information in McCrone *et al.*'s (2008) research, which honed in on school improvement strategies as part of research into change management. I had considered consulting with colleagues through group interviews, but rejected this for fear of the participants becoming less likely to discuss sensitive aspects of school improvement pertinent to their setting.

I intend to carry out two, thirty-minute interviews - one during the Autumn 2014 term and the other during the Spring 2015 term. The reason for two interviews is to enable participants to note any instances of teacher learning during the interim period between interviews. Colleagues might be asked to keep a journal of critical incidents to share in the second interview and which might prompt further questions as part of a co-researching exercise. This should also facilitate an enhanced depth of shared understanding about educational concepts over which we deliberate.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) advocate that interviews should be located within private, quiet settings. I will suggest that interviews should occur within participants' private offices, where they are less likely to be disturbed. I propose to audio-record the interviews to assist subsequent, iterative, data analysis as part of a constructivist approach. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) warn that audio recordings can distort the data and reduce the complexity of a social encounter, because of its remoteness from the original interview, by negating contextual factors such as visual and non-verbal features. In line with their recommendations, I will note these details as they may acquire significance during analysis.

Reporting and dissemination

I will produce a 'key headlines report', to be based on a summary of selected key findings and produced for participants at the conclusion of my thesis. I also intend to report back to colleagues within my own setting, which might influence their practice and support school transformation, change and, in the long term, improve standards for pupils.

References

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education.* London: Routledge.

McCrone, T., Teeman, D., Featherstone, G., Rudd, P., Ahmad, S. and Thompson, H. (2008). *Change Engagement Comparative Study: Final Report*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/OPM01/OPM01_home.cfm?publicationID=311&title=Change%20engagement%20comparative%20report. [Last accessed 15th December 2013.]

Mertens, D. (1998). *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ofsted. (2014). *The Framework for School Inspection*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-school-inspection. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Simons, H. (2009). *Case Study Research in Practice.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Section 3 Security-sensitive material

Security sensitive research includes: commissioned by the military; commissioned under an EU security call; involves the acquisition of security clearances; concerns terrorist or extreme groups.

a.	Will your project consider or encounter security-sensitive material?	Yes ☐	No X ☐

Section 4 Research participants Tick all that apply

- ☐ Early years/pre-school
- ☐ Primary School age 5-11
- ☐ Secondary School age 12-16
- ☐ Young people aged 17-18
- ☐ Unknown
- ☐ Advisory/consultation groups
- ☐ No participants
- √☐ Adults *please specify below*

Headteachers and deputy headteachers of primary schools

Section 5 Research methods Tick all that apply

- √☐ Interviews
- ☐ Focus groups
- ☐ Questionnaire
- ☐ Action research
- ☐ Observation
- ☐ Literature review
- ☐ Controlled trial/other intervention study
- ☐ Use of personal records
- ☐ Systematic review
- ☐ Secondary data analysis
- ☐ Other, give details:

Section 8 Ethical issues

What are the ethical issues which may arise in the course of your research, and how will they be addressed?

I will adhere to the Institute of Education's ethical guidelines (IOE, 2010; IOE 2013; IOE, 2014a; IOE, 2014b), which requires the British Educational Research Association's (BERA, 2011) code of practice to be followed and the submission of an ethics approval form and associated information (IOE 2014c). Although voluntary informed consent is an ethically integral, contractual relationship between the researcher and researched (McNamee, 2001; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007), it has limitations (Malone, 2003). Specifically, both the researcher and researched can be unaware of how a qualitative study may develop over time (Zeni, 2001; Malone, 2003; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). I am cognisant that acknowledgement and consideration of ethical issues at the planning phase does not preclude other ethical quandaries from arising during subsequent research phases. Ethical standards are often abstract, challenging researchers with their application (Simons, 2009). Nevertheless, I will provide potential participants with sufficient information to explain the intention of the research and the research process, as well as clarifying inherent delineations of anonymity and confidentiality. Potential participants will also be invited to contact me should they have any further questions regarding the research. This should support them to decide whether or not they wish to participate in the research without being under any compulsion.

I am mindful that participants may have perceptions of there being a differential of power between themselves, as interviewees and considering themselves as being in a vulnerable position, and me,

as a researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). In the informed consent letter, I will reduce barriers by positioning my status as a doctoral student undertaking research, akin to a 'researching professional' (student), (Bourner, Bowden and Laing, 2001; Wellington and Sikes, 2006) or a 'scholarly professional' (Gregory, 1997) rather than a 'professional researcher'. Moreover, I am positioned between the polarities of being both an insider and outsider researcher (Bridges, 2001; Loxley and Seery, 2008). I am an insider as a professional member of the educational community serving as a deputy headteacher, but an outsider to potential participants' individual institutions. Advantages to insider or member research (Sikes and Potts, 2008) is that it enables a researcher to undertake a study in a location of which they have intimate knowledge and an understanding of the context (Robson, 2002). This assists the researcher to maintain a degree of sensitivity, knowing best how to approach people and to be attentive to their responses, and retain some status of 'street credibility', with an understanding of the requirements and demands of the profession (Robson, 2002). Hence, I have explicitly indicated that I am a deputy headteacher on the potential participant letter. These aspects may facilitate the interview, in addition to supporting the interpretation of participants' comments at the analysis stage.

Participants might also fear that they may be 'exposed if they share information or be at risk if they raise problems that may be very relevant to the issue' (Smyth and Holian, 2008, p.40). Indeed, a semi-structured, interpersonal interview 'encourages an openness that can lead to unexpected disclosures of issues interviewees would have preferred to keep private' (Simons, 2009, p.43). For example, I am cognisant that I will be garnering the potentially sensitive nature of participants' perspectives relating to school improvement and the standards agenda of raising academic achievement in English and mathematics. Such discussion might affect a colleague's professional identity, and therefore, I need to approach with extreme caution. The fundamental, ethical principle of doing no harm will need to be reviewed during the interview process and when producing the final report so that 'I do not unintentionally exploit a person's openness' (Simons, 2009, p.97). To help reduce anxiety, I will inform them that pseudonyms will be used in the thesis report for their name and their school's name, and no contextual details will be divulged in a 'key headlines report', to be based on a summary of selected key findings and produced for participants at the conclusion of my thesis. This degree of anonymity will be upheld for any future reports or presentations based upon my research.

Representing the views of participants within a research report is fraught with tension, and questions of credibility could be used to critique my research which is exploring participants' perspectives about education, educational transformation, facilitating educational change in their school and how these impact upon pupil achievement. I wish to capture their views, ideas and reactions, both the positive aspects and the challenges as part of their school's past, present and future learning journey. I concede that the authenticity can also be challenged by the mere fact that I have my own perspective when interpreting the data which might (though hopefully not) misrepresent interviewees' spoken thoughts. To increase validity, I could ask participants to corroborate my views as part of a process called member checking (Robson, 2002). However, this could engender problems linked to comments they make about any sensitive areas which they raise about education generally or in their school. For example, interviewees may see comments that they wish not to appear, disagree with my interpretation or increase a propensity for participants to withdraw consent for including their comments in the final report (*ibid.*). Moreover, this could impact upon time constraints for completing my research. Thus, even though I am sympathetic to participants co-authoring statements with the researcher within a semi-structured interview (Kvale, cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.349), I openly acknowledge that the findings are located within my perspective. I aim to guard against researcher bias and misinterpretation (Mertens, 1998; Gubrium and Holstein 2002; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007) of the qualitative data through the use of audio recordings (Opie, 2004) to facilitate interpretation after transcription, by undertaking audit trails (Mertens, 1998; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007;) with my research supervisor for cautionary and reflective measures.

Oakley (1981, p.41) suggests that 'finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of the interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own professional identity in the relationship'. I feel that this helped to facilitate participants' responses in my IFS where I interviewed deputy headteachers - professional colleagues at an equal level of seniority to myself. However, even when I interviewed a headteacher,

who naturally had a more senior position to me, she explored very sensitive issues of her professional credibility which directly related to her professional identity. Her responses provided rich data, which I reflected upon in my findings. My target population for my thesis is similar to my IFS to the extent that I will be recruiting senior leaders who will be headteachers or deputy headteachers.

Potential participants will be informed that I wish to audio-record the interviews for the purposes of making transcripts and subsequent analysis. Nevertheless, I am aware that interviewees may feel uncomfortable with using a recording device to produce an electronic record (Yin, 2009). However, I will explain that the data sets will be accessible only to my research supervisor and me, who have no direct links to or authority over the participants. Additionally, I will advise prospective interviewees that the data will be stored securely on my computer and destroyed on conclusion of my thesis. Although I will clarify to participants that their responses will not be used against them, I am aware that they might ask for some comments to be kept confidential. As long as these are not associated with professional malpractice or counteract a legal duty of care within education, I will accede to their request.

I will notify participants that probing questions might cause them to partially answer or avoid responding (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007), and, therefore, I intend to frame questions which I would feel comfortable answering. Although this step is intended to minimise tension because of the potentially intrusive nature of interview questions, there remains a contentious element. Malone (2003, p.812) questions the golden rule 'never to take actions upon others that we would not be satisfied to have taken upon us' as recommended by Lincoln (1990) and Smith (1990). Malone (2003, p.812) questions the human 'ability to sufficiently imagine ourselves in others' positions, especially when our judgement may be clouded by the rationalization of self-interest'. In my context, this locates me as a self-interested doctoral student undertaking interviews to gather data for my thesis. Therefore, I will also advise participants that should they feel uncomfortable with responding to any of the questions, then they may decline to answer

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) stress interviews should occur within private, quiet settings. I will suggest to participants that interviews are conducted within their private offices at school or at an appropriately private but professional space. Colleagues will be informed that once I receive a declaration of their interest, via post, phone, e-mail or text, to be interviewed, I will contact them to arrange appropriate next steps and for them to sign a consent form.

References for Ethics approval form

BERA (2011). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.bera.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/BERA-Ethical-Guidelines-2011.pdf. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

Bourner, T., Bowden, R. and Laing, S. (2001). 'Professional doctorates in England'. *Studies in Higher Education,* 26(1), 65-83.

Bridges, A. (2001). 'The ethics of outsider research'. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 35 (3), 371-386.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education.* London: Routledge.

Gregory, M. (1997). 'Professional scholars and scolarly professionals'. *The New Academic*, Summer, 19-22.

Gubrium, J. and Holstein, J. (2002). *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and method.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

IOE. (2010). *Research Governance and Ethics Policy* . [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/documents/About_Policies/Gov_and_Ethics_policy_updatedOct10.pdf. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

IOE. (2013). *Research Ethics Applications Guidance: research degree students*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/documents/About_Policies/EthicsGuidance_3.1_Doctoral.pdf. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

IOE. (2014a). *Ethics Review Procedures for Student Research*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policiesProcedures/42253.html. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

IOE. (2014b). *Research Ethics.* [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policiesProcedures/41899.html. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

IOE. (2014c). *Ethics Approval Form*. [Online]. Available at: http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policiesProcedures/42252.html. [Last accessed 29th May 2014.]

Lincoln, Y.S. (1990). 'Toward a categorigal imperative for qualitative reserach'. In E. Eisner and A. Peshkin (Eds.), *Qualitative Enquiry in Education: The continuing debate*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Loxley, A. and Seery, A. (2008). 'Some philosophical and other related issue of insider research'. In Sikes, P. and Potts, A. (Eds.), *Researching Education from the Inside.* Oxon: Routledge.

Malone, S. (2003). 'Ethics at home: informed consent in your own backyard'. [Online]. *International Journal of Qulaitative Studies in Education,* 16(6), 707-815. Available at: http://www.tandfonline.com.elibrary.ioe.ac.uk/doi/pdf/10.1080/09518390310001632153. [Last accessed 16th December 2013.]

McNamee, M. (2001). 'Introduction: whose ethics, which research?' *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35 (3), 309-327.

Mertens, D. (1998). *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches* . London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Oakley, A. (1981). 'Interviewing women: a contradiction in terms.' In H. Roberts (Ed.) *Doing Feminist Research*. London: Routledge.

Opie, C. (2004). 'Research methods'. In C. Opie (Ed.), *Doing Educational Research. a guide to first time researchers*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Sikes, P. and Potts, A. (2008). 'Introduction: What are we talking about? And why?' In Sikes, P. and Potts, A. (Eds.), Researching *Education from the Inside.* Oxon: Routledge.

Simons, H. (2009). *Case Study Research in Practice.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Smith, L.M. (1990). 'Ethics, field studies and the paradigm crisis'. In E.G. Guba (Ed.), *The Paradigm Dialogue*. California: SAGE Publications Inc.

Smyth, A. and Holian, R. (2008). 'Credibility issues in research from within organisations'. In Sikes, P. and Potts, A. (Eds.), *Researching Education from the Inside.* Oxon: Routledge.

Wellington, J. and Sikes, P. (2006). 'A doctorate in a tight compartment: Why do students choose a professional doctorate and what impact does it have on their personal and professional lives?' *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(6), 723-734.

