

Can a targeted intervention programme promote change in the educational aspirations, attitudes and beliefs of a group of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls?

Doctorate in Education

**Institute of Education**

Charlotte Wilson

**December 2018**

## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to my supervisor Dr. Carol Fuller for her guidance and support throughout this process.

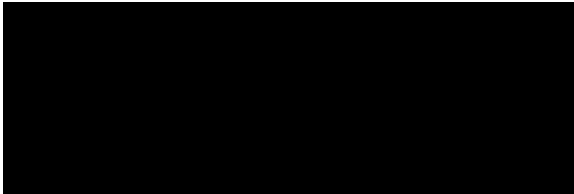
Thank you to Maureen for helping me to make the final hurdle.

Thank you to my family; Nick, Jacob and Ethan for their tireless, unconditional support. To my parents who taught me the importance of hard work, effort and believing in yourself.

Finally, thank you to the students in my school who were part of this research and for all the students who provide inspiration every day.

## **Declaration of Original Authorship**

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.



## Abstract

The gaps in academic standards between students receiving free school meals and their peers is significant. By the end of secondary school, the most disadvantaged students are on average two years of learning behind their better-off peers. Among girls, the difference is even more stark. These students often demonstrate weaker character/essential life skills such as a general lack of motivation, resilience and determination and have low attendance. The research centres on closing the attainment gaps for disadvantaged girls. The purpose is to investigate whether an intervention programme based upon research in the field of resilience could affect positive change in female students in order to impact upon their levels of achievement as well as their possible future aspirations, their resilience factors and retention at Sixth Form or College post Year 11. The thesis looks at the intrinsic factors that impact upon female students, such as values, motivations, aspirations and resilience, as well as extrinsic factors such as exam results, school, community and family. The research uses the Child and Youth Resilience Measure - 28 (CYRM28) and qualitative interviews to measure students' resilience levels and attitudes to school, achieving and aspiration before and after an intervention programme. The intervention programme focuses on developing qualities and the protective factors that contribute to resilience such as developing problem solving skills, having at least one supportive adult they can turn to within school, helping students to formulate plans for the future and supporting others through volunteering and developing self-soothing techniques. The findings from this research suggest that academic resilience does impact both positively and negatively upon academic achievement, attitudes to learning and as a result future life chances and aspirations. They also show that resilience is complex and can be developed given the right conditions but is also something that can decrease depending on situations, experiences and interactions which happen both in and out of school. It opens up possibilities for future research such as how schools could consider developing strategies to build resilience and develop students' sense of identity and feelings of self-worth for a particular demographic who do not necessarily identify with a culture or belief system.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	ii
Declaration of Original Authorship	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	v
<b>1. Introduction</b>	
1.1 Focus of the Study	1
1.2 Context of the Study	4
1.3 Overview of the Research	9
1.4 Overview of the Thesis	11
<b>2. Literature Review</b>	
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 The Importance of Success and Social Mobility	12
2.3 Barriers to Success	13
2.3.1 Barriers to Success – Social Class	13
2.3.2 Social Class and its effect on educational outcomes	16
2.3.3 Barriers to Success - Gender	18
2.3.4 Gender and its effect on educational outcomes	19
2.3.5 Removing the Barriers	20
2.4 The Introduction of the Pupil Premium as a solution	21
2.5 Interventions to improve Attitudes and Aspirations	23
2.6 Mentoring as a solution to tackle the problems of underachievement	25
2.6.1 The role of the mentor	27
2.6.2 Financial Constraints	27
2.7 Resilience	28
2.7.1 Definitions of Resilience	28
2.7.2 Resilience as a facet of Mental Health	34

2.7.3	Developing Resilience through Education	38
2.7.4	Examples of Resilience Projects	40
2.7.4.1	Academic Resilience Approach – The Resilient Classroom Resource	40
2.7.4.2	The Resilience Doughnut	41
2.7.4.3	Summary of Resilience Projects	42
2.7.5.	Summary of Existing Knowledge	43
2.8 –	Theoretical Framework	45
2.8.1	The Social Ecological Model (SEM)	45
2.8.2	Key Concepts and Research Questions	48
2.8.3	Development of the Intervention programme based on existing knowledge	50
<b>3.</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	
3.1	The Purpose of the Study	54
3.2	Approach Taken	54
3.3	Reflexivity	56
3.4	Research Design and Data Collection	57
3.4.1	Research Design - Intervention Case Study	60
3.4.2	Data Collection – Semi-structured interviews with students	60
3.4.3	Data Collection – Performance Data and reports	63
3.4.4	Data Collection – Measuring Resilience	63
3.4.5	Data Collection – Implementation of the CYRM	64
3.5	Methods of Data Analysis	67
3.5.1	Analysis of the interviews	67
3.5.2	Analysis of the CYRM	69
3.5.3	Analysis of the Performance Data and reports	70
3.6	Organisation of the Results	71
3.7	Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent	71
3.8	Potential problems, limitations and validity	75

<b>4.</b>	<b>Results</b>	
4.1	Background	77
4.2	Overview of the analysis	79
4.3	General Overview of Group One's CYRM-28 data	80
4.3.1	April Data (pre intervention)	80
4.3.2	Correlation between components	82
4.4	Sub Scale and Sub Cluster Analysis by Student	85
4.4.1	Bethany	85
4.4.1.a	Bethany – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	85
4.4.1.b	Bethany – comparison against the Study Group	86
4.4.2	Rebecca	89
4.4.2.a	Rebecca – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	89
4.4.2.b	Rebecca – comparison against the Study Group	89
4.4.3	Eleanor	
4.4.3.a	Eleanor – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	93
4.4.3.b	Eleanor – comparison against the Study Group	93
4.4.4	Sarah	95
4.4.4.a	Sarah – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	95
4.4.4.b	Sarah – comparison against the Study Group	96
4.4.5	Phoebe	98
4.4.5.a	Phoebe – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	98
4.4.5.b	Phoebe – comparison against the Study Group	99
4.4.6	Maisie	100

4.4.6.a	Maisie - comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	100
4.4.6.b	Maisie comparison against the Study Group	101
4.4.7	Annie	103
4.4.7.a	Annie – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	103
4.4.7.b	Annie comparison against the Study Group	103
4.4.8	Lisa	106
4.4.8.a	Lisa – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample	106
4.4.8.b	Lisa comparison against the Study Group	106
4.5	Whole Group Analysis for Group 1 – July Data (post intervention)	108
4.6	Interview Analysis	111
4.6.1	School and Exam Performance	112
4.6.2	Confidence	114
4.6.3	Future Aspirations	116
4.6.4	Parental Influence	120
4.6.5	Views on Interventions - Yoga	124
4.6.6	Views on Interventions – Primary School Reading	125
4.6.7	Views on problem Solving Sessions	127
4.6.8	Summary of Analysis	128
<b>5.</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	
5.1	Overview of Discussion	129
5.1.1	What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of underachieving white British, disadvantaged girls? - Aspirations	130
5.1.2	What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of underachieving white British, disadvantaged girls? - Beliefs	133
5.1.3	What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of underachieving white British, disadvantaged girls? – Educational Attitudes	136



5.2 Can these educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs be changed?	139
5.3 Results from the control group	141
<b>6. Conclusion</b>	<b>143</b>
6.1 Overview of Findings	143
6.2 The effects of increasing resilience as an intrinsic concept	145
6.3 The effects of increasing resilience to improve outcomes for students	146
6.4 Possible contributions to practice	147
6.5 Key findings and contribution to knowledge	150
6.6 Review and Limitations of Methodology	152
6.7 Possibilities for future research and influence on practice	154
6.8 Final summary	156
 Bibilography	 157
 <b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1 Fixed Base Interview questions for semi structured interviews	
Appendix 2 Youth CYRM28 – Sample Survey	
Appendix 3 Contract between researcher and data collector	
Appendix 4 Significant points drawn from interviews	
Appendix 5 Simplistic and Refined Coding of Interview Responses	
Appendix 6 Interview Analysis example	
Appendix 7 Governor Consent Form	
Appendix 8 8.1 Governor Information Sheet	
8.2 Letter to Parents	
8.3 Parent Information Sheet	
8.4 Student Information Sheet	
Appendix 9 Ethics Approval Form	

## Tables

Table 1.1	Progress and Attainment Data for good passes in both English and Maths GCSEs 2012-2017 by gender	8
Table 1.2.	Progress and Attainment Data for GCSEs 2012-2017 by Pupil Premium/Non Pupil Premium	8
Table 2.1	Examples of promotive and protective factors	31
Table 3.1	The Implementation Process	64
Table 4.1	CYRM Total Scores Comparison	80
Table 4.2	Group 1 Mean Data for Total CYRM, Sub clusters and sub scales pre and post intervention	81
Table 4.3	Correlations between components calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation	83
Table 4.4.1.a	Bethany's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	85
Table 4.4.1.b	Bethany's Progress Data	87
Table 4.4.2.a	Rebecca's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	89
Table 4.4.2.b	Rebecca's Progress Data	90
Table 4.4.3a	Eleanor's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	93
Table 4.4.3b	Eleanor's Progress Data	94
Table 4.4.4.a	Sarah's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	95
Table 4.4.4.b	Sarah's Progress Data	96
Table 4.4.5.a	Phoebe's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	98
Table 4.4.5.b	Phoebe's Progress Data	99
Table 4.4.6.a	Maisie's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	100
Table 4.4.6.b	Maisie's Progress Data	101
Table 4.4.7.a	Annie's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	103
Table:4.4.7.b	Annie's Progress Data	104
Table 4.4.8.a	Lisa's CYRM28 data compared to the study group	106
Table 4.4.8.b	Lisa's Progress Data	107

Table 5	Correlations between components calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation	109
Table 6	Results from Careers Interviews: Choices of Career from the Study Group	118
Table 7	Results for CYRM28 – control group's score	141

### **Graphs**

Graph 4.1	Relationship between Individual and Context sub scales	83
Graph 4.2	Relationship between Relationship with Caregivers and Context Sub Scales	84
Graph 4.3	Relationship between Individual and Relationship with Caregivers sub scales	84
Graph 4.4	Relationship between Individual and Relationship with Caregivers sub Scales – post intervention	110
Graph 4.5	Relationship between Individual and Context sub scales – post intervention	110
Graph 4.6	Relationship between Relationship with Caregivers and Context sub scales – post intervention	111

### **Vignettes**

Vignette 4.1	Rebecca's Story	92
Vignette 4.2	Eleanor's Story	95
Vignette 4.3	Sarah's Story	97
Vignette 4.1	Maisie's Story	102

### **Figures**

Figure 2.1	Social Ecological Model affecting the individual in an education setting	48
------------	--	----

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Focus of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate whether an intervention programme based upon research in the field of resilience could affect positive change in female students in order to positively influence their levels of achievement as well as their future aspirations and retention at Sixth Form or College post Year 11. The thesis looks at the intrinsic factors of resilience, motivation and aspiration, attitudes to school, community and family and their impact upon female students' academic achievements, as well as the extrinsic factors of gender and class.

This area of focus was chosen as working in a comprehensive Secondary School I witness, fluctuations and differences in students' behaviour, attitudes and motivations, attainment and progress on a regular basis. For some students the ability to focus themselves on their studies and achieve their potential proves to be a very difficult task, for some almost impossible. Their ability to commit to learning in lessons, to focus and work hard in school as well as on additional study at home presents multiple challenges for a variety of reasons. For some students their resilience and their ability to persevere is lacking. This is not a criticism of these students; the pressure to perform and achieve academic success often to the detriment of participating in other activities and interests is a real current concern for many educators (The secret teacher, 2018 and Busby, 2018). In part this pressure is not just being felt by students, teachers and leaders feel the pressure for different reasons too. Brown (2018) argues that the current Government's neoliberal educational policy is founded on both direct and indirect financial incentivizing of performance. This can be witnessed at a number of levels; student, teacher and whole school through the publishing of school data, rankings and individual educational outcomes. At a whole school level this incentivizing of performance acts as a driver to a school's popularity which links directly to funding; the more successful a school in terms of results outcomes, the more popular and oversubscribed it becomes which equates to greater income. The main source of funding in schools is per student, current rates of funding are set at a minimum of £3,500 for Primary Schools and £4,800 for Secondary Schools. At a teacher level, performance is linked to performance related pay, movement up the pay spine is dependent on a teacher reaching their set data targets which are more

often than not linked to student performance in exams. At the student level the greater the success in exams the better the access to higher education which unlocks higher earning potential and future career success. Therefore, this pressure to perform and achieve academic success can become the focus for the whole school as it strives to improve academic standards. As a result, everything undertaken in school is done in order for students to achieve good grades at GCSE so they can then move into further education where there are further pressures to attain good grades to enable them to access higher education and training. This notion of success, which schools are measured by, leaves very little time to focus on 'softer' skills and attributes which are not as easily measured. These skills do not fall easily into curriculum compartments, they do not have an exam specification or scheme of work so are not as easily teachable. However, arguably these softer skills like resilience, motivation and aspiration are needed in order to achieve the Holy Grail for schools; academic success and improved standards.