Yin, R. (2009). *Case Study Research Design and Methods.* London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Zeni, J. (2001). *A Guide to Ethical Decision-Making for Insider Research.* [Online]. Available

at: http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/ethicalissues/epilogue/zeni.html. [Last accessed 15th December 2013.]

Section 9 Attachments Please attach the following items to this form, or explain if not attached			
a.	Information sheet and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research.	Yes X ☐	No ☐
b.	Consent form	Yes X ☐	No ☐
c.	The proposal for the project, if applicable N/A	Yes ☐	No X ☐
d.	Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee, if applicable N/A	Yes ☐	No X ☐

Section 10 Declaration	
I confirm that to the best of my knowledge this is a full description of the ethics issues that may arise in the course of this project	
Name	Ashley Brett
Date	30th May 2014

Appendix 2 Informed consent information

Ashley Brett
(Residential address supplied)

e-mail: address supplied
Telephone or text: mobile number supplied

Potential participant's name and address details

Dear

Invitation to participate in doctoral research

I am a deputy headteacher and research student currently undertaking a Doctor in Education at the Institute of Education, University of London. My area of research is centred on school leaders' ideas about their teachers' learning and resilience associated with education, school improvement and change. I am writing to invite you to participate in my study, which will take place in the Autumn and Spring terms of next academic year and involve two 30-45 minute interviews - one in the Autumn 2014 term and one in the Spring 2015 term.

I have included details (see below) of the research in the form of an **information handout**, but am happy to answer any questions you have before you agree. If, after reading the information, you feel potentially interested or wish to have a discussion, please do contact me via my personal details at the top of this letter.

I would be delighted if you could participate in this project and very much look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation.

Yours sincerely

Ashley Brett

Appendix 2 continued Informed consent information

Leading education and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

School leaders' ideas about their teachers' learning and resilience associated with education, school improvement and change

(September 2014 – April 2016)

Information for potential participants

My name is Ashley Brett and I am a Doctor in Education student at the Institute of Education, University of London. This leaflet tells you about my research. If, after reading the attached details, you feel potentially interested or wish to have a discussion, please may I invite you to contact me via my personal details at the top of this letter. I am pleased to answer further questions that you may have and to explain the research process in more detail.

Why is this research being done?

This research is being undertaken to gather your thoughts about being a leader and making changes in your school as part of school improvement and the teacher learning and resilience which underpins this. I am interested in representing your perspectives and your personal experience. The interview discussions and research findings might have relevance for and positively support others in similar leadership positions.

Who will be in the project?

Nine primary school leaders, from a range of schools, will participate in this research.

What will happen during the research?

Participation in the research will involve one-to-one interview conversations in two parts - one in the Autumn 2014 term and one in the Spring 2015 term.

What will the questions focus on?

Themes will focus on your perspectives about facilitating educational change in your school, and how this might be nurtured through conditions which support your teachers' learning and their resilience. I wish to capture your views and ideas, both the positive aspects and the challenges as part of your school's learning journey.

What will happen to you if you take part?

The interviews can take place at your school and I will liaise with you about a suitable time.

If you agree to participate, I will make an audio recording of the interview so that I can transcribe it and use the transcript for my analysis. I am not looking for right or wrong answers; I am only interested in your thoughts. The audio recording and the raw data transcripts will be destroyed at the end of my doctoral studies.

Appendix 2 continued Informed consent information

Could there be problems for you if you take part?

There are no envisaged problems with you being interviewed and no responses will be used against you*****. I acknowledge that probing questions may make some people uneasy. I shall endeavour to use questions which I would feel comfortable answering. Should you feel uncomfortable with answering any of the questions during the interview, then we will not pursue them. If you have any problems during the research process, please inform me.

I wish to clarify my position as an independent research student bound to confidentiality and ethical principles to which I must adhere. I hope that this fosters your trust and confidence in me as a researcher to share honest and open responses.

Will doing the research help you?

I hope you will enjoy participating in this research. Some people find the experience of contributing to doctoral research quite novel and exciting, and the opportunity to reflect on and talk about their personal experiences a positive and useful endeavour. Indeed, some participants feel that the research process and conversations help them from a personal, professional point of view, because they have the opportunity to reflect and time to think.

Who will know that you have participated in the research?

Your responses will be treated within the limits of research confidentiality and not discussed with other participants or any member of your school community or local authority*. The raw data collected during the research will only be accessible to me and university research supervisors, whom are external to your school, the local authority and have no direct links to or authority over you. This data will contribute to key headline summaries and conclusions, and brief extracts might be referenced or referred to. However, the school name and your personal name will be altered to enhance anonymity in my final thesis report which I will submit as part of my doctorate. Audio recordings, transcripts and notes will be stored in a safe place and destroyed at the conclusion of my doctoral studies.

I will produce a 'key headlines report' upon the conclusion of my studies. This report will be a summary of selected key findings specifically written for participants.

This research will be reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee, University of London, prior to the interview stage.

(*****as long as these are not related to professional malpractice or counteract a legal duty of care within education)

Appendix 2 continued Informed consent information

Do you have to take part?
There is no obligation for you to participate, and you have the option of withdrawing from the research process at any time, or choose not to answer some of the questions, without being under any duress.

You can inform me of your interest to participate or make further enquiries by **e-mail, text or telephone**, details of which are listed at the top of the letter addressed to you or at the end of this information handout. I will then contact you to provide further details and/or answer any questions you may have. I will liaise with you about a time to undertake the formal interviews. Should you be willing to participate, you can sign a consent form prior to or at the interview stage.

Will you know about the research results?
I will send you a short report to document the key findings by August 2016. Should there be a delay, I will keep you updated accordingly.

Who is funding the research?
I am funding this research.

This research will be reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee, University of London, prior to the formal interview stage. I adhere to the British Education Research Association's ethical guidelines (BERA, 2011).

Thank you for reading this information

Ashley Brett
(Residential address supplied)

e-mail: address supplied
Telephone or text: mobile number supplied

Appendix 3 Question schedule – interview 1

Main questions	Prompts
What does education mean to you? If you were Education Minister, what would the education system be like? Is there anything from educational systems abroad which you would like to adopt?	Your view aligning with government view? Challenges in education Standards agenda View about national curriculum
What does school transformation mean to you? Do you see school transformation and improvement the same or different? /How do you compare school transformation with school improvement? Has your school undergone transformation or improvement?	National changes (as transformative) National curriculum Personal examples of transformation
What changes have you instigated in your school?	How? Challenges Do(ne) anything differently? Vision driving the change? Supported by educational frameworks - government policy Enabled to make change - effect of Ofsted grading Impact on children
Were there any shifts in teachers' perspectives to engage with change? OR If there was one key thing you could do to transform teachers' perspectives, what would that be? Has your leadership role radically transformed or has it slowly developed? Has your leadership style altered over time in this school?	Examples If there was one key thing you could do to transform teachers' perspectives, what would that be? What changed their (teachers) perspective? What things helped teachers' learning? Teacher reactions to change/attitudes (perspective)/ turnover Teachers 'buying into'/supporting change/ teacher stability
What's the vision for the school? - **(added in after Phyllis's interview)**	Future vision of school Future changes for the school

Appendix 4 Question schedule – interview 2

Main questions	Prompts
How have things moved on, since I last spoke to you, regarding teachers as learners?	
Given all the demands and pressures which a teacher faces, is there a way to support teachers to see the school's bigger picture? How do you get teachers to understand themselves as learners to engage with change? How do you get teachers to be learners? How do you create a learning culture amongst teachers?	Learning communities
What is your understanding of teacher resilience? 'How do you define teacher resilience?' - **(refined after Geoff's interview)** Do you think (teacher) resilience can be taught or is it something innate? – **(refined after Geoff's interview)** If you want to encourage a perspective change in teachers, to engage with change, how important do you think teacher resilience is? How can leaders develop the resilience of teachers?	One off versus continuous/ daily Take with you/ different types built up in different settings Examples Impact on the children Leader resilience – how? Benefits Support its development Wellbeing Trust

Appendix 5 Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification (REFER TO CAPITILIZED WORDS, WHICH ARE BRACKETED, UNDERLINED AND IN BOLD FONT)

A.B.: What does education mean to you?

Phyllis: Everything. Education is everything. From the minute you get up to the minute you go to bed. In the broader sense. I'm going to pull on something I say to the children virtually every day and certainly every assembly. A day away from Grassbanks School is a day wasted. And a moment away from Grassbanks is a learning opportunity lost. And if you speak to the kids here, they can echo that back to you. Simply because everything they are exposed to something occurs; it's consolidation of something, it's repetition of something, or something completely new. Education is about moving yourself on in lots and lots of ways and if it doesn't happen there and then, it's about seeing what has to happen to improve the minds and body and life, just getting the max out of everything on offer. That's education. **(REASON FOR EDUCATION - DRIVER FOR CHANGE AND POSSIBLE MOTIVATION FOR TEACHER LEARNING)**

It's also, I suppose, if you look at it from the side of the more standardised point-of-view equipping children, adults, whatever the age, with the skills to learn and to move their own learning on to live a better life, to lead a good life, to lead the life they want to live. And to see past their own noses, to know there is something else, even if they don't quite know what that is to have that curiosity, to go off, find it, search for it, and ultimately enjoy it. That to me is education. **(IMPROVED LIFE CHANCES)**

There's a bit of fun in there too. I think childhood is the most phenomenal time and experience, if allowed to be. One of the things I said to someone once, to a parent who was complaining in another school where I was an Executive Head, and her complaint was very valid on this occasion, and I said to her, "Fair enough leave it with me, and we'll make sure it doesn't happen again," and she said, "Thank you for listening." And we talked about other things, “You know, the thing is, when children come here, I expect it to be joyful. Yes, we have our bits and pieces and comings and goings, but you like to think they really want to come into school, because it's a joyful, safe place to be, and they enjoy the learning and they enjoy mixing with their friends, and they have their bits and pieces and they're nudging to find their way in society, but they're in a place where they know they can do that, and still come out on top. And I think that has to be key. **(FINDING YOURSELF)**

A.B.: You were talking about children moving on in lots of different ways, moving themselves on. What would you say were those ways, what areas?

Phyllis: In terms of emotional development, in terms of social development, in terms of being able to co-exist, alongside other people in the world who may not be the same as them, who may be different in terms of what they believe in, how they live their lives, what their different abilities and disabilities might well be. Moving on in those directions to be able to adapt, cope at worse, manage very effectively at best, themselves in any given situation, in an increasing confidence and proactive way, so that they're contributing as well as getting something out of the world that they actually

Appendix 5 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification

live in. And particularly at a localised level, their own community. **(CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY - POTENTIAL GUIDING TOOL FOR TEACHERS FOR MORALE?)**

A.B.: Would you say there are challenges that education is facing?

Phyllis: On different levels, I think the most immediate challenge, and that's not just this year or next year, is how this somewhat open and liberated profession to a degree, how they actually respond to the freedom and how well children learn as a result of that. Or how far diverse it may just go and how they keep an eye on that and how that's monitored. I was going to say policed, but that's too strong. Certainly monitored. Because Ofsted's shifting the goalposts all the time. Credibility can slip if that keeps happening. You have to slip onto the Ofsted website to see what's changing, and there's something wrong with that because it should all be moving together. **(DEGREES OF SCHOOL AUTONOMY)**

A.B.: What's your view about the standards agenda with English and Maths? **(Question not necessary)**

Phyllis: I think the foundation subjects have taken a massive knock. I think it's reflected in the very booklet we all got for the national curriculum on the most simplistic level. It always does go to the English and the maths, and yes there has to be an absolute level that everyone has to reach. But I think what gets forgotten, and I think what happens still is that it is not recognised that, at certain parts of children's growing through school, certain subjects and areas and approaches are there to develop aspects that need to be developed at that time of their lives. So, the ongoing thing of early years versus older children, you should see role play you should see dressing up all the way through. Children have already decided what they're good at and what they're not good at by the time they're 4, 5 years old. *That* is so very wrong. They have decided whether they are good at sport or not good at sport and excluded themselves from playing certain games in the playground at a very young age. And that already has cut off a massive aspect of their lives. And that's a development issue. And there's very little recovery from that, because once they have that in there, that whole self-prophesising thing comes to be at a time when they are trying to seek and understand who they are and what they are in the world, with a sense of their own identity and value and importance. They are being thrust towards these assessments and tests in various things or some sort of an explicit measure usually going back to the cores that gives them a picture of themselves, which doesn't mean to say it's accurate, it just puts in a shadow every other aspect of them. And going back to the development of any child, the stage that we work in is frankly I think the most important, the primary stage, the early years of primary. Because we want to protect them, well no we want to equip them to realise that some things we do better than others perhaps, but we have a passion different to others. We are capable of trying everything and making our own decisions without feeling inadequate. I think so many kids are made to feel inadequate now. They don't realise that in their heads, which is why I think it leads really quickly and very directly into lots of mental health issues in young children, which the government is now only starting to recognise, which is shocking actually. Because a child can be depressed from toddler age, and the word depressed is usually

with adults, and it's not. So, there are so many things with this age group that we work with that have to be recognised and taken into consideration, and not just English and Maths.