This increased pressure to perform has been exacerbated by whole school data tracking. Schools do not want students to slip through the net in terms of their performance, as a result whole school data tracking is now a common practice in many schools, tracking student current performance against their potential. These practices have been intensified by the introduction of analytical, commercial data tracking and performance packages such as PiXL and SISRA. The focus is firmly on student performance and the interventions needed if students aren't performing. My school is no different and has submitted to this pressure of tracking students at this micro level. Throughout the school year students are tracked at calendared data collection points to assess whether they are making progress and achieving their potential in relation to their end of year targets, their final GCSEs or A Levels. As a school we strive to close the gaps that exist between students' current grades, assessed at given points in time by their teachers, and their target grades which are set based on prior attainment. Schools will often focus on intervention programmes to close the gaps that exist between targets and current grades. These interventions are focused upon supporting students to make academic improvements such as specific subject booster lessons more often than not in Maths and English, one to one tutoring, targeted revision sessions and homework completion sessions. These various interventions have been and are being used widely in many Secondary Schools to

close the attainment gap along with one to one mentoring to provide individualised support for the focus students.

These attainment gaps are tracked at a series of levels, for individual students and between groups of students. Schools will be tracking the performance of their student groups by gender, race and ability level as well as by characteristics such as Special Educational Needs and economic status. This tracking is to highlight gaps between groups, which exist in order for interventions to be put in place to close the gaps.

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), a charity with a focus on educational, action research (2013) evaluate many of these academic interventions providing schools with evidence on which interventions are the most effective and provide the best value for money. Whilst these academic interventions can and do make a difference for many children, they are more effective if the approach is consistent and committed. In my experience, students who demonstrate weaker character/essential life skills such as a general lack of motivation, resilience and determination, have low attendance, low effort scores and a poor homework completion rate, can and do gain from academic interventions. However, many may also need extra support to ensure they persevere and maintain the positive benefits gained from these academic interventions due to their weaker character skills. Goodman and Gregg (2010) and the EEF (2013) recognise that there have been limited robust studies to explore the extent to which schools can influence these softer skills, and the impact of developing these soft skills have on other outcomes. The suggestion is that whilst there is evidence that character/essential life skills in childhood are associated with a range of positive outcomes at school and beyond, much less is known about *how* these skills can be developed and whether they lead to increased academic attainment. The findings from the EEF's research toolkit (2013) suggest that character related approaches can be most effective for improving attainment when they are specifically linked to learning or when they are embedded into the daily routine of school life. However, there is limited evidence especially from the UK in this area (EEF, 2013). Two approaches which have been trialled in the UK to develop character skills, Philosophy 4 Children and Changing Mindsets show promising initial findings but these research projects were targeted at key stage 2 children, 7-11 year

olds in Primary schools and have not been trialled at a secondary school level (EEF,2018).

This thesis centres upon the area which is less well researched; *how* students' softer character skills can be developed and whether developing these skills can lead to increased academic attainment. The focus is on the development of an in-school intervention programme to develop academic resilience. The programme concentrates on how the intrinsic factor of resilience can be developed in order to affect positive change in student academic outcomes and aspirations. One of the main drivers for this research, along with the contribution to knowledge was to effect positive change through an intervention study for a group of students. The hope would be that the development of an intervention programme that affects positive change could be replicated to impact upon wider groups of students and have positive effects.

## 1.2 Context of the study

As Headteacher of a Comprehensive Secondary Academy the issue of 'the attainment gap' is an ever present one. This is especially true for the underachievement of our Pupil Premium Students. The Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) is additional funding given by the government to schools in England to decrease the attainment gap for the most disadvantaged children. Students who are eligible for the PPG are students who have qualified for free school meals at any point in the past six years as well as students who are or have been looked after under local authority care for more than one day or who have parents in the military.

In my school the population is predominantly White British (93%) and 31% of students are eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) (compared to 27% nationally). The underachievement of this White British poorer cohort is one of incredible importance as they make up a third of the school population. The school is a medium sized comprehensive of 1085 students located in a prosperous market town in the south of England. Data for the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and for the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) (<http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/idmap.html>) for West Berkshire show that the school serves a community where the IMD for the LSOAs (lower-layer super output

area) within the immediate catchment area has a value of 4 indicating that part of the school's main catchment is in the 4<sup>th</sup> most deprived 10% of LSOAs compared to an average value of 8 for the whole of West Berkshire. The IMD is a way of measuring deprivation in small areas across England based on 7 different 'domains', such as income deprivation, crime or barriers to housing. Looking at the IDACI measure for the LSOAs in the school's main catchment area the value is 3 compared to an average for West Berkshire of 7. The IDACI measure is a supplementary index to those that make up the index of multiple deprivation. It specifically measures the proportion of children under 16 living in income-deprived families. The school's main catchment areas serve these LSOAs where the IMD and the IDACI measures indicate there are levels of deprivation, which are higher than the Local Authority average.

My role as Headteacher in my school is the most senior leadership post, I am responsible for setting the strategic direction of the school, its policies, culture, ethos and values. On a day to day level I am responsible for the education and safeguarding of all the students, management and well-being of staff. In my role I lead, motivate and manage staff, I have a senior leadership team of three deputy headteachers and four assistant head teachers to whom I delegate areas of responsibility. In conjunction with my senior team and Governors I set expectations and targets for staff and students, evaluating staff performance against targets set. As Headteacher I also work with outside agencies such as the Local Authority, the Department for Education and Ofsted. These working relationships are supportive in terms of providing advice and guidance as well as being focussed on quality assurance. The school is judged against national and local performance measures predominantly exam results but also against compliance of statutory obligations.

The school has received three consecutive 'Good' judgements from Ofsted in the past 8 years following on from a period of decline when the school was a 'National Challenge' School; a Government initiative to support schools who failed to achieve the national benchmark of 30% for 5+GCSEs at A\*-C (with English and Maths). Despite the school's current upward trajectory of school improvement, the issue of the attainment gap is a serious concern. The concern is not just for those students who are eligible for Pupil Premium but also for those students who are 'missed' by this measure. Nationally there are 200 000 students entitled to Free School Meals (FSM)



but are not claiming FSM, this equates to 14% of the student population who are eligible. There are marked differences regionally and in the South East and East, 25% of entitled students do not claim FSM compared to the North East of England where only 2% do not claim, the failure to claim rate in the Local Authority where the school is based is 25% (Iniesta-Martinez & Evans, 2012). As a measure of poverty, those students eligible for FSM has been used in Britain since 1998 and at the moment Gorard (2012) believes is the best indicator of poverty, but he also notes that this measure may miss those children who are super deprived and the most deprived of all. There are several reasons why some students miss out; this could be down to mobility issues, parental pride or some students may be just slightly above the threshold. Recent research also suggests that take up is less in areas where there is less deprivation overall, where schools have lower FSM rates and where parents hold higher status occupations or higher qualifications (Iniesta-Martinez & Evans, 2012). However, until the Government begins to collect data on parental occupation then eligibility for FSM is the best indicator at our disposal to judge disadvantage and poverty (Demie and Lewis, 2014).

The school has had mixed success in closing the attainment gap; since 2012 the attainment gap between the success of FSM students compared to their peers has and continues to fluctuate. Accountability measures for schools have changed, there has been a greater increase on measures of progress as well as a greater emphasis on the in-school gaps between different groups of students. This includes measuring the gaps between pupil premium and non-pupil premium students within school and non-pupil premium students nationally. Despite a narrowing gap nationally, those students from lower socio-economic backgrounds still do less well than students from families in higher socio-economic groups both in terms of attainment and progress. It is not just about academic attainment and progress, the school often sees white British poor students achieving the benchmarks but then failing to progress into further or higher education, choosing to drop out or 'choose otherwise' (Ball et al., 1999). Fuller (2009) supports this finding when noting that the importance of class not only determines the educational outcomes of young people but also influences their ambitions and aspirations.

In my school the data over the past five years shows that with the exception of 2012 and 2017 boys out performed girls in terms of attainment in GCSE English and Maths (Table 1.1). The percentage of boys achieving a grade C or above in English and Maths has been greater than for the number of girls. This is different for progress, with the exception of 2013, girls outperformed boys in progress measures which means that the girls 'travel further' from their Key Stage 2 (KS2) starting points than boys. Whilst in terms of performance the girls travel further, less achieve the 'golden ticket' – good passes in English and Maths at GCSE that enable them to access the next level of education and apprenticeships at a higher level. This is also mirrored in the pupil premium data (Table 1.2), non-pupil premium students do better than pupil premium students in terms of both attainment and progress.

Both attainment and progress measures were changed in 2016 to an Attainment 8 measure and a Progress 8 measure. These measures were introduced by the Government to encourage schools to offer a broad, well-balanced curriculum. Both are calculated using a student's average grade across eight subjects. Whilst the measures do mean a student has to study a broad range of subjects in order for a full calculation to take place, a criticism of these new measures would be that not all subjects count towards the measures and so for students studying vocational subjects like Childcare or Workskills their grades in these subjects would not count towards the two scores. Another criticism would be that because the Progress 8 score is an average score for a school of all its students' scores, if a small number of students miss exams because of personal crises in their lives or serious illness, they will have significantly negative scores, and as such can have a proportionate effect on the whole school score.

**Table 1.1 Progress and Attainment Data for good passes in both English and Maths GCSEs 2012-2017 by gender**

	Whole school progress score	Females Progress score	Males Progress score	Females Attainment English and Maths	Males Attainment English and Maths
2012	1009.7	1020.1	1004.1	71%	57%
2013	1000.9	999.3	1003.1	51%	52%
2014	1028.1	1046.8	1005.5	48%	53%
2015	1021.4	1030.2	1010.6	50%	53%
2016*	0.13	0.16	0.11	46.8	47.8
2017**	-0.1	0.19	-0.54	43.6	36.2

**Table 1.2. Progress and Attainment Data for GCSEs 2012-2017 by Pupil Premium/Non Pupil Premium**

	Whole school progress score	PP Progress score	Non PP Progress score	PP Attainment English and Maths	Non PP Attainment English and Maths
2012	1009.7	1009.3	1011.0	50%	67%
2013	1000.9	990.5	1005.1	24%	61%
2014	1028.1	998.7	1039.5	36%	56%
2015	1021.4	1011.1	1024.5	37%	55%

2016*	0.13	-0.18	0.23	8.95	12.97
2017**	-0.1	-0.4	0.11***	32.3	49.8***

\*Figures for 2016 are calculated using different benchmarks - Progress 8 and Attainment 8 and not raw attainment and progress.

\*\*Figures for 2017 were measured using the same benchmarks as 2016 but gradings for English and Maths GCSE have now changed from letter gradings to a numerical grading system of 1-9 with 9 being high and equivalent to more than an A\*.

\*\*\*Pupil Premium data in 2017 is measured against non-disadvantaged students nationally rather than against in school data

These fluctuating results in both attainment and progress between genders and different groups of students leads to gaps that highlight difference and disparity. In order to reduce this difference and disparity there is a need to review which interventions and actions work most effectively to close these gaps and make a difference.

### 1.3 Overview of the Research

The research centres on closing the attainment gaps for female disadvantaged pupil premium students through a resilience focused intervention programme. Therefore, the starting point was to investigate current thinking and research into resilience and the barriers to academic success, which exist for female white working class students in schools today. The attainment gap is real and the disparity between disadvantaged students and those who are not, is an important area of focus at all levels from teachers in the classroom to policy makers. The belief that if students are successful in terms of academic success then social mobility will follow; this is a common theme of the 2016 Education White Paper, Educational Excellence everywhere (DfE, 2016). This paper was examined as part of the literature review along with research that outlined the various barriers to success and subsequent social mobility; many of which are common factors in disadvantaged students' lives. Each of these barriers was considered in turn: social class, gender and the effects of both social class and gender and their intersectionality on educational outcomes. The work of Bourdieu notably the areas of habitus and capital (Bourdieu, 1986) was

considered alongside the work of Bandura et al. and Ball et al. and their work on parental influence (Bandura et al., 2001, Ball et al., 1999).

The literature review also looked at the various strategies introduced to overcome the barriers to social mobility and tackle the differences and attainment gaps that exist, the PPG and the various initiatives that have been employed in schools were a focus. Whilst the pupil premium initiative is designed to close the attainment gaps, the literature review shows that programmes carried out in schools with an academic focus only tackle part of the issue, students' motivation, resilience and determination are significant factors in ensuring student success both in the short and longer term (Martin, 2002). Therefore, the literature review looked at the research into interventions and mentoring schemes designed to change these softer skills including students' motivation, resilience, determination, attitudes and aspirations. Even though reviews of the larger scale mentoring programmes designed to tackle underachievement are scarce, the literature review examined the evaluation of smaller scale mentoring projects as well as the apparent constraints evident in many projects. There are several evaluations of the impacts of pupil premium spending carried out by the Government as well as charities such as the Education Endowment Fund (EEF, 2013). These were considered as part of the Literature Review in order to provide an understanding on the success of the pupil premium initiative and the impacts the initiative has had on closing the gaps.

The literature review also focuses on definitions of resilience, how the research on resilience has changed and developed over time, as well as the different ways resilience has been measured over time (O' Dougherty et al., 2013, Hart and Heaver, 2013, Ungar et al., 2011). The review then considers the links between resilience and mental health as well as how schools can play a part in developing resilience through looking at the limited evidence which examines and evaluates some of the projects designed to build and develop resilience (Young Minds, 2015).

Taking a pragmatic approach, framed in an interpretivist paradigm this research carried out in my school will allow me to collect and analyse data from a group of female students who do not necessarily match directly with the categories often used in studies of resilience. Ungar and Liebenberg, (2011) suggest that many of the resilience studies carried out have used samples of students who face significant adversity and disadvantage. This study looks at resilience in a group of students who

as a majority were white female British working class students; some who had faced adversity and some who had not. The factors they did have in common were they were all pupil premium students and all had gaps in attainment between their target grades and their current grades as judged by their teachers. This research could contribute to existing research by focussing on how a tailor-made intervention programme with its foundations in resilience research could have a positive impact on students' motivation, resilience and determination, aspirations and attitudes and ultimately their success. It could have practical implications for whole school curriculum design as well as intervention programmes in affecting positive change in students' resilience and determination, their aspirations, attitudes, and ultimately their academic success.

#### 1.4 Overview of the Thesis

The Thesis is separated into six chapters. Chapter Two, the Literature Review, critically analyses the current thinking and educational research on social class, its impact upon academic outcomes and how, along with gender it can act as a barrier to academic success. The review also focuses on how intervention programmes and Pupil Premium funding has been targeted at disadvantaged students to impact upon attitudes, aspirations, academic resilience and academic success. Resilience is also examined in the Literature Review; how it is defined, how it can be measured and how it can be developed. The Methodology in Chapter Three explains the way the research has been carried out and the considerations made in developing the research design including the research tools used, the limitations and the ethics. Chapter Four presents the results of the interviews and the Child and Youth Resilience Measure - 28 (CYRM28) results and these are then discussed in the context of the research questions in Chapter Five. The Thesis findings are discussed in Chapter Six along with limitations of the study, implications for research as well as contributions to knowledge in the area of resilience interventions and the impacts upon effects on students' academic success and aspiration.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to examine some of the key ideas being researched and discussed concerning the academic performance of a group of students in our schools we label as the white working class disadvantaged. The review will consider why it is relevant to look at and be concerned about the performance of these students as well as the barriers they face; notably social class and its impact upon motivation, resilience, aspiration and academic success. Consideration will be given to gender and how this also acts as a barrier to academic success for some students. It will also focus upon the different ways in which the gaps in the academic performance of these students in relation to their peers may be closed, focusing on a variety of schemes and programmes which have been introduced at a national level to address these issues. The introduction of Pupil Premium funding targeted at disadvantaged students will be examined including the success of mentoring projects which have formed part of the Pupil Premium Strategy in many schools. Focus will also be given to the research around how attitudes and aspirations can have an impact on academic success along with studies of resilience. Notably studies on academic resilience which are relatively new, these will be considered alongside definitions of resilience, how these definitions have changed over time as well as how resilience and resilience interventions are seen by schools and services working with young people.

### 2.2 The importance of success and social mobility

The guiding principle of the 2016 Education White Paper, Educational Excellence Everywhere is to

“provide world-class education and care that allows every child and young person to reach his or her potential, regardless of background”

(DfE, 2016, p.127).

Social mobility and social justice are inextricably linked to this guiding principle ensuring that every child has access to an education that will allow them to achieve

success. Success in the UK Education System is measured by exam passes and good grades; these qualifications give access to the next stage of education following school, whether this is college, university or further training. Better qualifications lead to better life chances. Research shows the effects of a lack of qualifications on earning potential throughout life. The lower a young adult's qualifications, the more likely they are to be lacking but wanting paid work and the more likely they are to be in low-paid work. ([www.poverty.org.uk](http://www.poverty.org.uk)). Educational achievement is equally as important for Governments who have focused on improving educational levels in order to increase economic prosperity by improving the workforce to meet the demands of the knowledge economy (Younger and Warrington, 2009). It is not just economic benefits the Government hope to achieve they also believe that building a well-educated population leads to a stronger, fairer and more secure country (DfE, 2016).

Research carried out by the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission (2014) suggest that if low attaining disadvantaged students could achieve better results there would be a significant impact on social mobility as better results lead to higher earnings and employment levels which lead to improvements in health and well-being and significant savings to the taxpayer through higher tax revenues, lower expenditure on benefits and less pressure on public services. This focus on improving outcomes for all, a culture of performativity (Wyness and Lang, 2016) and securing social mobility and justice is incredibly important for the life chances of young people, but there are barriers to overcome to be certain of success for all.

## 2.3 Barriers to Success

### 2.3.1 Barriers to Success - Social Class

Whilst the concept of class seems less discussed in general society today, tending to be more the preserve of sociology students and academics the inequalities within our society, the differences and the widening gaps between the haves and have nots is widely documented at times on a daily basis. Savage et al. (2013) argue that it is these inequalities that are remaking social class. Long gone are the days when social class was used as the theme for comedy sketch shows on prime time TV. Now we watch people go from working class to reality TV millionaires, pop stars and footballers overnight, often with seemingly little effort. Class lines are often blurred and success is measured in different ways. Those at the top, the rich elite are a clear group as are



those at the bottom of the hierarchy who live in real poverty on a daily basis. For those in the middle the idea of class is more blurred. They may not identify with the culture of the working class or middle class and feel they have no identity or links with these groupings instead choosing to identify themselves by the football team they support or the clothes they wear (Harris, 2014). For some educational achievement and subsequently a gateway to higher paid jobs, careers and fulfilment, is not a measure of success and therefore not something to be coveted. Whichever way it is portrayed the class debate remains important as social class is still an influential force in the life chances and futures of students.

It is widely reported that social class remains the strongest predictor of educational achievement in the UK, where the educational attainment gap between rich and poor remains one of the highest (Perry & Francis, 2010). Such is the magnitude of the problem it has been the subject of major educational debate for several years now and does not seem to be one that will disappear quickly. The introduction of the Pupil Premium to support disadvantaged students was only one of five Education Policies to be signed in the coalition agreement (Mansell, 2013). The focus on the reintroduction of Grammar schools with a particular focus on targeting disadvantaged students was one of the first proposed education reforms of the Prime Minister Theresa May in 2017.

Government statistics for 2013 show that White Working Class students were the 8<sup>th</sup> largest group out of fourteen ethnic groupings in England; in terms of attainment they were the lowest performing group out of the 14 at both Key Stage 2 and at GCSE (Demie, 2014). This is supported by Crawford and Morrin (2016) who believe that,

*“For some time there has been a feeling the white working class have been left behind by the education system” (2016, p.22).*

Definitions of who makes up the population of White Working Class students have undergone much debate; for the purpose of understanding here the definition proposed by Mongon and Chapman (2008), Cassen and Kingdon (2007) and cited in Demie and Lewis (2014) will be adopted,

“pupils from a White British ethnic background who qualify for free school meals” (2014, p.4)

Geographically too, the focus has widened to include, not just White Working Class students in deprived communities in cities and urban areas, to disadvantaged children more generally. In Wilshaw's (2013) report 'Unseen Children' he notes that,

"Children, entitled to free school meals... live in areas that might be considered generally affluent but nonetheless are performing poorly. Many others live in places that are relatively isolated, such as coastal towns." (2013, p. 4)

However, despite this increased focus, the issue of children from poorer backgrounds doing less well than those children from well off families is not a new phenomenon. (Willis, 1973, Fuller 2009, Chowdry et al. 2010, Strand, 2010, Goodman and Burton, 2012, Harris and Williams, 2012). In a 2013 report by the National Children's Bureau, research showed that the life chances for children living in disadvantage and poverty had not improved in fifty years and in some cases have got worse. Since the Bureau's first research fifty years ago the recent findings showed that a child from a disadvantaged background is still less likely to do well in their GCSEs at 16. The failure to achieve the 'golden ticket' of 5 good passes at GCSE with English and Maths affects the next steps in education. Access to apprenticeships and college courses is limited without the 'golden ticket', access to Higher Education is also limited with only 17% of Free School Meal (FSM) students entering Higher Education at 19 compared to 35% of None FSM students in 2009 (BIS, 2011).

Attainment should not be the only focus, schools often see white working class students achieving their 5 good passes with English and Maths, but then failing to progress into further or higher education, choosing to drop out or 'choose otherwise' (Ball et al., 1999). Fuller (2009) supports this finding when noting that the importance of class not only determines the educational outcomes of young people but also influences their ambitions and aspirations. A recent study by Berrington et al. (2016) adds to this reporting that in the UK all ethnic minority groups are now more likely to go to university than White-British young people.

As a Headteacher I have worked with and mentored a large number of students from different familial backgrounds. Their levels of intrinsic motivation, attitudes, aspiration and self-belief has been incredibly variable. All of these variables had a significant

impact upon attainment and achievement. Through these experiences a 'poverty of aspiration' amongst those students who are White Working Class is much more noticeable. Aspirations, attitudes and self-belief as part of the learner identities of working class children do appear to affect educational attainment and future life courses.

### 2.3.2 Social Class and its effect on educational outcomes

The Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) study by Dearden et al. (2010) considers the economic, developmental, psychological and sociological theoretical perspectives which may be used to explain how levels of advantage or disadvantage are transmitted from parents to their children. The Sutton Trust and Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) Evaluation of White Working Class Children in 2013 noted that the factors that affect educational achievement of white working class children are a set of complex and inter-related factors. These factors include poor parental engagement with school and with their children's studies, poor standards of literacy, problems with the transition from primary to secondary school and the lack of engagement with school as well as an aspiration to achieve well and have plans for their next steps beyond school. A range of theories on social reproduction, habitus and forms of capital have been much written about and at times criticised due to their ability to cause confusion and be contradicted by empirical evidence (Goldthorpe, 2007). Primarily, for Bourdieu (1997) capital and habitus refer to the assets individuals possess both materialistically and personally as well as the access individuals have to assets such as education, experiences and connections both social and culturally. However, his concept of habitus as integral to the person and affected by forms of capital which include family influences could be linked to the factors cited by the EEF as contributory to poor educational attainment. If social capital, the network of social relationships and connections each individual possesses, is indeed inherited as Bourdieu suggests and cultural capital, the skills and knowledge individuals possess to use to their advantage can be acquired unconsciously, marked by its earliest conditions of acquisition then it can be explained that if a parent does not have the cultural or social capital to engage with teachers and the school to support learning and growth, homework and potentially difficult periods in a child's life, like the transition to secondary school, the habitus of a child will be affected. Goldthorpe (2007) further criticises Bourdieu's idea that habitus is difficult to change

and underwritten by domestic influences and social class. Bourdieu does not recognise the potential of the education system to re-socialise a person and habitus. This view is supported by Sarojini Hart (2013) to some extent who states there is a lack of clarity around Bourdieu's argument that habitus is fixed, she relates this to Bourdieu's own personal circumstances and the way he seemed to be able to change his habitus for his own life course. However, in a study by Ball et al. (1999) 'family habitus was recognised and the ambitions and strategies that embodied this were closely related to the social reproduction of parental expectations. They did recognise students' paths could be influenced by educators and schools.