But I've never felt the shackles of national agenda anyway, because I think if you are doing right by the school and children you're dealing with anyway, then of course to a degree you are going to be guided by some of that. But actually, the needs that are there in front of you dictate what has to happen and it's how you make that happen which is your freedom. And I would suggest the common thing, really simple, is parents will come in and say something about the homework and say, "I didn't want to show him the way I do it, because he gets upset and it's different to the teacher," and I'll say, "Our take on this is we don't care how they learn it, as long as they learn it, so let them choose their own method. And if you think the one you have is better, then they'll decide for themselves." But that's them being autonomous learners. If you say, "No, no, you have to do what the teacher says," then you're doing them a disservice, so don't be afraid. And I say the same to the teachers as well, especially the younger crew who haven't quite got the feel for that yet. Whatever you have to do, just make sure they're making progress. And sometimes you have to go off the beaten path to do that - feel the freedom to do that, you've got it now, so do it.

A.B.: If you were Education Minister, what would the education system be like? **(MEANING OF EDUCATION; VISION - POTENTIAL GUIDE FOR RATIONALE OF TEACHER LEARNING?)**

Phyllis: I think performance tables and I think accountability, the public accountability I feel *has* to be there. I feel personally has to be there. I think there has to be accountability at all levels, and I don't dispute that. What I resent are the blunt tools by which that accountability comes about. There are certain things, yes, that have to be and that's measuring and that's accountability, but there has got to be a better way of showing what schools do. And showing off I should say what schools do, as opposed to this results-driven only, constant beating schools with a whip. I would remove that. I would have a *huge* department researching to help schools move forward and show what they can do in a published format that the public understand, but not in the straight-jacketed way it is now **(SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY)**. That would be I think what I would want to do. That would be the public side of it. If I was the Education Minister and I was to have a dream of or wish for a school what would that be? The highest possible quality of teacher training there is. I would start at the very beginning, so every child has a teacher who has been totally trained, exposed to situations. Get the profession recognised for the absolute pivotal role it is in any child's life. That would be what I would do because that's where it starts. Not more of English or more of art, or it should just be music and art, forget all that; you get your teacher in the room, one that understands *how* a child operates, one who wants to know every single child, and one who has got the strategy the tools of the trade to teach, because they've had a thorough, thorough, thorough training. That would be my dream.

A.B.: What things do you think we've got right in our educational system?

Appendix 5 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification

Phyllis: [Ponders for 5 seconds]. Well, I don't think you can take away from the fact that there has to be an emphasis on, at a very basic level, English and maths. (Ponders for 5 seconds). What else have we got right? (Ponders for 10 seconds). I think that handing over to leadership to make more autonomous decisions has got to be right, and I think the National College, and they had these fantastic 'Seizing Success' conferences up until 2 years ago, when they changed them into something else and did a joint thing with the N.A.H.T. (National Association for Headteachers), where they have got lots and lots of people spouting different theories and idealisms and all that kind of thing. I think that's great because it then either comes from or is translated into research, and I think there's the beginnings of research-driven education, and to know we're close to what it needs to be, because there's still too much - we have to get this and we have to get that, and you can't argue with that. That's from the minute they get baselined to the minute they finish A-Levels. But I think the beginnings of that approach and a little less meddling is probably one of the best things in today's world, contemporarily speaking. In the actual school itself, I think with regard to one size they [the government] did right in letting schools decide how their curriculum looks. I think that was, I won't say brave decision, I think it was maybe strangely done, but I was one of the advocates, yes, thank you. But equally, the fear kicked off and the kind of, I don't know what my curriculum looks like, or I don't know what I want it to look like, when actually everybody was saying the same thing to a greater or lesser degree, but it was all about actually well make it look like what you think the school needs with your staff and I think they got that bang right, I'm very happy with that. **(DEGREES OF SCHOOL AUTONOMY - IMPACT AS DRIVER OF TEACHER AUTONOMY?)**

A.B.: What does school transformation mean to you? **(REASON FOR EDUCATION - DRIVER FOR CHANGE AND POSSIBLE MOTIVATION FOR TEACHER LEARNING)**

Phyllis: Children getting the absolute maximum exposure to learning that they possibly can on a day-to-day basis here. That's what I feel. If I just go back to what was roughly 4 years ago, and my impressions of the school were, first and foremost, when I came in and thought what an incredibly enthusiastic group of children. There were times when, through the early months, I actually had thoughts about how these children could teach themselves if they weren't being taught, picturing if they were getting the best teaching in the world where they would be. There were certain measures in place, for example, the end of Key Stage 2 SATs there was a fantastic Level 4+ %, but I was looking at them and was thinking this is really a bland measure. I could see Level 6s floating all over the place. Not a single Level 6 was coming through. For me the transformation was enabling them to get that higher challenge and pitch, and taking them to where they could actually go, and making sure they were getting the opportunities to do so through the teaching and facilitating of learning that was going on. And to me that was what was necessary. So, for the question, what does school transformation mean, it meant for me giving them that deal, that package, because they were not all getting it. Not every child was accessing and achieving to their potential because they weren't being given the opportunities. **(GREATER ACHIEVEMENT NEEDED - DRIVER OF CHANGE; TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY)**

Appendix 5 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification

And that wasn't a direct and deliberate thing, that was a training implication **(POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES)** which jumped out, having gone round, sat back, looked; I mean I looked. I think I had the good fortune to start during the summer term, so I started in May. There's not an awful lot you can do at that time of the year, because everything is already timetabled, scheduled. The final assessments are happening, the SATs are taking place. Everything is a done deal; it's not like a September start. And it actually gave me a really good opportunity to see what was going on and evaluate in depth. Which is exactly what I did. I did that, at that stage, casually walking in and out of classes, looking at books, talking to children an awful lot, plonking myself in the playground, plonking myself over in the lunch hall, having lunch and eating with them. Really, really getting to know the adults who were resistant, because I was just a new face, and then the children who were, as they always are, welcoming and warming and caring and all that kind of thing. When I got a clear picture of how the school was, it became equally clear what needed to be done. And that was where the school development plans come into action. You have to be very, very clear and there has to be utter acuity what's there to decide, what comes next. And it was deciding what was the priority, and the priorities were there; just seemed to be hundreds of priorities. So, I just brought it back to the child **(CHILD AS NUCLEUS FOR DRIVING CHANGE)**. And I did that by holding the visioning day with a huge number of staff that didn't know me from Adam. But I had to set my stall up somewhere, I had to start somewhere. And they had to see what my expectation was and then I needed to see what was their reaction and response was as well. So, we did have the big vision day, and I facilitated it. Looking back now, I must have been mad, because you get people in to do that. I'd never done that before, but I like mad and I like challenge. And the two together; it was a case of if I don't do this, it has to be me in a way. Because that will tell them who I am. They'll know what I am. And they need to know that to either start feeling secure and buying into it or thinking I'm out of here. They'll know. I wasn't telling them what to do, I was telling them what I felt was necessary, where I saw the school needed to go, and then the rest was over to them. And we did. We had a terrific day. And we had an awful lot of joined-up thinking, clearly that hadn't been too obvious to me in the first instances, because when people sat down to do the activities, and we brought them back together at the end, there was a lot of shared views and a lot of consensus on what was necessary, and a few shocks **(WAKE UP CALLS; SIGN UP FOR CHANGE - POTENTIAL DRIVER FOR TEACHER LEARNING AND CHANGE)**. So that was the beginning of it all. So that was the kind of starting point, it was kind of like a shock. Because you were looking at the potential Levels 6s, we have the standards agenda as well and the views of education that you were saying so everything was going... Everything together. But it wasn't just Level 6s for the SATs. I was looking at the Year 3s and thinking to myself, you could be so much better, you could be doing so much more and achieving so much more. So, it was seeing that thought going all the way through the school, across all year groups. But that was a very blunt measuring tool. However, it was enough to indicate in simple language to everybody here the potential we had sitting.

Appendix 5 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification

A.B.: Do you see school transformation and improvement the same or different?

Phyllis: They are completely interwoven because you don't change a thing unless there is a need and something better to go towards. Therefore, that's improvement by pure definition. And that type of transformation needs to be agreed and acknowledged by all as being necessary due to advancement of whether it's standards, whether it's outcomes results, generally that of learning. So, you can't separate one from the other in my book at this stage certainly. Perhaps when a school is much more mature and the leader is still there and they're working towards improvement, just building on one thing onto another by doing something good that's even better, that's to a point still a transformation. It's different tones of change really.

A.B.: What's your perspective of what is going on now nationally with regards to 'educational transformation'?

Phyllis: What is happening currently, we know things are political, so I'm not going to go near that part of the discussion. In terms of what it looks like in reality on the ground and in practice, I feel the shock factor has come from what was there to be followed was directed, and that means you don't have to think hard about what's going on because you are being told and instructed. I love now that we can actually take the core that we've been given and make it work, given the school's systems are in place to ensure that that's high quality and clear, that the curriculum at my school, this school, our school would be different to the curriculum to a degree in another school **(DEGREES OF SCHOOL/TEACHER AUTONOMY - TO BE POTENTIAL LEARNERS, TO GROW, TO MOVE FORWARD)**.

But there are certain elements that remain the same, because that's what's needed in terms of what's good education and what's good learning. I'm pleased with the change **(POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHER LEARNING)**. I'm only sorry it all came at once to teachers who were trained not to think in that way before. My thinking would have been if that was the plan, why didn't you start at the teacher training colleges and bring it in gradually, as opposed to all at once. It just gave an argument for setting things up for failure; actually, it wasn't, but it's not the best organised. The actual thinking that should happen I totally support.

A.B.: What changes have you instigated in your school? **(SCHOOL AUTONOMY TO DRIVE CHANGE/POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES)**

Phyllis: What I have felt is that what I am doing they should have done nationally. We've used a year to prepare for change, prepare for doing away with and prepare for getting creative. Because the word creative, people say we need to get creative **(POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES)**, but some people aren't able to get creative just like that. It is not just one of those things you pick up. I don't think we are anywhere near to where we need to go in terms of what the new curriculum looks like. We still are very much at the starting point. We've shifted off

from the starting line, but we're still on a starting point because it needs to evolve. And the way I now see it, what has been done nationally, what wasn't as easy to do before was, a curriculum that could be quite static has now become dynamic because there's simply no choice. You have to keep shifting and changing and evaluating it and moving it on. And there's so little for the non-cores in terms of direction that you have that freedom to do it. It's just how that will be monitored should be more of a concern, I think nationally, more than anything else. But I'm pleased, I fully embrace it and members of staff embrace it as well. They're not totally clear on what they're doing as in all the way, because they can't be until they get themselves totally immersed in how it looks on a day-to-day, week-to-week, term-to-term basis. **(BUYING INTO CHANGE)**

A.B.: With changes you have made since you have been here, would you have done anything significantly differently?

Phyllis: I think year-on-year, I have done differently in a very subtle way. Looking back, I probably came in quite heavy handed in that *I* evaluated what I felt needed to be done. Were I in another school, I would be more considered in my way of putting that to staff [I should have noted this word and kept the conversation about teachers specifically, not staff in general], who weren't of that mind and that view as to how we would shift that forward. The school was labelled as a coasting school and their results were reasonable, their progress was not good. That came when all the shift from attainment at Level 4+, which the school was sitting high on, went back to, as it should have always been, on progress. And the progress wasn't even close to what they needed to be. It was not in a good place. It was due an Ofsted. So therefore, action had to be pretty quick, but nevertheless, it still needed everybody to buy into it. And as it turned out then not everybody did. And a good 50% of staff left [I realise now that this 'staff' is referring to learning support assistants (LSAs) - see later discussion. Wanted the conversation about teachers not LSAs.] in the first year, or it was pointed out that perhaps this was not the best place if that's how they felt. Without sounding like you need to leave or anything. But, unfortunately, a school is not going to move forward or anything unless everyone's going the same direction with the same vision. So, back to would have I done anything differently, maybe a little more diplomatically? But the actions would have had to remain the same because there wasn't any other way to do it. Might have just handled it better. **(EMOTIVE ASPECTS ASSOCIATED WITH INSTIGATING CHANGE. RATIONALE FOR CHANGE, SCHOOL AUTONOMY TO DRIVE CHANGE.)**

A.B.: Is there anything else you might have done differently?

Phyllis: -less ruthless, that kind of thing?

A.B.: Yes, if you want to share. Was it that people *had* to change or *wanted* to change? [I should have specifically mentioned about teachers, not staff.]

Phyllis: I'm going to speak about something that I think you are going to find very relevant for what you're doing here. I think I'm going to take a strand, it would be

easier to reflect the answer to this question. It was the staffing structure. The staffing structure here was not conducive to maximum impact on learning and that had to be looked at in various aspects. In the first instance, which is not the one that I'm going to go into detail with, it was at the teacher level [That is what I was interested in, but the headteacher is not going to talk about it – does not explicitly say she *doesn't* want to talk about it.] The second instance, which I am going to go into detail with, is the learning support assistants (LSAs) or teaching assistants (TAs). When they first came onboard as TAs, it was just to do the general clearing up. When it became clear over the years that this was no longer the role, they didn't want to leave, but didn't accept the role. So, when I fully evaluated the role and where we were at and what exactly I needed from them, and that was the vision side, they were either going to have to buy into it or we were going to have to look around as to how we were going to negotiate that. Because they were having, we backed this all up with the data, they were having zero impact. Virtually none. And certainly none that could be put into numbers via their interventions, via their in-class support and often we had situations where there were capability issues going on. So, when you saw that, we looked at fourteen individuals who were coming into a certain amount of money salary-wise, and you can't ignore that when you're a leader. You have to still consider that because you have to justify value for money. But in terms of actual learning, it wasn't impacting. And it wasn't just that all of them weren't impacting or there were just a small number who weren't; it was the way they were operating that wasn't impacting, and that had to be addressed.

The vision I had for that was they were being put with children who teachers were finding difficult to teach. So, it's back to the whole thing of why would you give untrained, unqualified individuals a job that teachers were finding difficult themselves. So, the answer to that was specialist teaching, which is where the specialist teachers came in. The other bit was what do I see the role of the LSAs as being? And I felt the role of the LSAs was simply, in my view, probably very, very, very contentious, was to meet the demands or the detail in statements that I had to legally stand by. So, for example, one child had twenty-five hours; that had to be met in their statement. For me, that was where the LSAs were most needed. Now that wasn't so much that those children were getting the worst deal, they were not. But my hands were tied. So, when I came to restructure, what I put forward was the type of LSA I need was one who was able to work with a child with a statement and who's willing to accept the training that is needed to work with and support that child with a statement in class, alongside the teacher as directed. That was the vision. I also had to decide how many were needed, and we based that on the current number of statements we had in the school at that time, and that was seven. I had fourteen TAs. I made it clear to them what I needed and if they felt that was something they wanted to buy into. And seven fell away, just fell away. Didn't want to know, weren't interested and accept that this was the direction the school was going in.

A.B.: What were staff's [meaning teachers, but she is talking about LSA pruning] reaction to this change?

Appendix 5 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification

Phyllis: To say I was transparent from the beginning is an understatement. I kept the LSAs up-to-date only minutes between what they knew and what the teachers knew after. So, they had the knowledge before anyone else. I followed what is the procedure anyway set by the local authority, which is then set nationally. But I kept everybody in the know as to the whys. The reasoning behind and the direction we had to go and what we should get when we reached that end, so to speak, so it was totally and utterly clear. Nothing was based on budget. Everything was, you have to write a business plan, was driven by standards and learning. Nothing else.

A.B.: Was there a turnover with staff during that period [meaning teachers]? (Had mentioned 50% of staff leaving.] **[Keep to word 'teacher' next time – not staff.]**

Phyllis: During that period, with that going on, all teachers bought into it. And the reason I believe they did was because I didn't come here and do that right away. I came here and evaluated. I watched very closely. When I came here, I dealt with the teaching staff, what I felt was missing, and what needed to change. That's another story in the strand. [I should have mentioned that I was interested in the teachers.] The one that I am telling you about is one we came to at such a point that when we came to the one-to-one interviews with each of the LSAs, not the re-employment ones, but the ones where I said this is where we stand, this is what I'm going to do, and this is how it might affect you personally, and this is your opportunity to put questions to me. Everyone told me how much they loved their jobs, but they didn't want to do what I was asking of them. They liked their job as it was. They didn't see their job as being helping children to learn, yes, but other things as well. And that's not unusual. And in all honesty, they had been employed in that capacity, so for them this was no longer the job they had applied for when they first came. But what I was saying was things have now moved on and your role has changed and I'm going to offer you the opportunity to train to become what these children now need, and it's down to you to decide whether that is something you want to follow. So, some did and some didn't, and what you see today are the ones who did. And the ones who weren't interested decided not to reapply for their jobs.

A.B.: Was your vision driving the change?

Phyllis: That is the bit that you build up to. That is a huge process and a lengthy one before you even get to where you want to go. Had my vision been different or if there had been other factors which had a place, such as money, then the business plan would have been written not based on standards or lack of, because of their role. It would have been based on finance and the school could no longer function with the way things are, and that is just cost-cutting and job-cutting, and that's different. And that's more common of what you see. Mine wasn't driven by that, my finance was fine.

A.B.: Did you feel supported by the educational frameworks and government policy to implement the changes you wanted?

Phyllis: Yes. Wholly. I also felt particularly supported in terms of national by the fact that I had an OFSTED inspection, which I welcomed with open arms, and was

completely and utterly open and honest with them where the school was at and still didn't try to paint the school in a bad light, said it exactly as it was, and I felt to give me a really good launch pad to make sure that everybody was clear on the work to be done. Because an outside force, an outside agency, lay it on the line. **(ACCOUNTABILITY - OFSTED - DRIVER FOR CHANGE AND POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING)**

A.B.: Were there any shifts in teachers' perspectives to engage with change?

Phyllis: That's a brilliant question. If I could take you back to when we did our teaching and learning policy, it was a complete and utter melt of minds, where everybody brought their thoughts, their views, what teaching and learning really looks like. Although we have many, many commonalities, when you have people getting up quite confidently. 'Well, I think this and I think that', and they go off in a tangent in this direction and that direction, and then we have to pull them back because this day had to produce a Teaching and Learning Policy, that is where I felt we clicked as a staff. **(PERSPECTIVE CHANGE IN TEACHERS; POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING)**

A.B.: How long ago was that?

Phyllis: That was in June [4 years ago]. We've done the vision, year-on-year and looked back at them. Every time we've seen them. So, for example, the vision goes at the front of every Governor report, at the front of every calendar of events, goes at the front of every significant document. So, once it's done, it's in your face everywhere you go.

The vision was an incredible day. It was looking at everybody's roles and why they do what they do, and what has that got to do with the child. So yes, I know you are the midday lady, but how do *you* impact on that child's life on a day-to-day basis? Caretaker, how do you do it? SENCo [Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator], how do you do it? And it was also the perspective of others, on what they interpreted to be somebody's jobs. So, what did the midday think the SENCo did, and what did the SENCo think the E.A.L. [English as an Additional Language] person was doing? So, it was a whole mishmash of who does what, why and how, and what exactly do we all want to see happening as a result of our jobs? And that's 3 or 4 years ago we did that?

And we still go back to it every so often and see if it's still relevant. The aims are broader. They are to do with what we want the school to achieve, you'll see them out there. And the Teaching and Learning Policy was the *big*, *big* glue to hold together everything we believe we should be doing, as far as our pedagogy and teaching and learning and practice is concerned. So, a very simple example, every lesson should have a focus group: A teacher working with a particular group for a particular period of time. Not just English and Maths, it should be everything including P.E. [Physical Education]. Do people agree to that; if you don't, can we talk about it? And that all went straight into the Teaching and Learning Policy.

Appendix 5 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme identification

A.B.: If there was one key thing you could do to transform teachers' perspectives, what would that be?

Phyllis: It largely depends on the perspective. If I could answer it coming in slightly differently, but I hope it answers, what do I think the perspective of a teacher should at least be? I would have to say that they are doing and thinking about how every child in that class makes progress, and how they make it their ultimate aim to have that happen, however they do it, by employing whatever strategies they can. What we do with the Teaching and Learning Policy is frame it, a bit like the national core curriculum. There are certain things that just have to happen. But the craft, which a teacher brings to it, has got to be driven by their utter aim of making each child learn and progress.

A.B.: Has your leadership role radically transformed or has it slowly developed?

Phyllis: I think it is both. I think it has slowly developed and now looking at it from its starting point from where it is now, it is quite radical. It is quite a dramatic change. It's also about shifting through. And that you'll leave because that's more important. But you've got to mentally learn to not be niggled by that, because that is actually more important and [refers to absence capability of a staff member] ...you're rattled because this is not fair, the school shouldn't have to suffer as a result, regardless of your sympathies for the individuals involved. When you've read a 100 of those [e-mails from colleagues who are absent because of illness] you start to think actually the procedures will deal with you; me, I have too much to deal with over here. You're not putting it on the back burner, but procedures will deal with that; there is nothing more you can do. Mentally, not being niggled by that takes time, and there are hundreds of similar examples. Those things shift. I quickly cut through, so you notice on a personal level when I sit down to have meetings, when everybody at a school I am supporting as an Executive Head starts going into the detail of things, I go deaf; I actually have to go 'Can we come back to the points that are relevant to this meeting, please'. And not intending to sound at all brusque or rude, but time is of the essence, and it's too valuable, and this is not suitable for the here and now. Even though you need to get your answer right now, and he needs to get his answer right now, actually as a leader you've got to stop that. So, if you work that through, not just in meetings but in lots of things - planning, development points, it's a skill and a development skill in itself.

(Ask about future vision for school in subsequent interviews.)

Appendix 6 Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the second set of interviews - general theme identification (REFER TO CAPITILIZED WORDS, WHICH ARE BRACKETED, UNDERLINED AND IN BOLD FONT)

A.B.: You've been through a massive change since I last spoke with you.

Geoff: Slightly. I thought I was coming into one thing and have walked into something very, very different. So, I am back at the beginning of a journey that I started in a previous school two years ago. That journey that I didn't particularly wanted to repeat; that whole journey from scratch and having to start that all over again. There is still a slight fear that the local authority is going to pressure you to go academy and take away the leadership, "Either you go academy or we will replace your governing body and you will go academy. So, if you get that 'requires improvement', they can do that. They have three objectives, one of which is to ensure that all of their schools are at least good.

A.B.: So, it literally is if you get requires improvement, you are pushed to become an academy.

Geoff: Mmm. So, there is another layer to what I'm having to do in leadership in terms of I'm compiling a file of how we are working with other schools, how we are using other schools, how we are working within the consortia and learn off each other, so you cannot force me to do that because we are already learning from that process. So, there's another thing that you didn't really want to do [compile the folder as evidence], but you've got to prove that you're doing it, as a contingency for later on. **(LEARNING COMMUNITY, CONSORTIA; DEGREES OF SCHOOL AUTNONOMY)**

A.B.: I know you have only been here a short period of time. Would you have an example of teachers as learners?

Geoff: I think of one teacher. Another member of staff came to get me the other day to say, "You need to come, we've got a teacher bawling her eyes out in the corner of the classroom." So, I went in there and chucked everyone else out, and actually that's part of it as well because they've got to bond with you. And if they've got other people trying to step in and say things that might not be very useful, then they're not going to build their trust of you as a leader. And we sat down and got to the bottom of what was making her so upset, and it was that she didn't know what to do. She felt like she was a failing teacher because she didn't *know* how to make it any different. No-one had given her the correct procedures, the correct planning, the correct schemes of work, the correct outlines for different year groups. And she was just absolutely terrified that she was failing and it was all *her* own fault. That's not her own fault. How is that her own fault? That's leadership fault. That is pure and simple training. That's absolutely heart-breaking because you've got a teacher who has the potential to be good, who has been let down by poor leadership. And yes, she might have had maternity leave at the wrong time, but then you look at what do you do when they return. How do you put them on coaching so that they catch up on the things that they missed? How do you involve them with their 'keeping in touch days' [when they are off on maternity leave]? So, it might be if you are going to be returning to teaching and you know that, you might want to come along to these INSET days so that you don't miss out on the next big thing. So, it breaks my heart for those staff because it's

not their fault. And I felt like that in my last school as well. And a lot of the focus has gone into saying to staff, "Right, then this is the training that we put in place, this is not your fault. This is the training." And reiterating that so many times, and trying to get them to understand that it's not their fault. In that case, it was quite easy, because I could go away, print off a load of stuff that I had ready from previous schools and say, "Right, actually, these are the objectives. This is it." And she looked at it, stopped crying and went, "I can do that." And it was like that's all you need to focus on. **(TEACHER LEARNING, SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING/ENABLING, EMOTIVE ASPECTS; TRUST/PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS)**

A.B.: Given all the demands and pressures which a teacher faces, is there a way to support teachers to see the school's bigger picture?

Geoff: I think there is. I think the main focus for me in coming in here and having a school development plan, which was one hundred pages long, too woolly and ridiculous, no teacher is going to be able to picture that. I would rather be able to present staff with by the end of next term this is the picture; and in five years we'll be there, but by the end of next term. So, it's step-by-step. I think that teachers prefer that, because there are also miniscule deadlines within that. Within two weeks I want you all to do this, within four weeks I want you to do this. So, they know within a term, they know within a year, but there's that how to manage it now **(SENIOR LEADERS' SUPPORT, SHARING VISION/BIG PICTURE)**. I recently had a very interesting and unexpected turn of events in that on the back of a LA review, on the back of presenting a single plan, I realised that one thing that hadn't been done within the health and safety audit, was the stress risk assessment for the staff. And you have to draw up an action plan. And part of the audit is have you done this, or are you part of a well-being programme? And I thought great I have just given my staff a single plan, I have just given them a LA review, a monitoring schedule when everything is going to be scrutinised, and I'm now going to say, "How stressed are you?"