Contrary to this, Bandura et al. (2001) reported that parents who were working class but who had a strong sense of 'academic promotive efficacy' (p204) would discourage manual work and thereby could possibly change familial traditions. Time appears to be a key component in Bourdieu's ideas on the different forms of capital. He purported that;

"cultural capital in the embodied state.... costs time, time must be personally invested by the investor....it cannot be done second-hand (so that all effects of delegation are ruled out)".

(Bourdieu, 1997, p. 48)

He also gives importance to the length of time that an individual can give to the acquisition of cultural capital, he links this to the amount of time the family can give to an individual before they are needed to work and help contribute to the family. This is echoed in the study by Younger and Warrington (2009) who found that many students had constrained ambitions for the future citing Further Education not being for them or something which was discouraged by their parents who valued the workplace more. It is not only the time element necessary to develop a child's cultural capital but also that parents lack the necessary skills – i.e. the cultural capital - too. As Ball et al. (1999) found, parents of working class children did offer support and were encouraging and pressurising in equal measure, however what they lacked was the offer of tangible support or the ability to facilitate opportunities for their children. Gewirtz et al. (2005) support this view and reported from a study on Education Action Zones that parents were supportive and did value education but that they not only lacked the cultural capital but also the 'right' kinds of social capital in terms of social contacts with professionals that middle class parents may possess that would be

advantageous for their children. This is often seen in schools when students go out on work experience placements. Those students from families who have personal contacts in a range of professions often find it easy to secure their children meaningful placements that are linked to future career aspirations. For those parents who do not have the contacts the aspirations of their children are not as easily met and they often find themselves in a local placement, a shop or office compared to their more affluent peers who have secured places in law firms or, as was the case more recently, a GP surgery working with a midwife which directly linked to the student's future career choice.

Breaking the cycle of social reproduction to allow working class students to break out of their 'traditional comfort zone' (Reay and Lucey cited in Younger and Warrington, 2009) by building forms of capital is therefore not an easy goal to achieve. Younger and Warrington (2009) and Cummings et al. (2012) realise that working class students and their parents often have high aspirations but lack sufficient capital to realise these ambitions. What is actually needed is advice, guidance, information and support in order to help them realise their ambitions and succeed. After all, raising the participation age should have the biggest impact on those students who do not traditionally opt to stay in education, employment and training, notably the working classes. Archer (2005) points out that it is these students who 'live' the social inequality every day who are often disengaged, not because of a lack of ability or intelligence but because they lack the necessary cultural capital to achieve well.

### 2.3.3 Barriers to Success: Gender

The changes that have happened in the lives of girls and in society in general over the last 20 years have significant implications. (Hamilton, 2009; Biddulph, 2013; GirlGuiding Association, 2013; Rae and Piggott, 2014; Bennett, 2016).

A major reason for this change is the introduction and increased use of technology in every aspect of life. The GirlGuiding Attitudes Survey (2018) noted that 10 years ago social media wasn't included in the survey as many of today's current social media platforms used by young people did not exist, now 59% of girls aged 11-21 say social media is a main cause of stress for them.

Phipper (1996) has also noticed the changes that have taken place in the lives of adolescent girls as a result of her work with girls in therapy. She notes that girls today are living in a whole different world compared with her own experiences. She believes that girls become overwhelmed with the complicated modern culture in western societies that all too often promote violence, sexualisation, indifference and disrespect. She believes in order to support girls and address these issues, a society where emotional toughness, self-respect, strength and resilience are valued and grown needs to be developed for girls and women.

Hunt (2019) acknowledges that some progress has been made to promote equal representation across institutions, remove the gender pay gap and address other obstacles to women's progression and leadership but there is some way to go to address the inequalities that still exist. High profile social movements such as #TimesUp and #MeToo demonstrate that inequalities and injustices are very real for many women. This injustice and inequality affects all ages and all women in all areas of life. Over three quarters of female secondary school pupils in the UK who attend mixed schools claim that they have been on the receiving end of sexist comments from other pupils. (GirlGuiding Association, 2018). The statistics suggest that things do not always improve as girls leave school. The Young Women's Trust report that almost a third (31%) of young women reported sex discrimination while working or looking for work and one in five (19%) said they are paid less than their male colleagues for the same or similar employment (Siddique, 2018).

#### 2.3.4 Gender and its effect on educational outcomes

Rae and Piggott (2014) note that although girls' academic performance has been higher than that of boys for the past 20 years they recognise that there is a concern regarding the specific achievements of white working class students of both genders. These differences are also seen in the Department for Education and Skills publication, 'Gender and education: the evidence on pupils in England' (2007) which showed that for 5+ A\*-C GCSE, FSM students are at a significant disadvantage: only 28 percent of FSM boys achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSEs compared to 55.8 percent of non-FSM boys; and only 37 percent of FSM girls compared to 65.7 percent of non-FSM girls. This shows

that the effect of being eligible for FSM has a slightly greater impact on girls than boys: for girls, FSM eligibility depresses attainment by 28.7 percentage points (65.7% points minus 37% points) and by 27.5 percentage points for boys (55.8% points minus 28.3% points) (2007, p. 58)

The traditional focus on boys' underachievement can shift attention away from the fact that large numbers of girls are also low attainers. In 2011, low income White British girls were the second lowest performing group, after low income White British boys (Ofsted, 2013). Fuller (2009) reported that whilst girls have become more educationally ambitious it is often female, low attaining, disadvantaged students who were more likely to be frustrated by school and seek careers that are more influenced by gender.

Richard's (2018) study in a former deprived mining community found that working class girls' aspirations and futures were affected by the culture and community in which they lived, the girls often felt that they were not clever enough to do jobs which required higher education and employment mobility and they were scared to move away from their communities. She also finds that they were constrained by family and community expectations of what girls should do; early marriage, motherhood and local employment.

### 2.3.5 Removing the Barriers

In order to tackle the barriers that class and gender present, numerous initiatives and schemes have been developed and delivered to tackle the problems that schools face; lack of motivation and aspiration, low standards and performance and closing the gaps. Fielding (2006) criticises schools for applying pressure to both students and staff in the quest to improve performance and become high performing arguing that a constant focus on performance marginalises students and staff and depersonalises education as the quest for good results can become the sole focus. Many schools have introduced schemes to support students in this quest to achieve academic excellence, rather than schemes which nurture students' character and qualities, such as confidence and motivation. The students who have been targeted for support are more often those who are not achieving their potential. More often than not these are students from disadvantaged backgrounds and more often than not disadvantaged girls. The Pupil Premium Initiative is a long standing funding driven

policy to improve the attainment of disadvantaged students. Used to fund a variety of schemes and interventions in order to improve educational outcomes it has had mixed success.

#### 2.4. The Introduction of the Pupil Premium as a solution

The focus of much current education policy is on closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. The introduction of the Pupil Premium Grant funding to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds is designed to close this gap. The Pupil Premium Gap is a well-known educational term used in compulsory education today. The 'Gap' is the difference between the attainment of those students from poorer backgrounds who receive extra education funding through the Pupil Premium Grant compared to children from more affluent families measured by attainment levels at Key stage 2 and GCSE benchmarks at Key stage 4. The Policy to target additional funding, a total of £2 billion nationally for 2014-15 (Ofsted, 2014) to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers (DFE, 2014) has reportedly had mixed success. The criteria for Pupil Premium being eligibility for FSM, either currently or in the last six years of education. In an analysis of the 2013 GCSE results it was reported that nearly half of local authorities in England saw an increase in the attainment gap (Watt, 2014). Ofsted report that the Pupil Premium is making a difference but that this will take time, it also reports that their increased focus and the increased accountability measures has led to Headteachers being critically aware of the overall effectiveness measure of a school being impacted by their Pupil Premium gap.

"In 151 reports analysed between January and December 2013, there was an association noted between the overall effectiveness of the school and the impact of the pupil premium"

(Ofsted, 2014, p.9)

It is not surprising then that Pupil Premium and the 'Pupil Premium Gap' is a hot topic in education today. The value of the Pupil Premium has increased from £488 per student when it was first introduced in 2011 to £935 in 2016, with service children receiving £300 and Looked After Children (LAC) receiving £1900. With the revised Ofsted framework in 2015 there was increasing accountability placed on schools to



justify their Pupil Premium spend and its impact on closing the gap. A plethora of courses, initiatives and schemes emerged for schools to guide them in the best way to spend their premium to close the gap. The Sutton Trust-Education Endowment Fund Teaching and Learning Toolkit was one such tool which provided evaluations of interventions to guide schools in how best to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils (The Sutton Trust, 2014). Ofsted, (2014) reported that evidence collated from Inspections showed most schools were spending the funding effectively. One of the factors responsible for this could be the need for Headteachers and Governors to report impact of spending annually on the school's website.

This policy focusses purely on improving attainment and achievement levels for disadvantaged students so they are in line with their more advantaged peers. Strategies that have been 'sold' to schools as those that work are often those that target first and foremost academic improvements, some examples include catch up literacy and numeracy sessions, improvements in marking and feedback and TA support. Carpenter et al. (2013) report that 75% of schools they surveyed had funded additional staff to support disadvantaged students in their learning. However, these strategies can often be seen as remedial and dealing with a problem that already exists rather than tackling a problem from the root cause. In a study by Younger and Warrington (2009) the findings showed that achievement can often be raised in the short-term through interventions without transforming students' longer-term goals and expectations. Fuller and Fox (2014) argue that this focus solely on attainment may not fully address the wider problem:

“This focus on educational attainment alone will not necessarily address lower educational achievement and aspirations, unless it is also coupled with measures that target specifically the development of young people's confidence and sense of self-efficacy”.

(2014, p.3)

In support of this view whilst some schools do see improvements in raising attainment, the results year on year tend to fluctuate and nationally the picture has remained

steady. The most recent Ofsted Pupil Premium Update (2014) reports that for Key Stage 2:

“In 2013, 60% of pupils eligible for free school meals achieved a Level 4 or better in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 tests compared with 79% of non-eligible pupils. This is an increase of one percentage point on the 2012 figures for both groups. The attainment gap in 2013 remained at a difference of 19 percentage points.”

(2014, p.17)

And for Key Stage 4

“In 2013, 38% of pupils eligible for free school meals achieved five GCSEs or more at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics compared with 65% of non-eligible pupils. This attainment gap – 27 percentage points – is unchanged from 2012”.

(2014, p. 18)

The findings show that the attainment gap is narrowing at a slow rate and states that it will take time before the full impact of the Pupil Premium Policy is seen. Whilst there may be some gains for individual students and individual schools with some of the strategies employed, these statistics do show that the issue is still prevalent despite the funding. These statistics also indicate that the issue is much more complex than simply just employing strategies to raise attainment. If we want to close this gap and achieve lasting sustainable outcomes that has intergenerational change more has to be addressed than just the educational attainment of the White Working Class group of students.

Improving attainment is only one part of the jigsaw, the bigger picture is much more complex, involving changing attitudes to education, raising aspirations and ambitions, developing and encouraging a sense of self efficacy, increasing levels of motivation and changing parental levels of engagement too.

## 2.5 Interventions to improve attitudes and aspirations

In a study on career trajectories Bandura et al. (2001) state that self-efficacy is the main determinate of all other factors such as career choice and development, aspirations and ability to fulfil the educational requirements necessary for chosen careers. No direct link was found between a family's socio-economic status and children's perceived future occupational efficacy but that parents who believe they can impact their children's life course are more proactive and successful in developing their children. Gewirtz et al. (2005) found that families from lower socio-economic backgrounds did value education and wanted the best for their children's development, however they lacked the right kind of social and cultural capital in order to bring about change and impact on their children's achievement. Ball et al. (1999) support this and noted that whilst support and encouragement from families of low socioeconomic background is there, it is often not tangible as the familial cultural capital is stretched especially when learning is only seen as something that is necessary for the future, a challenge or chore, rather than for enjoyment or personal development.