And I had to think this is never going to go well. Time was of the essence and there are different ways to do it. So, I got all of the staff together and went through the questions with them and said, "This is a completely trusted area, you can say what you like, whatever you say I will record, there are no judgements on you, but we can talk about solutions to those as we go as well, and, therefore, I'll draw up the action plan as well." And the nice thing was that the teachers who were the most stressed were the newer teachers, because they were still trying to figure out how to manage day-to-day things, let alone having a single plan, let alone having a review; all of those things they had never had to experience before. And then at the same time, the more experienced teachers were stepping in and saying, "But how about you doing this instead?" Try this, try that. And because it was such an open forum, they were all helping each other. And their suggestions became the action plan. So, it was like well we're all going to do that then, that works for you, how are you going to manage this. And it was lovely. It ended up being a bit of an hour discussion after school, which they probably could have done without, probably wanted to work and mark books. However, the result of it was quite an open forum about their worries and stresses and how to manage them. And I came away with a really clear action plan that was defined

by them as to these are the things that worry us, these are the things that stress us, and we've agreed on things that can release that. And I wasn't expecting that on the back of a LA review. **(TRUST, PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS)**

A.B.: You seem to be providing that supportive environment.

Geoff: It's like with children, having a clear behaviour policy isn't it? If they know their boundaries, they know what their expectations are, they behave better. **(KNOWING EXPECTATIONS)**

A.B.: How do you think you can get teachers to understand themselves as learners to engage with change?

Geoff: I do place a lot of faith in lesson study and working together and learning from each other. When I've been in large schools, that's been within a coaching approach and that was me delivering the coaching to teachers according to their needs. Here, what I've got are four class teachers plus an Early Years teacher. The Early Years teacher is separate to the model. Then I've got two very strong teachers and two who are struggling. So, they're bonded up, so there's a strong teacher with a not so strong one, and they are looking at the practices of the other pair. So even how do they mark books, what do they do that's really good there, how can we make ours like that? And whilst the strongest of the pair might already be doing it, it's just rubbing off. And it's also giving them someone else in the school to talk to, and ask how can I do this in a supportive way, rather than it being top-down? **(SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING/ARRANGING TEACHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES; LESSON STUDY, TEACHER COLLABORATION; MODELLING PRACTICE; MECHANISMS FOR CHANGE; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEARNING; TEACHER EMPOWERMENT)**

A.B.: And they [two teachers who are struggling with the school] are part of a consortia too?

Geoff: Yes. Within the consortia, there's a group of early years teachers, Key Stage 1 teachers, Key Stage 2 teachers, the Year 6 teachers, the deputy heads; they all have different meetings and work together. At the last headteachers' one, it came back with we'd benefit with all the Year 2 teachers doing some writing moderation together. So that happened last week. So, you've got ten schools that have been part of a tight consortia for well over ten years. And no matter how the headteachers have changed, the other headteachers have immediately homed in and welcomed that head in. And every year one of the INSET days is all the schools together for an inspirational day, where they have a guest speaker come in. **(TEACHERS AS LEARNERS/TEACHER LEARNING; SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING THIS; MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT CHANGE; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEARNING; BUYING INTO CHANGE WITHIN CONSORITUM; COLLABORATION; EMPOWERMENT)**

Appendix 6 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the second set of interviews - general theme identification

A.B.: How well do you think that model functions within a bigger group of schools?

Geoff: I think within the consortia, it is working. There is a ceiling for a certain number. They visit each other's schools to look at each other's practice. The larger that huddle becomes, you end up people going off at tangents and lose focus. Once it gets too big is stops being supportive.

A.B.: And besides being part of that consortia, you're supporting teachers back here at school?

Geoff: Yes. And positively encouraging them. That's been particularly challenging for the early years teacher, who is an NQT, no-one else in the school teaches early years, no one else experienced with early years. And then if she did speak to someone else within the consortia, no one else had done learning zones.

A.B.: What's your understanding of teacher resilience?

Geoff: Teacher resilience are those teachers who are up for change and can go with it, with the right open mindset. It's like the growth mindset. It's that for teachers. This is how we change, being open to it. It's not about not getting emotional. You're going to get emotional because you love it. It's how you handle that and build it into a different way of practice. It's about growing a tougher shell maybe. **(GROWTH MINDSET; EMOTIVE ASPECT OF RESILIENCE**)

A.B.: Do you see resilience as responding to something adverse as a one-off event

Geoff: -no

A.B.: -or do you see it as continuous?

Geoff: It is continuously developing. And I see that more so with teachers, in that your NQTs have less resilience, but as teachers go through more and more change in their careers and have different experiences, the resilience can grow. So that's not from one experience that they're just resilient to that. It's about as a practitioner being able to reflect that bad things will happen, that you can shrug it off and go home and still enjoy your family, and that it's not the end of the world. It's a different mindset to being able to say I can walk away from this and maybe that comes from having trust. You can be more resilient if you trust that those around you are going to support you. If you know that actually they're not, how can you be resilient. You're just going to wait to be attacked. **(SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING RESILIENCE; TRUST; RELATIONSHIPS)**

A.B.: You've worked in different schools. In your experience, is resilience something that you can take with you or do you build up different types of resilience in different settings?

Appendix 6 continued Initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the second set of interviews - general theme identification

Geoff: I've seen this recently and I've been reflecting on this. My previous two schools were on a journey from a very low starting point and I think because of that,

because the staff had been through such a journey of poor behaviour from the children, poor respect from the parents, actually they have grown a bit of a thick skin. They were ok, fine, give us a solution and we'll go with it, we'll embrace it. They were resilient teachers when you come into a school where maybe they've been a little mollycoddled

A.B.: - and that's here you're talking about?

Geoff: Yes. Then actually there's no resilience because they've had it so easy for so long, that everything has coasted very beautifully, that all of a sudden it's just whoa, change? How do we manage that? We don't do that, this is the way we do it [do things here]. It's very different. And yes, it's a higher Ofsted grade, but you put that alongside the fact that you're probably going to drop an Ofsted grade if you don't have some resilience and have that change. We've got a teacher here and she's amazing, absolutely brilliant, and probably the most resilient because she's just been in a school that's had a rough journey. And the journey has come out the other side. And she's walked in here, she's up for change **(CHANGE AND RESILIENCE)**. She's up for leading change. She's absolute dynamite. And she can sit in here and cry. She can sit in here and laugh, but she's seen in practice that there can be a light at the end of the tunnel.

A.B.: Do you think resilience can be taught?

Geoff: Experienced. I don't think you're ever going to be able to say this is what you've got to do. You're just going to have to experience it. I've yet to see how to teach it. You can advise people along the way, you can support them, you can build trust with them, and that should speed it up. In fact, if they want to come in here and cry, they can. And I will talk them through it and we will find solutions. **(TRUST, PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS)**

A.B.: If you want to encourage a perspective change in teachers, how important do you think teacher resilience is?

Geoff: Enormous. Without resilience you don't get change. I went to a conference set up by an HMI inspector, and he had supported a local school and he was very proud that this HMI school, he was inspector of, had come out of special measures. And he'd asked them to lead a conference on what had made the difference. And my deputy and I at the time went along to this conference to listen to three hours of how the whole journey was about resilience. They did three hours of presentations on resilience. For them, the reason they'd gone from special measures to good was resilience. And having just done a similar journey in my last school, the teachers that stayed the journey were the ones that became resilient. At the beginning they showed the grassroots. You knew that they were going to be. They might not have been yet, but you could see the spark there that they were going to be with the

right support. I think you can see very clearly the ones who just, the resilience is not there, and I think that's maybe the teachers who are not in it with their heart. If they're in it for a job, they're not going to be resilient. Their mindset is not there.

(RESILIENCE SUPPORTING PERSPECTIVE CHANGE; SUPPORTING COMMITMENT)

A.B.: So, for you, it's driven by the passion of wanting to be in education.

Geoff: Yeah. If you're going to embrace change and Ofsted changes, DfE changes, everything changes, SEN changing, assessment changing, curriculum changing, actually you've got to be resilient to all those changes. And if you don't love the job, how are you *ever* going to adapt every year to the new things that come your way. **(RESILIENCE SUPPORTING PERSPECTIVE CHANGE; SUPPORTING COMMITMENT)**

A.B.: So, it translates into your practice as well?

Geoff: Yeah. And what you stand up in front of your class and do, if you think it's all a pile of rubbish, then you're never going to get graded as a good.

A.B.: How can leaders develop the resilience of teachers?

Geoff: I think if you can spot the grassroots, if you can see which teachers have the potential, then it is building that trust, letting them know that they can come and see you, having that very clear plan of within two weeks, we'll do this, and that does all support resilience because they know. It's not all going to be expected tomorrow - stagger it out, you will be here within a year, don't worry, within a year you will get there, a little bit at a time - within a month, I want you to be doing this, within two months, I want you doing this. You are going to build their resilience by giving them small targets, bit by bit. There will be teachers that can't build it. **(SENIOR LEADERS STRUCTURING PRIORITIES/STEPPING STONES; RELATIONSHIPS, TRUST)**

A.B.: Have you got an example of what you have done in this school as leaders to help teachers develop resilience?

Geoff: I would say there is a leadership example. I've only been here for seven weeks. Last term, the deputy was the acting head. Firstly, that's going to be incredibly hard for any deputy going back to being a class teacher when he's had a term out when he has tried his hardest, but actually he had some very challenging situations and some very fiery staff. He tried to put in as much as possible as he could. And we did have some phone calls and we did keep in touch during that time, but I was in my own school. I couldn't keep coming over here, I wasn't allowed. And one of the things that he's found incredibly hard was the LA [local authority] review not being pleasant about leadership. And whilst I think he can be resilient, I think over the last few years here, it's been so easy. The last six months have been a real shocker to his system again. Whether that resilience has been ebbed off because he hasn't needed to use

it, because everything's been coasting along so beautifully, you've not had to be tough about anything. Everything's been yeah let's do that. And then all of a sudden it flares up and he's really, really struggled. And I know he's got a history of some really challenging situations, so he has obviously overcome those things.

But at the moment to be going through a whole not all the staff loving him because of last term, and it wasn't his fault, the LA saying that performance management wasn't strict enough, and actually he should have had more help doing it. And things like the LA review is shared amongst the governors, so to be able to sit there and have that read out in front of all the governors to say leadership is not doing its job right now because you've dropped the ball on this when you were the acting head, that's heart-breaking. And for him, yes there were days when I stayed behind late and we had a bit of a chat. The day of the LA review was particularly tough, and for that one I didn't want him to go home alone. So, I said, "Come on, we're going to go out to get a coffee and something to eat, and we're just going to vent and chat, and just get it out, because I know this is tough." And we did it that way. For him, I've also changed his focus for what he was coordinator of, because he can fluster a little bit. So, therefore, he needs a really, really strict role. I've therefore cut out some of his jobs to say, "Right, now I'll do it. I can do that right now, I'm out of class. You concentrate on this, this and this. And just that. Someone else is going to pick that up, you concentrate on this, this and this." And just taking some of that load off that he's feeling that he just has to carry. One of the things that I have said is, "I need you to be this year NQT mentor. I've got two NQTs. That's an enormous job. I need you to be Early Years leader." Actually, I can't have anyone else as Early Years leader. "If you just do those two things, I'll take maths off you for a bit. After all, next September you won't need to be Early Years leader, you won't need to be NQT mentor. You can take those things back again. But this year, we've got those situations in place, so let's just play around for a bit to fine tune this." **(SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING; TRUST; PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS; STRUCTURING PRIORITIES)**

A.B.: How is he feeling within himself at the moment?

Geoff: He seems a bit smilier this week. Definitely. He's still coming to me and saying, "Is this alright?" But actually, sometimes I do tweak it. Sometimes I'm, "Yeah, that's great." Today, he's sorted out a complete charity day, sorted out getting the air ambulance overhead. If he's able to, I'm like, "Yeah go with it, you know what you're doing. You've been here, you've done this before. Go for it. I don't need to take that off you."

A.B.: What's the impact of teacher resilience on the children?

Geoff: First of all, I would like to think that the more resilient the teacher, the more resilient the child, if you are modelling to them that things can be challenging and you can overcome them. Then you are setting them a good role model. If you are going in and you look exhausted, you look fed up with the world, you're never going to be a good role model. You're going to have children fed up who are not inspired. It's going to rub off. It almost needs to be in the core standards as to how resilient is

this person, because if they're not going to have an open mindset, if they're not going to be open for change, then actually how are they going to move from school to school through their career? How are they going to move with a different set of children each year with different demands? How are they going to change with different assessment procedures, different curriculums, different everything? It needs to be a standard.

Appendix 7 Summary of initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the first set of interviews - general theme categorization

Drivers of change

REASON FOR EDUCATION - DRIVER FOR CHANGE AND POSSIBLE MOTIVATION FOR TEACHER LEARNING; CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY - POTENTIAL GUIDING TOOL FOR TEACHERS FOR MORALE?; MEANING OF EDUCATION; VISION - POTENTIAL GUIDE TO STEER TEACHERS AS LEARNERS?; IMPROVED LIFE CHANCES; CHILD AS NUCLEUS FOR DRIVING CHANGE.