Several reports and studies have been produced that have researched the area of attitudes and aspirations with some evaluating several interventions designed to close the attainment gap by impacting on attitudes, aspirations and behaviours. This importance of improving self-efficacy can be seen in Carter-Wall's and Whitfield's (2012) study of aspirations, attitudes and behaviours which found that there is a need to move away from a sole reliance on teaching to improve attainment and to find strategies to address aspirations, attitudes and behaviours to increase attainment and success. The study showed that interventions to improve aspirations, attitudes and behaviours which were focused on parental involvement did have an impact on attainment with evidence of some impact as a result of extra-curricular activities, mentoring and improving self-confidence. In contrast a review of several interventions by Cummings et al. (2012) found that those interventions focused on parenting, mentoring and extra-curricular activities showed value for money and did improve attainment but there was no evidence that they were a mechanism of change in aspirations, valuing school or locus of control. The picture so far then, is a mixed one. Goodman and Gregg (2010) believe that fundamental to improving rates of attainment and ambition is the ability of students to recognise the value of learning and develop a sense of self efficacy through having self-belief in their ability to

achieve. Part of the report used the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYPE) findings which considered how socio-economic background influenced attainment. The findings showed there were several 'transmission mechanisms' including those parental attitudes and behaviours and young people's attitudes and behaviour which linked family background to educational outcomes. It found that children from poorer backgrounds had less belief in their own ability and less belief that their own actions were important in determining their future link this. It also found that the attitudes and behaviours in the previous generation accounted for 40% of the gap in test scores between rich and poor backgrounds (Goodman and Gregg, 2010). The report also reviewed the various programmes which have been used to address some of the issues. However, they found that the review of programmes such as Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), Aim Higher and The National Behaviour and Attendance Strategy could not evidence proven benefits, particularly in respect to improvements specifically for attitudes and behaviours. The report concluded that 25% of the achievement gap could be closed if government policy were able to even out the differences in teenagers' attitudes, aspirations and behaviours. Therefore, more work needs to be undertaken on this area of self-efficacy, aspiration and behaviour.

## 2.6 Mentoring as a solution to tackle the problems of under-achievement

In order to target more than academic outcomes many schools have used mentoring schemes. The literature written on mentoring provides a mixed picture. There is a whole range of different mentoring schemes used for a variety of reasons, using different types of mentors and mentoring different groups of children. Two of the largest schemes were borne out of National policies; Aim Higher and Excellence in Cities, both of which no longer exist. Evaluation of both initiatives is scarce and where evaluation does exist it is intangible and not linked to concrete data.

"Learning Mentors were perceived as having an impact on many of the young people they worked with, and staff reported improvements in pupils' self-esteem, behaviour and motivation, as well as their relationships with their teachers and peers".

(Excellence in Cities, 2005, P. 96)

The phrase 'perceived as having an impact' is vague and does not appear supported by hard data. This view that there is a lack of tangible evidence reported on the effectiveness of mentoring schemes is also noted by Younger and Warrington, (2009) and Colley (2003). Hall (2003) goes on to suggest following a literature review of mentoring schemes that there is a large scale quantitative evidence base from the US but that the evidence base in the UK is less secure and based on qualitative analysis of individual schemes. One thing that is suggested from the findings of mentoring scheme evaluations in the UK is that for any mentoring scheme to be effective it needs to be integrated into the whole school ethos or context of the organisation or the community it is based within. (Hall, 2003; Younger and Warrington, 2009) Rose and Jones (2007) and Demie and Lewis (2014) also go on to stress the importance of mentors knowing the communities within which they are operating. The study of interventions to change aspirations and attitudes by Cummings et al. (2012) suggested there was a lack of evidence about the complex mechanisms by which affluence and disadvantage in children's background are translated into educational outcomes. They noted that whilst mentoring schemes can be linked to attainment outcomes it is harder to evaluate the impact of mentoring schemes on aspirations, attitudes and beliefs and causal link of mentoring schemes to raising attainment levels in working class children. They noted that there were small indications that mentoring could have a relatively favourable impact on more socio-economically disadvantaged young children. Colley (2003) in her review of an engagement mentoring programme does not agree with this view, she argues that because a person's habitus is not easily changed, mentees are not always amenable to changing their lives. She also noted that in some cases when mentors in schools were not teachers they lacked power and influence to affect any change for some students. Evaluations of some small scale mentoring schemes, have shown that achievement can be raised in the short term, but there is little evidence as to whether they can be transformational and raise aspirations in the long term when students often have constrained ambitions for the future (Younger and Warrington, 2009). Whilst, Demie and Lewis (2014) report on the strategies used in schools that are 'bucking the trend' to raise white working class achievement their report does not use quantitative data with regard to the effectiveness measures of mentoring as a strategy. The report uses qualitative responses around how the mentors viewed the scheme from their perspective.

### 2.6.1. The role of the mentor

The role of the mentor is an important one. In the evaluation of an assertive mentoring scheme by Younger and Warrington (2009), they reported that as well as relationships between mentor and mentee being favourable and supportive, some mentees reported a negative relationship that was counterproductive; some students reported feeling bullied by the mentor, who was a senior member of staff. In the Excellence in Cities review the use of non-teaching staff as mentors had mixed reviews, with some teachers feeling negatively towards the creation of these extra roles (Kendall et al., 2005). However, because they are employed by the school but were not teachers, the idea was that they would have greater credibility with their professional colleagues but, be seen as separate to the teachers by the children. Rose and Jones (2007) reported different findings in their analysis:

“being an employee of the school may be regarded by pupils and parents/carers as representing that institution and may not always be viewed favourably. In particular, those pupils and parents/carers who have been in dispute with the school may feel unable to place their confidence in an individual who they associate with being an establishment figure”. (2007, p. 9)

This mentoring programme was for young people at risk who had multiple problems, whilst this was by no means the case for every young person from a working class background, the choice of mentor is an important one. This is because it is crucial to have a successful pairing where the student feels valued and listened to, someone who they can trust as well as someone who they will respond to and depending on the type of mentoring complete what is asked of them and ‘buy in’ to the programme. Yet, the choice of who mentors is often governed by financial constraints as discussed below.

### 2.6.2. Financial Constraints

The two large mentoring initiatives in the UK detailed earlier; Aim Higher and Excellence in Cities no longer exist. The schemes were cut as part of the Coalition Government's policy of taking a ‘whole-of-education’ approach, starting much earlier and supporting pupils to turn school-based achievement into success at university (Atwood, 2010). The introduction of the Pupil Premium was part of this new

approach. This is surprising then, as even though evaluation of both initiatives and the mentoring aspects of both are limited, the NFER's 2010 evaluation of Aim Higher suggested that the mentoring aspects of the programme did have an impact on attainment and progression into Higher Education (Passey and Morris, 2010). However, as Colley (2003) points out any mentoring scheme is bound by funding. The Pupil Premium Report 2013 found that those schools in a situation with decreasing real funding had to use pupil premium funding to maintain provision previously funded from different funding streams. It reported some schools had to reduce the level of support offered to pupil premium students citing the most likely level of support they would withdraw would be additional staff, with mentoring schemes being affected (Carpenter et al., 2013). It seems clear then that the evidence for the success of mentoring as a tool to improve attainment for children from deprived backgrounds is,

“promising but not yet compelling”

(Carter-Wall & Whitfield, 2012, p.52)

Some of the issues which surround mentoring as an intervention; impacts versus value for money, longevity of the impacts to affect habitus as well as affecting short term gains and the mentor/mentee relationship all need further consideration and thought. There is also a lack of qualitative and quantitative data to measure the impacts of these schemes and their lasting impacts on young people's self-efficacy.

## 2.7 Resilience

If self-efficacy is the belief in our own ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish tasks a person's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how they might approach these goals, tasks, and challenges. The belief in our own abilities will also be affected by another characteristic that needs to be discussed more fully here and that is the characteristic of resilience.

### 2.7.1 Definitions of resilience

In education the definition of resilience is centred upon a student's ability to bounce back in the face of challenges or failure. It is also about a student's ability not to allow external factors such as family, friendship or relationship problems to negatively impact their studies. Initially much of the research into resilience in young people was

focused upon their resilience in the face of adversity, often severe adversity. These studies focused upon the protective factors developed by a young person in order for them to be resilient and develop ways of coping and surviving to help them deal with the various situations that they face. Such studies focussed on children from disadvantaged backgrounds, black and ethnic minorities and those in situations which were more individualised, to a community or particular situation e.g. following a traumatic event or children at risk of HIV. Prince –Embury and Courville (2008) suggested that these protective factors identified in research led to resilience being viewed as one dimensional. This one dimensional view only looked at the individual protective factors that a child or young person may have developed rather than considering other risk conditions that were external to the individual. Hart and Heaver (2013) identified groups they thought might also benefit from further research such as children with complex needs e.g. children with special educational needs and disabilities or multiple learning and/or physical disabilities. The research was also lacking for those children who were deemed as 'normal/average', those who were living in typical circumstances. i.e. who were not necessarily living with any external risk factors such as in situations of domestic abuse and violence or with parents who were substance abusers or living in criminal neighbourhoods. The normal/average child may be one who attends their local comprehensive school regularly, are from a stable family home with working parents, and yet parental engagement with school may be low. Research by CentreForum (2016) showed that even though White British children were in the top 3 for achievement at the age of 5 they slip to 13<sup>th</sup> out of 16 for achievement in their GCSEs. The research suggests that this is due to a lack of parental engagement with school; lack of attendance at parents' evenings and a lack of knowledge, tools and resources to help their children make their aspirations real.

Personal traits that often vary with the age of the child or young person and make them resilient and stress resistant is seen as the 'First Wave' in Resilience Research. These studies often compared individuals, focussing on what made one child or young person more resilient than another in the same or similar situations. The definition of resilience in these cases was seen as

“the ability to weather adversity or bounce back from a negative experience”

(Prince-Embury and Courville, 2008, p. 11)



Similarly, Masten, stated that,

“resilience was a common phenomenon resulting from the operation of basic human adaptational systems”

(2001, p. 2)

and, if these systems were working well then, the development of individuals would not be jeopardised even when they were faced with severe risks and situations of adversity. Both these definitions imply that resilience is something biological within an individual and something that might be tested by one event or difficulty that occurs, as opposed to something that can be developed and grown or even diminished by an event, series of events or circumstances. In short, that some children are born more resilient than others.

The ‘Second Wave’ of resilience research began to focus upon an individual’s interactions with their wider environment and the context in which they lived as well as their individual biological traits. This research built on the idea that resilience can change over the course of a child’s life and that their interactions should also be considered e.g. relationships with parents. Various longitudinal studies in this wave of research showed that often the severity of the adversity or number of events children had endured can have an effect on their outcomes in later life.

The ‘Third Wave’ of research, as evidenced by O’Dougherty et al. (2013) focussed upon how resilience can be promoted, through risk prevention and behaviour promotion interventions building on the “Science of Resilience” (2013, p27) and developing these into actions which would promote resilience in individuals. This wave of research identified the growing number of strengths based models and resilience frameworks for use as interventions and to develop resilience. This area is also highlighted by Hart and Heaver (2013) as an area where further research was needed to evaluate the effectiveness of programmes and interventions designed to build resilience. Hart and Heaver’s views around the further research needed

approach were based upon requests from practitioners and parents themselves who were keen to know the effectiveness of such interventions in developing the resilience of young people to support and promote their development.

As resilience research has moved forward, the 'Fourth Wave' has been identified as being multifaceted within various research fields; ecology, public health and emergency services, coming together to address concerns which present as bigger threats at a societal level e.g. Global terrorism and pandemics. However, it is clear that resilience in young people, in particular how it can be developed and nurtured is still an important issue and one that must continue to be at the forefront of research.

O' Dougherty et al. (2013), Garnezy (1985) and Masten (2001) all identified what Masten referred to as a 'short list' of resiliency traits. These promotive and protective factors in Table 2.1 are evident in the research on resiliency in children at risk. The research shows that these factors are fundamental to children developing their adaptive systems to deal with the risks they face.