School accountability/ autonomy

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY; DEGREES OF SCHOOL AUTONOMY - IMPACT AS DRIVER OF TEACHER AUTONOMY?; WAKE UP CALLS; SIGN UP FOR CHANGE - POTENTIAL DRIVER FOR TEACHER LEARNING AND CHANGE; DEGREES OF TEACHER AUTONOMY - TO BE POTENTIAL LEARNERS, TO GROW, TO MOVE FORWARD; POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEACHER LEARNING; SCHOOL AUTONOMY TO DRIVE CHANGE/POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES; ACCOUNTABILITY - OFSTED - DRIVER FOR CHANGE AND POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING

Teacher learning

As above plus:
PERSPECTIVE CHANGE IN TEACHERS; POTENTIAL TEACHER LEARNING BUYING INTO CHANGE; EMOTIVE ASPECTS ASSOCIATED WITH INSTIGATING CHANGE; RATIONALE FOR CHANGE, SCHOOL AUTONOMY TO DRIVE CHANGE

Appendix 8 Summary of initial content analysis of Interview 1 from the second set of interviews - general theme categorization

Internal/external collaboration

LEARNING COMMUNITY, CONSORTIA; DEGREES OF SCHOOL AUTNONOMY; LESSON STUDY; MODELLING PRACTICE; TEACHER COLLABORATION

Environment

TRUST/PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS; SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING/ FACILITATING; SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING/ARRANGING TEACHERS AS LEARNERS; MECHANISMS FOR CHANGE; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEARNING; TEACHER EMPOWERMENT; SHARING VISION/BIG PICTURE; MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT CHANGE; BUYING INTO CHANGE WITHIN CONSORTIA; COLLABORATION; EMPOWERMENT; SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING RESILIENCE; ATTENDING TO EMOTIVE ASPECTS OF CHANGE; TRUST; PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS; SENIOR LEADERS STRUCTURING PRIORITIES/STEPPING STONES

Teacher learning

As above plus:
SENIOR LEADERS SUPPORTING TEACHERS AS LEARNERS; KNOWING EXPECTATIONS; PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEARNING; GROWTH MINDSET; CHANGE AND RESILIENCE; RESILIENCE SUPPORTING PERSPECTIVE CHANGE; SUPPORTING COMMITMENT

Appendix 9 Email for the participants, relating to the interim task and second interview

Ashley Brett
(Residential address supplied)

e-mail: address supplied
Telephone or text: mobile number supplied

Leading education and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

Dear

Thank you so much for participating in my research project and for taking the time to meet with me recently for the first interview.

You may recall that I left some post-its and a note book with you. This was so that you could detail in brief any significant events or reflections relating to your teachers' learning within the context of your school change. Even jotting down some key words could act as a memory trigger during our next conversation at the second interview.

I look forward to seeing you in the Spring Term and will contact you nearer the time to arrange a convenient time.

Thank you again for your time.

Yours sincerely

Ashley Brett

Appendix 10 Consent form

Ashley Brett
(Residential address supplied)

e-mail: address supplied
Telephone or text: mobile number supplied

Leading education and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

Consent form

School leaders' ideas about teacher learning and resilience associated with education, school improvement and change

(September 2014 – April 2016)

I have read the information leaflet about the research. ☐ (please tick)

I agree to be interviewed ☐ (please tick)

I agree to an audio recording of the interview ☐ (please tick)

(Please sign and return to researcher)

Participant's Name _____

Signed _____ date _____

(Researcher to complete before interview and give copy to participant)

Researcher's name _____

Signed _____ date _____

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee, University of London. The interviewer adheres to the British Education Research Association's ethical guidelines (BERA, 2004).

Appendix 11 Extracts of first level coding of data – free node level of analysis in NVivo

<Internals\\d 4 6 Daniel for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 1 reference coded [1.79% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.79% Coverage

A.B.: Given all the demands and pressures which a teacher faces, is there a way to support teachers to see the school's bigger picture?

Daniel: They have to have ownership of the school's improvement plan, they have to know the role they play in it, so it's not just this is what leadership are doing - this will always be about the quality of teachers and this is the role you will play in it, and be clear of their expectations and feel valued that they do have a role to play and that they are going to make a difference, rather than 'bye' standards - just watching it happen i.e. to be involved in it.

<Internals\\e 5 2 Ken for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 1 reference coded [9.66% Coverage]

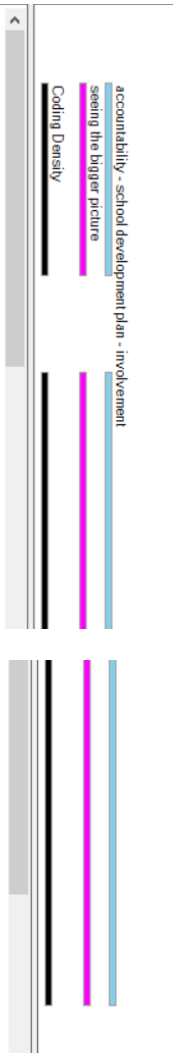
Reference 1 - 9.66% Coverage

A.B.: Given all the demands and pressures which a teacher faces, is there a way to support teachers to see the school's bigger picture?

Ken: Yes there is. It's all about communication and involvement of staff within the direction of the school and that comes through chiefly by sharing the school development plan and enabling staff to be part of that school development plan. So they know they have a direction in where the school is heading to; they're the signposts in terms of priorities where the school is heading. For staff to be part of that is key.

A.B.: How do you involve staff with the school development plan?

Ken: Firstly, it's through the senior leadership team and through the meetings that the senior leadership have. It's training all of the senior leadership team to be able to unpick and identify school data, so that they can see where the strengths and the weaknesses lie. It's skilling them into knowing what good and outstanding lessons look like so they can also know where the weaknesses are. It's about working with them to have that critical eye in terms of the school's environment, so they know where the school needs to be moved to, in terms of the school being in a better place in terms of a learning environment for children. So, putting those elements together, the senior leadership team are an important part of being able to help the head to be able to create that school development plan and knowing where the school needs to be next. Then it filters down to the middle leaders and their involvement, again through that process and sharing the draft report with all members of staff, which in this case it's pinned in the staffroom and there are copies left on the staffroom tables, so staff have an opportunity to comment on and feed back in terms of what they think needs to happen next.



<Internals\\e 5 2 Ken for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 2 references coded [5.87% Coverage]

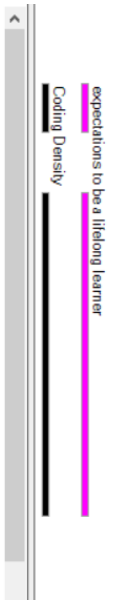
Reference 1 - 0.62% Coverage

There isn't the hierarchical structure in terms of learning stops when you get to a particular position in the school.

Reference 2 - 5.25% Coverage

A.B.: How do you get teachers to understand themselves as learners to engage with change?

Ken: They know when they come to this school that learning never stops. It's part of, I suppose, the interview process and showing people around the school that this is a place of learning for everybody, and we never arrive always trying to improve ourselves, so that ultimately we improve the experience for the children. So that comes right from the very beginning, but it's through a shared experience of the senior leadership team demonstrating that we are constantly learning ourselves through things that come to us by email or things that we've seen in other schools or through training that we've been on, that we then share with colleagues. But it's also important that colleagues also share new learning from courses etc. to the rest of us so that we're learning from each other and from outside and that is for the greater good, it's for the journey of the school, and we all play a part in that.



Appendix 11 continued Extracts of first level coding of data – free node level of analysis in NVivo continued

<Internals\\a Phyllis 1 1> - § 1 reference coded [14.29% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 14.29% Coverage

If I just go back to what was roughly 4 years ago, and my impressions of the school were, first and foremost, when I came in and thought what an incredibly enthusiastic group of children. There were times when, through the early months, I actually had thoughts about how these children could teach themselves if they weren't being taught, picturing if they were getting the best teaching in the world where they would be. There were certain measures in place, for example, the end of Key Stage 2 SATs there was a fantastic Level 4+ %, but I was looking at them and was thinking this is really a bland measure. I could see Level 6s floating all over the place. Not a single Level 6 was coming through. For me the transformation was enabling them to get that higher challenge and pitch, and taking them to where they could actually go and making sure they were getting the opportunities to do so through the teaching and facilitating of learning that was going on. And to me that was what was necessary. So for the question, what does school transformation mean, it meant for me giving them that deal, that package, because they were not all getting it. Not every child was accessing and achieving to their potential because they weren't being given the opportunities. And that wasn't a direct and deliberate thing, that was a training implication which jumped out, having gone round, sat back, looked; I mean I looked. I think I had the good fortune to start during the summer term, so I started in May. There's not an awful lot you can do at that time of the year, because everything is already timetabled, scheduled. The final assessments are happening, the SATs are taking place. Everything is a done deal; it's not like a September start. And it actually gave me a really good opportunity to see what was going on and evaluate in depth. Which is exactly what I did. I did that, at that stage, casually walking in and out of classes, looking at books, talking to children an awful lot, plonking myself in the playground, plonking myself over in the lunch hall, having lunch and eating with them. Really, really getting to know the adults who were resistant, because I was just a new face, and then the children who were, as

childrens' rights to reach academic potential
putting the child at the heart of change
wake-up calls
Coding Density

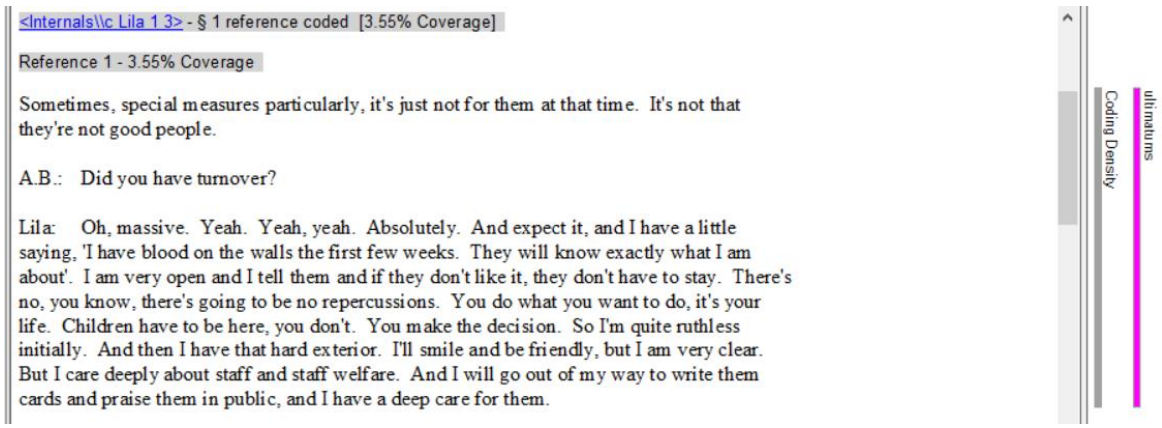
they always are, welcoming and warming and caring and all that kind of thing. When I got a clear picture of how the school was, it became equally clear what needed to be done. And that was where the school development plans come into action. You have to be very, very clear and there has to be utter acuity what's there to decide, what comes next. And it was deciding what was the priority, and the priorities were there; just seemed to be hundreds of priorities. So I just brought it back to the child. And I did that by holding the visioning day with a huge number of staff that didn't know me from Adam. But I had to set my stall up somewhere, I had to start somewhere. And they had to see what my expectation was and then I needed to see what was their reaction and response was as well. So we did have the big vision day, and I facilitated it. Looking back now, I must have been mad, because you get people in to do that. I'd never done that before, but I like mad and I like challenge. And the two together; it was a case of if I don't do this, it has to be me in a way. Because that will tell them who I am. They'll know what I am. And they need to know that to either start feeling secure and buying into it or thinking I'm out of here. They'll know. I wasn't telling them what to do, I was telling them what I felt was necessary, where I saw the school needed to go, and then the rest was over to them. And we did. We had a terrific day. And we had an awful lot of joined-up thinking, clearly that hadn't been too obvious to me in the first instances, because when people sat down to do the activities, and we brought them back together at the end, there was a lot of shared views and a lot of consensus on what was necessary, and a few

childrens' rights to reach academic potential
putting the child at the heart of change
wake-up calls
Coding Density

shocks. So that was the beginning of it all. So that was the kind of starting point, it was kind of like a shock. Because you were looking at the potential Levels 6s, we have the standards agenda as well and the views of education that you were saying so everything was going...Everything together. But it wasn't just Level 6s for the SATs. I was looking at the Year 3s and thinking to myself, you could be so much better, you could be doing so much more and achieving so much more. So it was seeing that thought going all the way through the school, across all year groups. But that was a very blunt measuring tool. However, it was enough to indicate in simple language to everybody here the potential we had sitting.