**Table 2.1 - Examples of promotive and protective factors**

Characteristics	Factors
Child	<p>Social and adaptable temperament in infancy</p> <p>Good cognitive abilities, problem solving skills, and executive functions</p> <p>Ability to form and maintain positive peer relationships</p> <p>Effective emotional and behavioural regulation strategies</p> <p>Positive view of self (self-confidence, high self-esteem, self-efficacy)</p> <p>Positive outlook on life (hopefulness)</p> <p>Faith and a sense of meaning in life</p>

	Characteristics valued by society and self (talents, sense of humour, attractiveness to others)
Family	<p>Stable and supportive home environment</p> <p>Harmonious inter-parental relationship</p> <p>Close relationship to sensitive and responsive caregiver</p> <p>Authoritative parenting style (high on warmth, structure/monitoring, and expectations)</p> <p>Positive sibling relationships</p> <p>Supportive connections with extended family members</p> <p>Parents involved in child's education</p> <p>Parents have individual qualities listed above as protective for child</p> <p>Socioeconomic advantages</p> <p>Postsecondary education of parent</p> <p>Faith and religious affiliations</p>
Community	<p>High neighbourhood quality with good quality facilities</p> <p>Safe neighbourhood</p> <p>Low level of community violence</p> <p>Affordable housing</p> <p>Access to recreational centres</p> <p>Clean air and water</p>
Effective Schools	Well-trained and well-compensated teachers

	After-school programmes School recreation resources (e.g., sports, music, art)
	Employment opportunities for parents and teens
	Good Public Health
	Access to emergency services (police, fire, medical)
	Connections to caring adult mentors and prosocial peers
Cultural or Societal	Protective child policies (child labour, child health, and welfare) Value and resources directed at education Prevention of and protection from oppression or political violence Low acceptance of physical violence

(Masten, 2001)

Ungar (2015) takes this further and states that the individual characteristics which a child possesses account for less of the variance in children's outcomes than the systemic factors detailed in the Family, Community, Effective Schools and Cultural/Societal factors outlined in the table. Ungar suggests that these social and physical ecologies can give children the five types of capital (social, human, financial, natural and built) which they need to cope with the impact of stress and help them recover if their mental health has deteriorated.

There is recognition that resilience is still difficult to measure and describe:

“the research to support a description of a child as resilient is still evolving as clinical cut-offs have not been defined for how many resources, at what level of adversity, in which culture or context is likely to produce the highest measure of wellbeing”.

Ungar, 2015 p11

Looking at the risk factors in a child's life first before looking at the resilience in a child is important. Ungar has developed a decision tree for diagnosing resilience which uses a five phase approach. Being able to assess the risk factors, level of adversity, promotive and protective factors and environment in this way allows there to be a tailored approach to making changes in a child's environment to promote resilience.

Ungar recognises the need for further work on intervention once resilience levels have been identified,

“Diagnosing resilience, though, is only a first step toward the validation of interventions that focus on the promotion of wellbeing. Our next step must be to create a larger evidence base for these interventions”.

Ungar, 2015 p14

This recognition alongside a balanced assessment of mental health will enable multifaceted interventions to be developed to target the multidimensionality of resilience. Recognising that resilience is not just the qualities and traits possessed by individuals but something more dynamic which involves the interaction between individuals and their environments demonstrates that ideas about resilience have developed and are continually advancing (Ungar et al., 2017; Lal et al., 2014).

### 2.7.2 Resilience as a facet of Mental Health

MacConville and Rae (2012) state that resilience can act as a buffer against depression and other mental health issues. Therefore, with the prevalence of young people with reported mental health issues on the increase resilience becomes an important factor in combatting mental health issues that begin in adolescence and

continue to cause problems in later life. Recent studies of adolescent mental health show that resilience, mental health and well-being are inter-twined, with well-being seen as a multi-dimensional concept (Finch et al., 2014). The promotion of emotional health and wellbeing enables children and young people to develop their capabilities and thrive. The National Child Development Study (2016) found that participants who had attended the Scout and Guide movement as children may have built resilience against common stresses in life, or increased their chances of achieving more in life, so were less likely to experience such stresses in later life. Yet, we live in a society where funding for mental health is being cut. This has led to a number of leading practitioners, charities and researchers calling for more research and funding into adolescent mental health,

"If Mental Health has been the 'Cinderella service' of the NHS, Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services are the 'Cinderella's Cinderella'. They receive just six per cent of the NHS Mental Health Budget and 0.6 per cent of the NHS budget overall. This is despite three children in every classroom suffering from a diagnosable mental health problem"

(Time to Mind, 2016)

Glover (2009) reported that there was a growing awareness that mental health has declined in all developed countries in the past few decades. This could be as a result of several factors including the increase in the screening of children and young people, the greater awareness of mental health and the increase in availability of medication to treat mental illness all resulting in a greater propensity to report mental illness. UNICEF UK (2013) also reported that the downgrading of youth policy and cuts to local government services are having a profound negative effect on children's well-being. Whilst, Report Card 11 (UNICEF, 2013), which identified five dimensions of children's lives, showed an improvement in children's experiences in Britain since 2007 it also showed we still lagged behind other rich countries and had the highest rates for alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy and young people 'not in education, employment or training '(NEET) and the lowest rates of young people studying in further education.

A study by National Philanthropy Capital (NPC) Charity showed that levels of happiness fall as young people move through adolescence. The study also showed

that out of 7000 young people surveyed over a four year period, girls' resilience showed an overall decline compared to boys who show an upward trend after age 14 (Finch et al., 2014). This is further supported in the Good Childhood Report 2015 which reported that girls demonstrate low scores on all 3 subjective well-being measures (current happiness, satisfaction and finding life worthwhile) compared to boys. The GirlGuiding Association suggest that girls face challenges today that they previously did not, such as the increases in technology and a 24 hour culture where we never switch off. It is factors such as these which are contributing to these issues surrounding resilience, well-being and mental health. This is echoed by projects such as the Everyday Sexism project and recent articles which suggest that today's technology obsessed world leads to no time or space to switch off. In addition, young people are increasingly exposed to sexualised imagery and readier access to pornography, with images and videos being shared more easily with peers. The gradual and cumulative effects of this sexism affects girls more than boys and this is impacting directly on mental health and well-being (Bates, 2014; Bennet, 2016; Kiss, 2015; Schlesinger, 2014).

These factors suggest that further research into resilience is increasingly more important. Indeed, resilience has been recognised as being a key part of government policy in spite of funding cuts:

"well-being will be the major focus of government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, in the way that economic prowess was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and military prowess was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

(Mulgan cited by Ecclestone, 2013, p.1).

The importance of resilience and mental health can also be seen in recent Education Policy. In the Government White Paper Educational Excellence Everywhere (2015), the recommendations to develop resilience are made across several areas.

These start with the importance of providing a curriculum which develops resilience through schemes such as the National Citizenship Service and through the development of the Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) to build character traits that prepare students for success and fulfilling careers. The document also

recognises that students need to be resilient to bounce back from failure and that resilience underpins academic success, happiness and well-being.

Good mental health and well-being are referenced as being important to success. The role of schools and teachers in promoting well-being and mental health is referenced alongside building resilience to combat radicalisation and hate crime.

These messages are also echoed in Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook which references aspects of learning resilience and whilst not always taught explicitly, believe it can be taught through other means. This focus is not new as in the 2007 Children's Plan there was an emphasis on the importance of building resilience (Glover, 2009)

These references to developing resilience as a facet of mental health and well-being and building this into the curriculum, whilst not a statutory requirement does emphasise the importance of developing resilience in all children and young people and not just those that are the most disadvantaged or vulnerable. Whilst these groups of children and young people are important, it is building resilience in all children that is of particular interest to schools and education especially when evidence shows that resilience could contribute to a range of factors including higher qualifications and skills (Public Health England, 2014).

There is much written about adversity in the context of children in care, youth offenders and students with mental health issues. However, these case studies often research 'extreme' behaviours and contexts rather than mainstream school settings, Prince Embury (2008) recognises this and suggests that to be acceptable to parents, students, and teachers in school settings, working on resiliency needs to be strength based and informative while at the same time not stigmatizing or "pathologizing" of groups or individuals.

Another factor that has been observed as common to many disadvantaged students is a lack of resilience in overcoming adversity. This adversity could present itself in a variety of forms:

- From the family home; poor access to study materials, poor environment for study, low parental expectation and aspiration
- From peers; risk taking behaviour, peer pressure



- From the student themselves; low self-efficacy, aspiration and expectation, low ability and gaps in knowledge.

### 2.7.3 Developing Resilience through Education

A lack of resilience can be seen in many ways in the classroom, from students giving up, engaging in poor or risk taking behaviour alongside declining effort levels, lack of perseverance and willingness to work through the issues and as a result, students do not achieve well. However, there is emerging evidence that schools have the potential to positively influence the development of young people and their biopsychosocial growth; the biological, psychological, and social factors affecting an individual. Ungar (2017) suggests that inadequate attention has been paid to how schools facilitate access to tools that develop resilience whilst also suggesting that schools are in key positions to build resilience among children and young people. This can be done through providing protective factors, decreasing risk factors, not just for the children and young people themselves but also for families and communities (Ungar et al., 2014, Public Health England, 2014). By paying attention to seven broad categories of resources identified by Ungar et al. (2007) (1) material resources; (2) supportive relationships; (3) a desirable personal identity; (4) experiences of power and control; (5) adherence to cultural traditions; (6) experiences of social justice; and (7) experiences of social cohesion with others, a more social ecological approach to increasing resilience can be developed.

If schools can develop academic resilience, then this could have the potential of leading to good and better results as well as successful students who will thrive beyond the school gates. Minnard, (2002) believes that the more resilience resources a student has then the better their chance for success. So, schools are in a good place to build and develop this resilience, not just to achieve better results but to equip students with skills for future success.

This more 'education' focussed resilience work has already begun to be developed through the UK charity 'Young Minds'. Their focus is on supporting schools to establish systems to build 'resilience approaches' that support students over time through a whole school approach which focuses on the following areas:

- Help pupils to understand what resilience is about and how they can apply it in their own lives
- Ensure that vulnerable pupils have at least one supportive adult they can turn to in the school community
- Help with the basics for those pupils who really need it
- Provide multiple opportunities for children who find problem-solving difficult to practice that skill
- Make sure your most vulnerable pupils have an activity they enjoy and help them to actually do this on a regular basis.
- Create safe spaces for pupils who wish to retreat from 'busy' school life
- Help pupils to map out a sense of future, developing hope and aspirations
- Helping pupils to cope – teaching self-soothing or management of feelings
- Support to help others such as through volunteering or peer mentoring

(Young Minds, 2015)

These areas of focus above are also prevalent in the framework of Adelman and Taylor (2008) as multiple protective factors; strong and caring relationships with adults, effective peer relationships, and supports for students' academic efficacy and developmental autonomy can lessen the barriers to learning that are conditions of risk and adversity. They are also mirrored in Newman's (2004) review of resilience research which evidence; strong social support networks, committed and supportive relationships with at least one adult within and outside the family, positive school experiences, self-belief, participation in extracurricular activities, ability to 'make a difference' to others and opportunities to develop coping strategies to challenges.

The ability to distinguish and measure how interventions target resilience specifically as opposed to more generic positive child development has been raised by the National Children's Charity (2007). Thus, measuring the effectiveness of interventions on resilience becomes more difficult.

Pianta & Walsh (1998), Windle and Salisbury (2010) and Hart & Heaver (2013) have reviewed a number of resilience based programmes in schools and all have been frustrated by the 'more research' needed approach when looking at and evaluating the success of resilience development interventions. Pianta concluded that:

‘there is scepticism about the widespread adoption of programs intended to produce resilience. Theory is immature and evidence is emerging only slowly’

(Pianta and Walsh, 1998, p. 408)

Since Pianta's research Hart & Heaver's starting point in looking for interventions that work and which could be easily replicated, led to conclusions being drawn that there is more research needed into what will work outside of large research funded projects that can actually be applied to real life contexts that make a difference to students in schools today. A more recent focus in resilience research is emerging as a direct result of the need to find solutions to intransigent problems like social inequality and large scale events. This research is testing integrated models across systems which aim to produce practical solutions for individuals, families and societies as a whole (Masten, 2018).

#### 2.7.4 Examples of Resilience Projects

##### 2.7.4.1 Academic Resilience Approach - *The Resilient Classroom Resource*

This Resilience Resource was created and developed to provide practical help for tutors and pastoral staff in schools. The resource has been developed in conjunction with school staff, students and is based on the Resilience Framework evidence base developed by Hart and Heaver (2013). The resource is practical and is designed for the whole school to develop a culture of resilience in the school and support students with everyday situations where developing resilience will be useful in helping them to cope with the challenges of school life. The focus is on developing academic resilience; students achieving good educational outcomes and being successful. It is a Whole School approach where universal actions that are available to all will benefit all but when the actions are targeted at disadvantaged students and the most vulnerable there is the potential to have the most benefit on those that need it the most (Public Health England, 2014). The approach is summarised in a framework which sits above a wealth of activities and resources that can be used in the classroom. It can be tailored to schools' needs and offers a bespoke approach. There is no cost to purchase this programme from the Authors and as such makes it an attractive intervention for schools as the only costs come from staffing that will already

be in place and replication of the free resources. This programme has no formal evaluation so measures of its success and impact are difficult to assess.