childrens' rights to reach academic potential
putting the child at the heart of change
wake-up calls
Coding Density

Appendix 11 continued Extracts of first level coding of data – free node level of analysis in NVivo continued



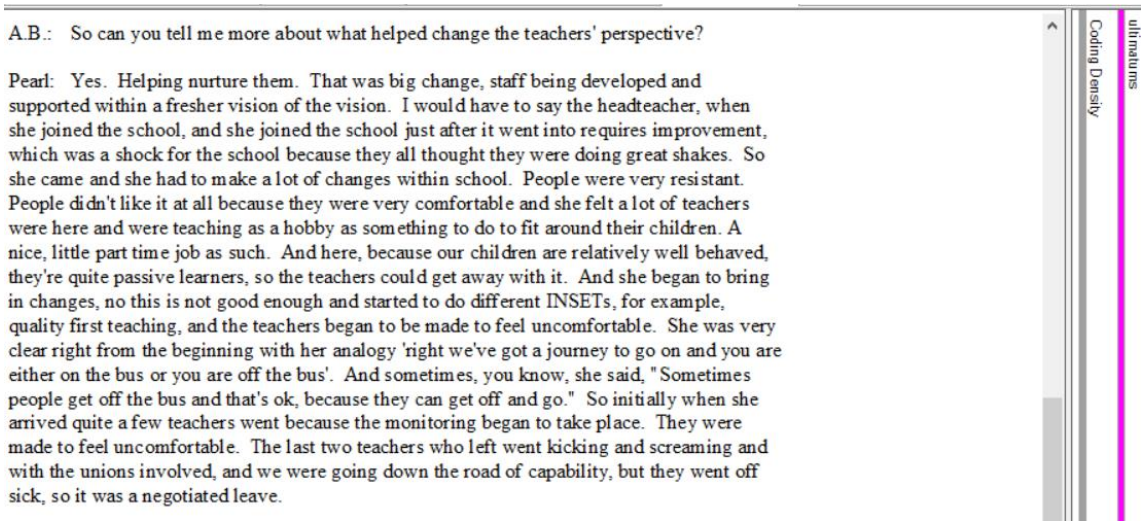
<Internals\\c Lila 1 3> - § 1 reference coded [3.55% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.55% Coverage

Sometimes, special measures particularly, it's just not for them at that time. It's not that they're not good people.

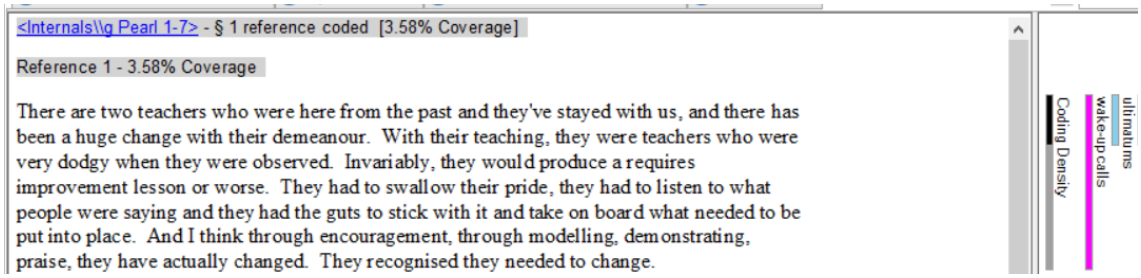
A.B.: Did you have turnover?

Lila: Oh, massive. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Absolutely. And expect it, and I have a little saying, 'I have blood on the walls the first few weeks. They will know exactly what I am about'. I am very open and I tell them and if they don't like it, they don't have to stay. There's no, you know, there's going to be no repercussions. You do what you want to do, it's your life. Children have to be here, you don't. You make the decision. So I'm quite ruthless initially. And then I have that hard exterior. I'll smile and be friendly, but I am very clear. But I care deeply about staff and staff welfare. And I will go out of my way to write them cards and praise them in public, and I have a deep care for them.



A.B.: So can you tell me more about what helped change the teachers' perspective?

Pearl: Yes. Helping nurture them. That was big change, staff being developed and supported within a fresher vision of the vision. I would have to say the headteacher, when she joined the school, and she joined the school just after it went into requires improvement, which was a shock for the school because they all thought they were doing great shakes. So she came and she had to make a lot of changes within school. People were very resistant. People didn't like it at all because they were very comfortable and she felt a lot of teachers were here and were teaching as a hobby as something to do to fit around their children. A nice, little part time job as such. And here, because our children are relatively well behaved, they're quite passive learners, so the teachers could get away with it. And she began to bring in changes, no this is not good enough and started to do different INSETs, for example, quality first teaching, and the teachers began to be made to feel uncomfortable. She was very clear right from the beginning with her analogy 'right we've got a journey to go on and you are either on the bus or you are off the bus'. And sometimes, you know, she said, "Sometimes people get off the bus and that's ok, because they can get off and go." So initially when she arrived quite a few teachers went because the monitoring began to take place. They were made to feel uncomfortable. The last two teachers who left went kicking and screaming and with the unions involved, and we were going down the road of capability, but they went off sick, so it was a negotiated leave.



<Internals\\g Pearl 1-7> - § 1 reference coded [3.58% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 3.58% Coverage

There are two teachers who were here from the past and they've stayed with us, and there has been a huge change with their demeanour. With their teaching, they were teachers who were very dodgy when they were observed. Invariably, they would produce a requires improvement lesson or worse. They had to swallow their pride, they had to listen to what people were saying and they had the guts to stick with it and take on board what needed to be put into place. And I think through encouragement, through modelling, demonstrating, praise, they have actually changed. They recognised they needed to change.

Appendix 11 continued Extracts of first level coding of data – free node level of analysis in NVivo continued

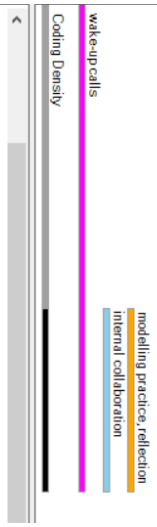
<Internals\\b 2 7 Pearl for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 1 reference coded [11.93% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 11.93% Coverage

Pearl: I would have to say with one of our teachers in particular, who felt, I don't know if I said this last time about the perception of herself as not being very good at mathematics, and then she began to realise that she wasn't as good as she thought, and she's worked really hard at that and she now has become what we would say is a good to outstanding teacher of mathematics. She is so switched on.

A.B.: What got her switched on?

Pearl: I think recognising that she needed to learn some more. So I see it in terms of you know when there's some sort of opposition and you've got some scratchiness, and from scratchiness you've either got to itch it, put some ointment on it. Or when there's opposition, when there's a struggle, you either fall down or you find a way forward, and when there's conflict you can either fall over backwards and say lay on your back and kick your legs up in the air, or you say, "Yeah, there is conflict, I need to do something about this," and then you go and do something about it. But because you have then identified some areas, you work on it and then it's like in a way, she's a P.E. [physical education] expert and it's like from going to be able to do bunny hops to leap frog over a horse. And that was it. She was doing little bunny hops and now she's able to leap over a horse. What's happened I think is several things. I think her challenging herself. I would like to say, I would like to think someone [me] believing in her, actually saying that she can do it and someone working alongside her, and showing her a few bits and bobs and then giving her a task to do, and she does the task and actually realises, 'Oh yeah, oh yeah, that's really good' etc. and seeing it actually making a difference with her children. That gave her the confidence to, 'Yes, I can do it'. And has she been on any courses? After that, she went on new curriculum training, which again gave her lots more ideas, and she just got excited about it. She was inspired. I think it was from inspiration, encouragement, but recognising that she had a need to learn.



<Internals\\d Geoff 1 4> - § 1 reference coded [1.93% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.93% Coverage

So some teachers worked alongside AST [Advanced Skills Teachers] and worked with coaches and did really, really well. Some teachers, once they'd done that went on to support others, and actually that's when they came into their own, because they took responsibility for leading and supporting someone else. And I think that's when you could see a transformation. It was not them being done to, they gripped it so much that they could help others with it.

Appendix 11 continued Extracts of first level coding of data – free node level of analysis in NVivo

<Internals\\d Geoff 1.4> - § 2 references coded [10.66% Coverage]

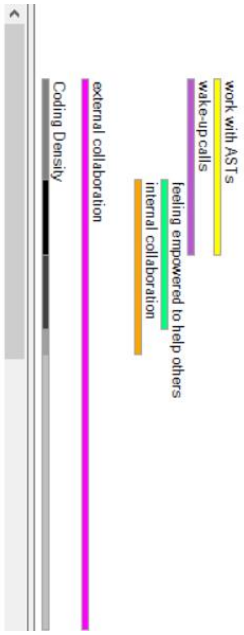
Reference 1 - 6.98% Coverage

A.B.: What changes have you instigated in your school?

Geoff: Helping change the attitudes of staff. It goes back to what I was saying about their mindset earlier and what they *think* is happening in their classrooms and what is *actually* going on in reality. Some teachers needed support to help them wake up to reality. So some teachers worked alongside AST [Advanced Skills Teachers] and worked with coaches and did really, really well. Some teachers, once they'd done that went on to support others, and actually that's when they came into their own, because they took responsibility for leading and supporting someone else. And I think that's when you could see a transformation. It was not them being done to, they gripped it so much that they could help others with it.

A.B. What helped that change in their perspective to engage with change?

Geoff: It was that you couldn't tell staff, you had to get them to see it with their own eyes. When you see staff see practice somewhere else, or when you see staff seeing someone do something in class with their own children and they go, "Oh, that's what you meant, that's what you're talking about." You see, I don't think you can tell a teacher how to do things. You can only show them in reality what it looks like, and the most powerful showing is when it's with their own children. Because a number of staff will turn around and say, "Great that you're doing it that way in your own school, but in my school with my children, that won't work." So, if you're going to show it to teachers and make them believe that it can work, you have to make it work with *their* children.



<Internals\\d 4 6 Daniel for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 1 reference coded [1.29% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.29% Coverage

You show awareness that we're all going through it together, but there is a plan to improve things. We're not there yet, but people know that we have got a plan to address it. We recognise it, we've got a plan to address it, and people feel supported in the meantime. And I think that's a major thing for resilience. We are still showing yeah we are going through a tough time, but that staff still feel hopefully valued in what they do.

<Internals\\g NV 7 1 Phyllis for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 1 reference coded [1.14% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.14% Coverage

virtually everybody in the school has some form of management responsibility, which is not pressured at all, but gives them a sense of just belonging, but they too need to do something because they have to play their part. And I think with that responsibility and sense of belonging comes trust, because you build up and work on relationships, and then it comes full circle with teachers feeling able to cope, because you know you can trust people and that supports resilience too.

Appendix 11 continued Extracts of first level coding of data – free node level of analysis in NVivo

<Internals\\d 4 6 Daniel for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 1 reference coded [1.12% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 1.12% Coverage

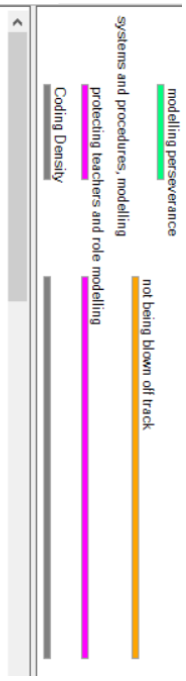
Daniel: It's being that role model for a start, the leadership as a role model to staff it's tough for all of us at the moment but we're all resilient, and we'll get through it and we're going to be better for it, and show that we have to persevere with things - to be honest, we tried this, it didn't work so now we're going to try that. I think you have to be honest about it.

<Internals\\e 5 2 Ken for NVivo ROUND 2> - § 2 references coded [13.39% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 6.89% Coverage

A.B.: What is your understanding of teacher resilience?