#### *2.7.4.2 The Resilience Doughnut*

The Resilience Doughnut is a model and framework for building resilience and promoting well-being in schools. It focuses on strength based solutions and offers a focused approach through workshops and programmes for students, staff and parents, training and development for staff and Accreditation for staff are all part of the programme. The framework has two sections; an internal section which focusses upon the internal characteristics of an individual and an external section which is, divided into seven sections which interact and support the internal. The external are environmental contexts where resilience can be ignored, recognised or developed. In each of the seven environmental contexts the potential exists to enhance positive beliefs within the individual, helping to develop resilience. This framework is suggestive of a more practical application in how to enhance resilience development (Worsley, 2010). Whole School use of the Resilience Doughnut has been evaluated in three Australian schools. Worsley's (2010) evaluation of the findings suggests that applying a whole school approach to interventions can be problematic not least because there can be issues with the willingness of staff. There are often underlying tensions between schools having to prioritise the teaching of well-being and focusing on attainment (Formby and Wolstenholme, 2012). Pastoral welfare is not always seen as a priority for teaching staff couple this with the high turnover of staff the sustainability of any project can be affected. Staff motivation can also be a problem if staff don't see the outcomes or share in the results. In Secondary Schools relationships with parents are not as strong as in Primary Schools, parental engagement is important in the success of intervention programmes. In the three schools the evaluation of the programme showed an increased benefit for those experiencing anxiety and difficulties in emotional and social contexts. Less significant were changes to students who were in the normal range of difficulties. Interventions for whole school groups showed positive experiences; the benefits of connecting with others as part of the programme is a positive factor. The evaluation did note that the effectiveness of the interventions would have been better measured with the use of a control group which would enable short term effects to be measured. This is something that I will include

in my own research to ensure the impact of the interventions can be measured effectively.

#### 2.7.4.3. Summary of resilience projects

The work being carried out on resilience in schools at present is much more closely linked to concerns around mental health and emotional and social development more so than on improving academic development and achievement. Not all students have mental health or emotional issues, often they are just struggling to make sense of the world as they move into and beyond adolescence. Pipher (1994) cites Simone de Beauvoir who said that when girls reach adolescence they realise that their power comes from consenting to become submissive, adored objects. She believed that the gap between girls' true selves and cultural prescriptions of what they should be creates enormous problems. Combine this with the pressures and challenges of life in modern Britain; the stress and pressure to do well at school, to measure up to the expectations from friends, family school and the media it is not surprising that 69% of girls aged 7-21 feeling like they are not good enough (GirlGuiding, 2016).

In a review of school based interventions to enhance resilience Ungar et al. (2014) demonstrated that in interventions where improved academic achievement was desired the focus was often on how the student could better engage with the school or vice versa to impact positively on academic achievement. Interestingly many programmes in the study focussed on building students' social capital in the different arenas of home and school by developing relationships with supportive adults in these places and with peers who behaved in socially acceptable ways. It also found that successful programmes were ones which interrupted patterns of behaviour that were likely to lead to academic failure and disengagement from school by changing a students' social ecology.

Both approaches have their merits, both demonstrate that by introducing intervention programmes students' achievements can be improved. My own experience of intervention programmes to close attainment gaps in a Comprehensive Secondary Academy has been mixed. The issue of 'the gap' and white working class underachievement is one of incredible importance. In years where attainment gaps have closed, still those students from lower socio-economic backgrounds did less well than students from families in higher socio economic groups both in terms of

attainment and progress. They are also less likely to remain in further education or go on to higher education.

Having spent several years working with predominantly female students in a mentoring capacity from all different backgrounds, the levels of intrinsic motivation, resilience, determination, attitudes, aspiration and self-belief of individuals is incredibly variable. There is also an increased pressure for girls both in and out of school which impacts upon female students' motivation, resilience and determination, their aspirations, attitudes, and attainment.

#### 2.7.5. Summary of existing knowledge

Whilst the concept of social class remains much more fluid it is still an influential force in the life chances of students. Although defining social classes may have become harder there are a group of students in Britain, the white working class disadvantaged for whom the attainment gap is growing ever wider and where social mobility is non-existent for many. The research into social class tells us that there are an increasing number of children living in poverty who are disadvantaged due to their situations and for white working class children attainment and future aspirations are limited due to a set of complex inter-related factors which affect their education. These factors are linked to familial access to the different forms of capital, family values, attitudes and experiences. The issue of the gender gap has also shown that there are a large number of low attaining girls who are still falling in education, couple this with the changes to girls' roles in society in the last twenty years and we begin to see the complex picture girls face in achieving success and overcoming the barriers.

The research into the evaluation of the PPG and interventions such as mentoring shows us that there are opportunities to remove or at least mitigate the barriers of social class and gender to academic attainment. The introduction of the Pupil Premium to target academic improvements has often resulted in remedial short term schemes that tackle the problem but not the cause. Lasting impacts are hard to define and although there has been a narrowing of attainment gaps in some places they still exist and the issue of the attainment gap is still a problem for educationalists and remains a focus for schools and teachers.

Providing interventions which do not directly target academic attainment but focus more on changing attitudes and motivation through mentoring is another initiative which has been adopted by many schools. Whilst there is evidence that mentoring can serve as a tool for improving educational outcomes, it is also limited by time and financial constraints. There is also limited evaluation of the successes of the differing schemes available. Some of those schemes are harder to evaluate than others, especially when the schemes are designed to affect intrinsic values such as attitudes, aspirations and motivation; the outcomes are not always measurable. However, in those schemes designed to improve educational outcomes the effects are easier to measure especially for short term gains e.g. success in exams but not as easy to evaluate the lasting benefits achieved.

Research which has evaluated the different strategies for improving attitudes and aspiration have provided a mixed picture depending on the nature of the study and participants. Parental influence was seen to be a factor in some studies as was social class and background. As the studies all involved different variables it is hard to reach a conclusion based on the evidence as to the most successful approach.

Studies into resilience show that the subjects are often students who face severe adversity, either from living in extreme, deprived neighbourhoods within inner cities or in neighbourhoods which have experienced a traumatic event. These studies look at the protective factors children and young people possess and how these may be developed. This kind of approach has led to a one dimensional view of resilience and the research is lacking for children who may not live in severely deprived risk adverse neighbourhoods but in more average towns and cities. The waves of resilience research show that the concept of resilience has changed over time and the definitions of resilience have changed. Firstly, from being a single one dimensional entity that is concerned with individual protective factors to the fourth wave of research where resilience is more multifaceted and involves the ability to possess adversity in the face of large scale global and societal threats. However, it is clear from resilience research that whilst information and knowledge are growing, the topic of resilience must remain current and at the forefront of research. This becomes increasingly more important when mental health is considered as a facet of resilience. The literature shows that resilience can act as a buffer against depression and mental health issues. With an increase in focus of mental health in the media, this has never

seemed as important as it does today. Even though the main body of current work has been around the resilience of students in adversity, there is a growing body of work that is more education focussed and looks at building resilience approaches to support students over time. The research shows that whole school approaches which focus on frameworks to promote resilience through a variety of mechanisms are becoming more common place.

It appears that although the pupil premium strategy is now in its seventh year, the gaps still exist for those students who are disadvantaged. Gaps exist for low attaining female students too; when the two characteristics of social economic status and gender are combined there is clearly a need to address the gaps that exist for these students. Looking at the research it is clear that resilience is intertwined with attitudes, beliefs and aspirations and if these can be tackled then educational outcomes can be improved. There are gaps in research in evaluating intervention programmes which are designed to grow resilience and develop these softer character traits, it is these gaps along with a need to improve outcomes for white, working class, female students which led me to formulate the following research questions in order to add to this body of knowledge.

## 2.8 Theoretical Framework

### 2.8.1 – *The Social Ecological Model (SEM)*

The Literature Review suggests that there are a number of causal relationships between the factors discussed. The interplay of intrinsic factors such as resilience, aspirations, and attitudes and the extrinsic factors of social class and gender all combine to impact upon the academic success and performance of female White British Working-Class students. Schools and interventions designed to tackle the problems of underachievement also play a role in this academic success. These causal relationships form the basis of this study's theoretical framework as seen in Figure 2.1.

The conceptual framework for this thesis is based upon the social ecological model (SEM) introduced by Urie Bronfenbrenner in the 1970s which focused on the construct of health and the major contributors affecting health for the individual (Kilanowski,



2017). The SEM has been developed more widely in different fields of research; to examine health prevention, violence prevention in communities and in a social work context. It is a theory-based framework for understanding the multifaceted and interactive effects of personal and environmental factors and “assume[s] not only that multiple levels of influence exist but also that these levels are interactive and reinforcing” (Golden & Earp, 2012, p.364).

There are a variety of interpretations of the levels when using a SEM which depend upon the context of the study. Some include 4 levels whilst some include 5, which is the inclusion of a Chronosystem which introduces a time context, global elements or the policy environment. SEM theory is used in this study to examine the wide-ranging factors and different complexities that operate at different levels and come together to impact upon student motivation, resilience, determination, academic achievements and aspiration. The SEM provides the conceptual framework to discuss how different factors can shape student resilience, motivation and determination.

Interpreting the SEM for this study (Figure 2.1) puts the individual at the centre of the SEM. The individual characteristics of student motivation, resilience, determination, academic achievements and aspiration are affected by the systems in which they exist. The microsystem is closest to the individual and is the one with which they have the most direct contact. This will include their family, their friends and their school. Positive interactions and experiences at this level will reap positive impacts upon the individual. This could include loving and caring relationships with parents that are supportive and foster development and growth whilst providing nurture, love and encouragement. This is true of relationships with friends and teachers, building relationships that are supportive, respectful and based on trust should have positive impacts on individuals.

The mesosystem includes the relationships and interactions between the individuals' different microsystems. These relationships and interactions exert influence on each other and can be both positive and negative. Parents' interactions with school would be part of this system; if these interactions were positive then this would exert positive influence on the child and their experience in school. This may also be negative if

parents did not interact with school and have no relationship or take no interest in their child's studies.

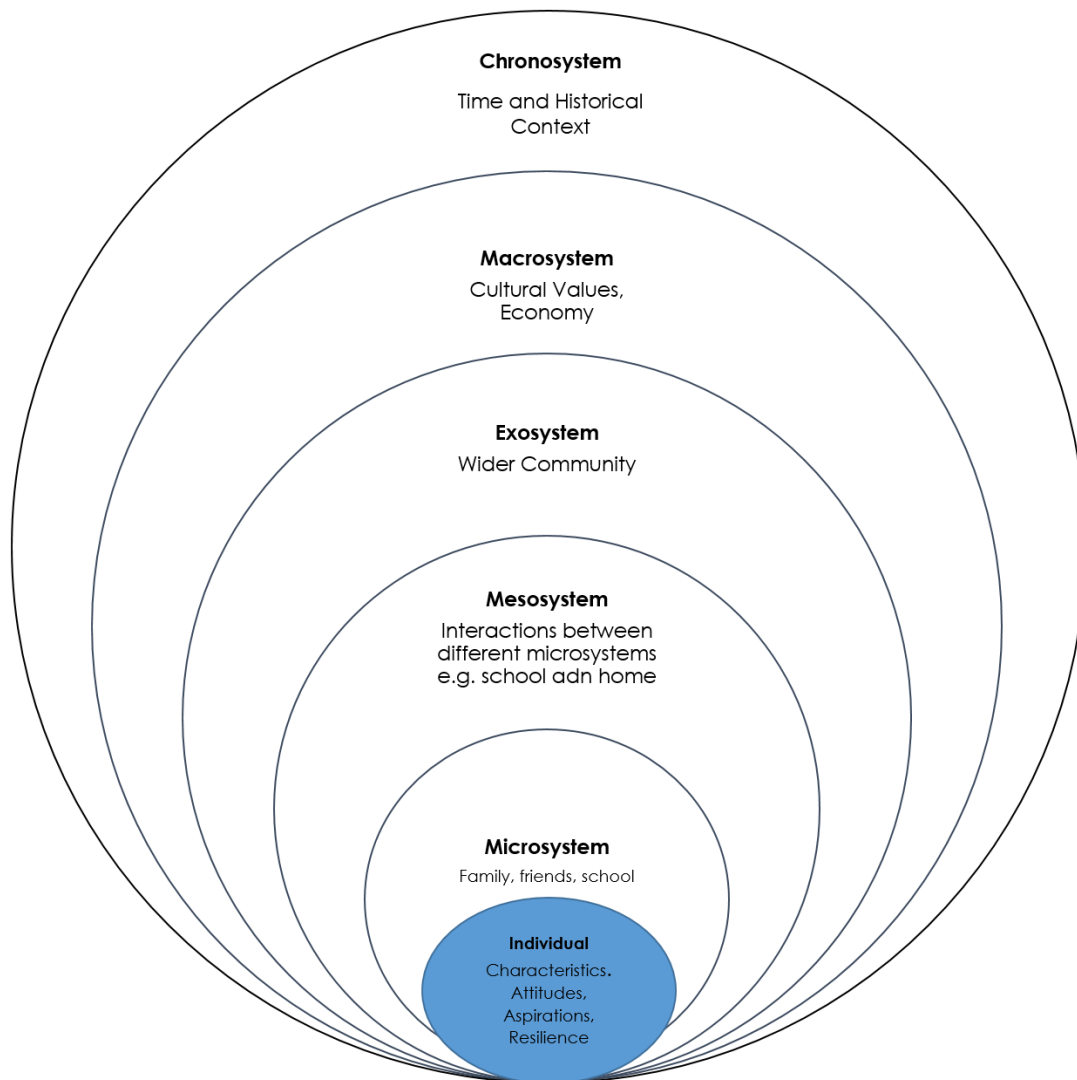
The Exosystem is the setting which does not involve the individual as an active participant. This level involves the spheres in which those closest to the individual operate within. Decisions taken in this setting will still affect an individual positively or negatively. E.g., this could be the parents' workplace and the decisions taken here or even the lack of workplace. If a parent loses their job and becomes unemployed then this will probably negatively impact upon a child. Other agencies in which members of the family are involved could be health, the local authority, housing where decisions are made will also impact indirectly on an individual.