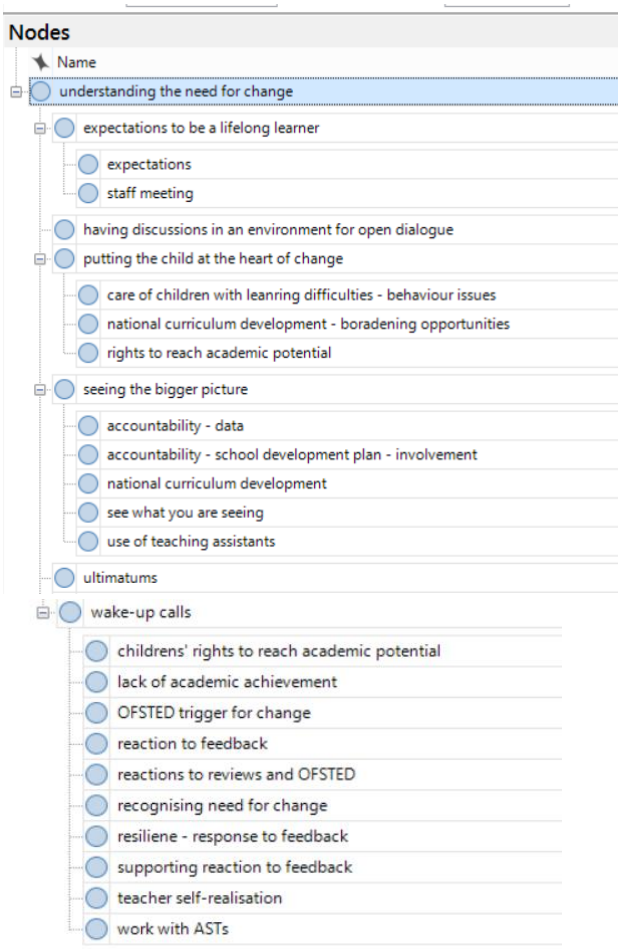
Ken: It's the drive to be the best that you can be in a culture of huge demands and not being blown off track by all the things that can come and impact negatively on what teaching is all about, and that's preparing good lessons, delivering good lessons, giving outstanding feedback and building those positive relationships. Those are the four big things that I think are so important that we as leaders of a school have to protect teachers so that they can endeavour to be the best that they can be in those four areas. And there are a lot of things that are now coming that can impact negatively on resilience: the increased demands that parents have of teachers, almost wanting a one-to-one tuition type of service from teachers; the expectations of behaviour that can get in the way of good teaching; increasing number of deadlines that teachers have to be aware of and ensure that they've covered a wide curriculum, SATs results, the broad curriculum and yet the narrow curriculum in terms of assessment; all those things that teachers has to resilient against, so that they don't lose sight of what the core purpose is, which is ensuring that children are excited and love learning and learning never stops and they can be the best that they can be.

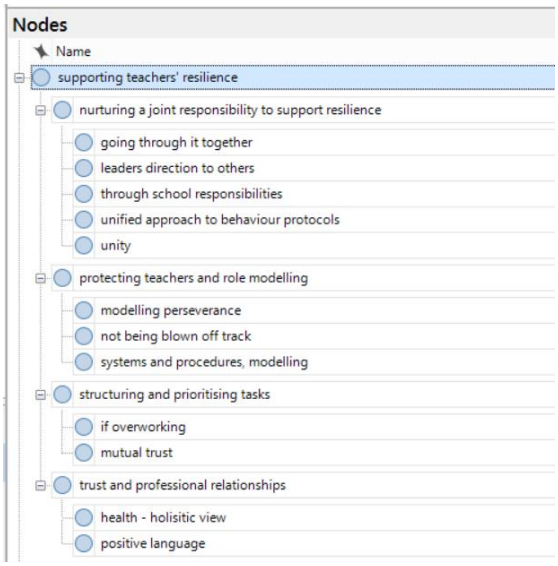


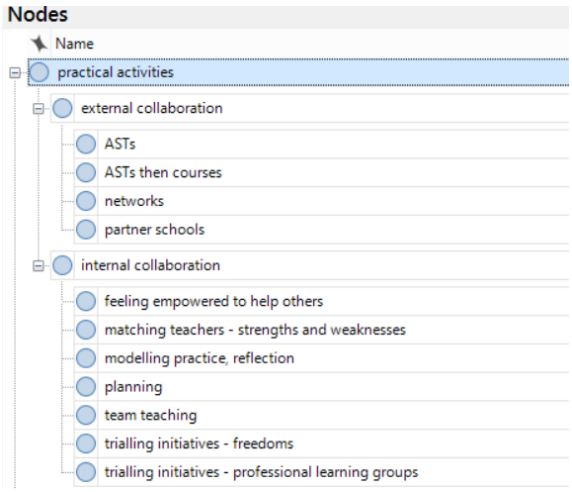
A.B.: How can leaders develop the resilience of teachers?

Ken: Maybe that's the taught part of resilience? I believe that it can be taught through modelling. Like I said, it's something that teachers bring into the classroom as part of who they are, and with some people it might be a bigger piece of work than with others. It's not something that everybody attends a staff meeting about and tonight we're going to talk about resilience; at the end of this, you're going to be able to face every challenge that comes your way. It's about reducing and filtering the leadership team, the amount of negative things that class teachers have to be or can be exposed to, limiting that to what they are chiefly employed to do, and then ensuring that there are the systems and the procedures in school to help staff in terms of meeting difficult parents, modelling that prior to a meeting, so preparing as much as possible for any sort of interaction that they might find tricky. So resilience is about modelling, showing and then holding their hand whilst they have a go and then feedback and trying again until they acquire the skills. And developing that armoury of skills gives you confidence and builds resilience, doesn't it, I suppose.

Appendix 12 Extracts of second level coding of data – categorization in NVivo to develop node patterns and themes







Appendix 13 Summary sheet of the key ethical considerations referred to at the beginning of the interview

Purpose of research

- This research is being undertaken to gather your thoughts about being a leader and making changes in your school as part of school improvement and the teacher learning and resilience which underpins this.
- I am interested in representing your perspectives, your personal experience and reactions to educational change.
- The interview discussions and research findings might have relevance for and positively support others in similar leadership positions.

Anonymity

- In the final report, your name and any personal details you mention will be altered. You can decide on your own pseudonym.
- You may recognise yourself, but no-one outside this school will.
- I will send you a short report of key findings by the summer/early Autumn period 2016. If the timescale alters, I will inform you.

Confidentiality

- audio recordings and typed notes will be stored in a safe place in a home
- only be accessible to me and my research supervisor, whom are external to the local authority and have no direct links to or authority over you
- contribute to a report read by them and members of the examining board.
- as long as comments made by you do not relate to professional malpractice or against your legal duty of care within education.

My role

- I'm coming as a research student.
- I'm not coming as a deputy head making judgements.

I hope this makes you feel comfortable to talk openly and honestly

Procedure

- About a 30 minute interview
- Should you feel uncomfortable with answering any of the questions, then we will not pursue them.
- **It's not a test. No right answers or wrong answers. It's just about your views. If I ask a question and you don't understand what I'm asking, just tell me - it will be my fault not yours - and I can rephrase it.**
- Paper/post-its – during course of interview – should you wish to jot anything down
- **Do you have any questions to ask before we start the interview?**

Appendix 14 Extracts of the researcher's remarks/ questions (highlighted) detailed on the transcribed scripts of the interviews – relating to comments made by the participants

Phyllis interview one

Phyllis extract 1; interview 1

Phyllis: What is happening currently, we know things are political, so I'm not going to go near that part of the discussion. [Stays away from political which I am interested in - why?]

Phyllis extract 2; interview 1

Phyllis: I think year-on-year, I have done differently in a very subtle way. Looking back, I probably came in quite heavy handed in that *I* evaluated, so what I felt needed to be done. Were I in another school, I would be more considered in my way of putting that to staff [I should have noted this word and kept the conversation about teachers specifically, not staff in general], who weren't of that mind and that view as to how we would shift that forward. The school was labelled as a coasting school and their results were reasonable, their progress was not good. That came when all the shift from attainment at Level 4+, which the school was sitting high on, went back to, as it should have always been, on progress. And the progress wasn't even close to what they needed to be. It was not in a good place. It was due an Ofsted. So therefore, action had to be pretty quick, but nevertheless, it still needed everybody to buy into it. And as it turned out then not everybody did. And a good 50% of staff left [I realise now that this 'staff' is referring to learning support assistants (LSAs) - see later discussion. Wanted the conversation about teachers not LSAs.] in the first year, or it was pointed out that perhaps this was not the best place if that's how they felt. Without sounding like you need to leave or anything. But, unfortunately, a school is not going to move forward or anything unless everyone's going the same direction with the same vision. So, back to would have I done anything differently? Maybe a little more diplomatically? But the actions would have had to remain the same because there wasn't any other way to do it. Might have just handled it better.

Phyllis extract 3; interview 1

Phyllis: I'm going to speak about something that I think you are going to find very relevant for what you're doing here. I think I'm going to take a strand, it would be easier to reflect the answer to this question. It was the staffing structure. The staffing structure here was not conducive to maximum impact on learning and that had to be looked at in various aspects. In the first instance, which is not the one that I'm going to go into detail with, it was at the teacher level. [That is what I was interested in, but the headteacher is not going to talk about it – does not explicitly say she *does not* want to talk about it.] The second instance, which I am going to go into detail with, is the learning support assistants (LSAs) or teaching assistants (TAs).

Phyllis extract 4; interview 1

Phyllis: During that period, with that going on, all teachers bought into it. And the reason I believe they did was because I didn't come here and do that right away. I came here and evaluated. I watched very closely. When I came here, I dealt with the teaching staff, what I felt was missing and what needed to change. That's another

story in the strand. [I should have mentioned that I was interested in the teachers.] The one that I am telling you about is one we came to at such a point that when we came to the one-to-one interviews with each of the LSAs, not the re-employment ones, but the ones where I said this is where we stand, this is what I'm going to do, and this is how it might affect you personally, and this is your opportunity to put questions to me.

Phyllis extract 5; interview 1

A.B.: If there was one key thing you could do to transform teachers' perspectives, what would that be?

Phyllis: It largely depends on the perspective. If I could answer it coming in slightly differently, but I hope it answers, what do I think the perspective of a teacher should at least be? [This doesn't answer the question.] I would have to say that they are doing and thinking about how every child in that class makes progress, and how they make it their ultimate aim to have that happen, however they do it, by employing whatever strategies they can.

Phyllis interview two

Phyllis extract 1; interview 2

A.B.: Given all the demands and pressures which a teacher faces, is there a way to support teachers to see the school's bigger picture?

Phyllis: Because they're all working at different levels and they're at different stages in their career and, therefore, they're at a different point in their journey towards their own professionalism and continued development of it, you have to look at that as a leader, and decide what things can be common for everybody and then what else is different that those individuals actually need. So, for example, you expect them to keep up-to-date and abreast of things, the expectation has to be given some form of support in showing them the way to do that. So, we build in reading time, which means every so often we will take them out over and above their PPA [planning, preparation and assessment] time, give them a bumph to read, send them up to the tower room and say, "No technology required, just sit down and read through this." And then what they have to do is an evaluation sheet back to us. So, they have to write down their responses to what they're reading, whether it's they don't understand it, think it's a good idea, disagree with it or it's just useful information. So, you've got common things like that. [I should have asked had they done anything on the back of it, i.e. the evaluations - did it pave the way for any further discussion about changes they might make?]

Appendix 14 continued Extracts of the researcher's remarks (highlighted) detailed on the transcribed scripts of the interviews – relating to comments made by the participants

Phyllis extract 2; interview 2

A.B.: Do you see resilience as responding to something adverse as a one-off event or do you see it as continuous?

Phyllis: [Gives a response to question and then says] And I guess for me, resilience is the whole re-energising of what you do. [I should have asked for clarification about this.]

Phyllis extract 3; interview 2

A.B.: How can leaders develop the resilience of teachers?

Phyllis: I would say through leaders modelling and their support structures, which they provide in the school, so that teachers know who they can go to, to ask if they have a problem. But it's also knowing that a solution can always be found and looking at ways forward to move towards the solution. Once you are working towards solving the problem, or a teacher has reached that end goal, then resilience can be said to have kicked in and worked. [I could have asked what modelling exactly?]

Phyllis extract 4; interview 2

A.B.: Do you think a teacher's resilience looks different in different schools?

Phyllis: I think it looks different? - no, I think resilience is something that might just look different for people. It's a person thing. If you're talking professional resilience across a profession you're going into a much more political type thing. [I should have asked for greater clarification.]

Ken interview one

Ken: I think there is a need to have the national curriculum, I think there is a need that schools are held accountable [Suggesting that schools should be held accountable for delivery of the national curriculum?], that we provide a service, it's not our money, it's state money, so we have to provide and spend that money the best that we can.

Ken interview two

A.B.: From what you've described, it sounds very much like your own school is a professional learning community?

Ken: Absolutely. And everybody plays a part in that. There isn't the hierarchical structure in terms of learning stops when you get to a particular position in the school. [I could have asked what learning he does?]

Appendix 14 continued Extracts of the researcher's remarks (highlighted) detailed on the transcribed scripts of the interviews – relating to comments made by the participants

Pearl interview one

Pearl: Change. Changing from one state to another state and the journey that it takes to go from one to the other. It can be painful, it can be exciting, it can be a bit monotonous, it can be fast, it can be slow. [I should ask what does she mean by moving from one state to another?]

Joel interview one

Joel: I started people on pre-capability, but they often sorted themselves out. But I didn't word it to them that way, but people went. Those people who needed to go gradually have gone. I'm left with one, who I would like to be without. [I should have asked what do you do in those circumstances?]

Joel interview two

Joel extract 2; interview 2

A.B.: What is your understanding of teacher resilience?

Joel: For me, resilience is not taking it personally when a parent has been verbally abusive to you, it's not taking it personally when your school does really badly, but it could be argued it is your fault, it's your neck on the line. Resilience is about hanging on to what you really believe through all this nonsense, and I do describe it as nonsense. Actually, when I think about it, resilience is not being buffeted by the latest government fad. Resilience is about standing firm actually in what you believe when everyone else is telling you something different, isn't it, or when everything around you suggests that you are worthless [Has this been the case with Joel?].