The macrosystem is the economy and the cultural values in which an individual exists. In our current educational system, the prevailing message is one promoting a culture of performance; students achieving well at GCSE and closing the gap between those students who are disadvantaged compared to their non-disadvantaged peers. Societal views and opinions on gender and social class also sit at this level. The impact of social class should be considered at this level. If, for example a student is from a white working class background they may not have the networks and relationships with people who live and work beyond their immediate communities. As a result, their social and cultural capital is limited and their exposure to a wide range of experiences, jobs and opportunities and consequently their aspirations may be constrained.

The final level in the SEM is the Chronosystem, which is linked to the time setting of an individual's development and the historical context. The pervasive nature of technology is situated here; students in schools 20 years ago would have very different experiences in relation to the technology used in their lives and the technology available to them.

As a theoretical framework this is a useful model as it highlights how an individual is nested within all of these systems through interactions and relationships at all levels. All of which contribute to an individual's development, their characteristics and habitus.

**Figure 2.1 Social Ecological Model affecting the Individual in an Education Setting**



### 2.8.2 Key Concepts and Research Questions

The key concepts guiding this thesis drawn from the literature are:

- Barriers to academic success
- Resilience
- Mentoring

Barriers to achieving academic success can be wide ranging, this literature review has focused on the concept of disadvantage and gender and their intersectionality

as barriers to academic success. The literature review has shown how educational inequalities caused by lack of access to education because you may be a disadvantaged student can lead to reduced life chances. It also showed how the changes in the lives of girls in the last 20 years has impacted on educational attainment and progress. When the two are combined disadvantaged girls' educational outcomes are a cause for concern.

The concept of resilience as the ability to be able to face adversity and not allow external factors to negatively impact attitudes and motivation has been developed throughout the literature review. It is clear that the concept of resilience has developed over time, as have the projects and initiatives that have been designed to boost resilience in young people. The idea of resilience as a range of promotive and protective factors that can be developed in a variety of ways has shaped the ideas for the intervention programme.

Looking at mentoring as a concept to tackle the problems of educational underachievement has shown that the success of mentoring programmes are mixed. Difficulties such as engagement, the role of the mentor and financial constraints are all barriers to successful mentoring. However, mentoring as a concept where a more experienced and knowledgeable person, with a stake in the mentees success, guides them to achieve this success is an attractive one. As mentoring was already an embedded intervention in my school it was developed within the intervention programme for this study.

These key concepts have guided the development of the following research question:

Can a targeted mentoring intervention programme based on resilience research promote change in the educational aspirations, attitudes and beliefs of a group of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls?

In order to analyse the main question and explore the different elements two sub-questions will be considered:

- What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of disadvantaged students?
- Can these educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs be changed?

The first question deals with the intrinsic values and motivations of students, whilst the second question focusses on the intervention programme as a strategy to affect change.

### 2.8.3 Development of the Intervention Programme based on existing knowledge

The theoretical framework for this thesis follows a Social Ecological Model and shows how interactions, relationships and experiences at different levels within the model affect an individual's characteristics, attitudes, aspirations and resilience. All of which have a direct impact upon academic success and aspiration. The current research into resilience demonstrates that by developing and nurturing promotive and protective factors at different ecological levels students can grow their resilience.

Therefore, this thesis focuses on the development of an intervention programme which targets white, disadvantaged female students. The intervention programme is designed to have positive impacts on their resilience, attitudes, beliefs and aspirations by using techniques which research has shown builds and develops resilience.

The intervention programme developed for this study was based upon the research and reviews of Adelman and Taylor (2008), Newman (2004) and Young Minds (2015) who all identified a set of common protective factors that have been seen to promote resilience. These factors could be classified into three areas. The first area includes opportunities to build strong and positive relationships at a number of levels, with their peers, with adults and building relationships where they are supporting others through programmes such as volunteering and peer mentoring. The second area is focused on creating positive experiences giving students the chance to map out a sense of their future, creating opportunities to tackle problem-solving activities and ensuring they have the opportunity to do something they enjoy. The third area is linked to their sense of self and includes helping students to manage their feelings, providing safe spaces for them to escape the busy school day and ensuring they have their basic needs met.

In designing the intervention programme I considered the programmes our school runs already. The mentoring programme is well established and has run for the past five years. Students are chosen based on their academic data as well as the knowledge we already hold about the students which we have gained from working with them since they started school. Some students would expect to have a mentor who they would meet with weekly to discuss how well they were doing in each of their subjects. In their mentoring sessions students are set very clear small stepped targets to help them make progress towards their larger target grades. These targets could be wide ranging from completing revision notes on a specific area or committing to attend a revision session. The purpose of the mentoring is to hold the student to account to their small stepped targets and support them to do this as well as providing the students with an opportunity to share their feelings and any concerns they may have. In some cases, the teacher may act as an advocate for the student mediating between the student and other teachers to manage deadlines and workload.

The mentoring programme in our school provides two of the protective factors outlined in the research, the opportunity to build a strong caring relationship with a trusted adult and providing a safe space away from a busy school day where they can share concerns. Therefore, the mentoring programme was part of the intervention as it provided two of the protective factors but the meetings were carried out separately as standalone meetings and would continue even after the rest of the intervention programme ended up until the students sat their final exams as they were an intrinsic part of our school.

The other elements of the intervention programme were also chosen based on the research findings. Opportunities to manage their feelings and develop self-soothing techniques were seen in the research as important to support students in being able to cope with daily stresses. This element was fulfilled through the weekly yoga sessions which would provide an opportunity for the students to deal with stress and learn techniques to help them regulate themselves and their feelings.

The school has seen the positive benefits reaped for students of our existing peer mentoring scheme, where older students work with year 7s and over the years when

students work in the community with our feeder schools and at old people's homes. Therefore, including the opportunity to be part of a reading scheme with a local primary school as part of the intervention programme was important. It was also supported by research (Young Minds, 2015) which is clear that volunteering and supporting others introduces students to responsibilities and obligations, which make them, feel valued and part of the community as well as showing them they can achieve.

Introducing a weekly problem solving activity was part of the intervention programme, studies show that children who can problem solve well tend to do better academically (Young Minds, 2015). When students are taught to problem solve they build confidence and look to sort things out for themselves rather than giving up or avoiding an issue.

Having a careers interview for students to talk about their future career plans and aspirations and begin to map out their future was included in the programme. Students need to understand what opportunities are out there and how they can make them possible. For students who have a limited habitus they need exposure to what is available to them.

The Intervention programme was developed with these elements included based on the research and studies from the field of developing academic resilience predominantly from the work of the Young Minds Charity. They have an evidence base from their work in schools that show that these approaches work. The research recognises that unless interventions are targeted and focussed they are less likely to have an impact on the students who need it the most. Therefore, focusing on the disadvantaged students who seem to lack resilience by choosing interventions that look to change their experience in aspects of their school life can have success. Hart et al (2018), through their evaluations of pilot schools using the Academic Resilience Approach have shown that it has been a positive factor in the healthy development of young people and believe it be effective in supporting students face the difficult challenges they may face.

Whilst it was hoped that the intervention programme would bring positive benefits it should be recognised that there are criticisms and limitations. Intervention programmes cannot take the place of quality first teaching designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful. However, if students have barriers to accessing this teaching then the multiple resilience-building mechanisms built into the intervention programme should allow them to break down these barriers and access the teaching by being in school and engaging with the lessons. Some elements of the intervention programme take time out of formal curriculum time such as the reading scheme and problem-solving activities, which mean students, would have to catch up on any lost learning time. Whilst this is not an ideal scenario the benefits increased resilience may bring could outweigh the limitations suggested here.



### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether an intervention programme based upon research in the field of resilience could positively impact upon the attitudes, aspirations and academic success of a group of white working class, female students.

The research questions are focused upon the intrinsic values and motivations, of students, as well as those extrinsic factors such as exam results, family and community links which affect them.

These foci have been chosen as various interventions have been and are being used in Secondary Schools to close the attainment gap but few have been evaluated fully (Goodman & Gregg, 2010). Working in a school allows me to witness, fluctuations and differences in students' behaviour, attitudes and motivations, attainment and progress. Through this research I would like to be able to effect some positive change in outcomes for the students I work with as well as contribute to knowledge on interventions to close attainment gaps.

#### 3.2 Approach Taken

This research takes a pragmatic approach and is framed in an interpretivist paradigm as suggested by Cohen et al. (2011). The aim of the research is to affect change for girls by finding out what their barriers to achievement are; understanding that these barriers will be different for each individual. Using Guba's (1990) characterisation of research paradigms the ontological view is a constructivist one where there is no single truth or reality. Realities are constructed and this research will not predict the answers or outcomes, instead the results of the research will be as a result of interpreting understanding. My role in this research has to be considered as being the Headteacher I am part of the system that the girls are in, not outside it and therefore the girls have constructed their own realities in part in relation to me. The findings will be distinct and individual and not generalizable. It is important to be aware of the

girls' experiences and culture; their environment, values and ways of thinking as well as recognising that they see and experience 'their world' in this case 'our school' differently to me and their interpretation of 'their world and experiences' will be different to mine. Atkins and Wallace (2012) believe we cannot separate our values from our research and therefore it is important to recognise these values as influencing our research and the importance of being self-reflexive. Reflecting on these values and attitudes and considering how they might influence my own behaviour as well as the behaviour of the girls is important to acknowledge.

It is also an important consideration when considering the epistemological viewpoint which is interpretivist. This way of knowing centres on the way in which humans make sense of their reality and attach meaning to it. Understanding the girls' experiences is as important as explaining and interpreting it. Weber (1990) believed that meanings can be found by looking at the intentions and goals of the individual and this is an important consideration in this research which focusses upon aspirations, attitudes and learner identity. The girls' contexts; where they live, how they work, will all affect their behaviour towards school, their aspirations and self-belief and, therefore it is important as the researcher to understand this when interpreting the research. Complete objectivity and neutrality are impossible to achieve as I am integral to the research as their Headteacher.

It is important to be aware of the weaknesses in using the interpretivist paradigm, Cohen et al. (2011) cite that critics were quick to point out that certain positions in this viewpoint may have gone too far in abandoning scientific methodologies which have structure, checks and balances resulting in failure to arrive at an end point that promotes a theory or makes generalisations about behaviours. When working in an interpretivist paradigm it is important that the researcher proceeds in a well-structured and systematic way. Cohen et al. (2011) cite various studies which criticise qualitative methods such as interviews that by their very nature may lead to inaccuracies if they lack control. What the researcher may be seeing may not in fact be the truth but a perception of the researched when in fact the perception is wrong. This will be important to remember as my relationship with the girls has an added dimension, it is not just one of researcher and researched but consideration has to be given to power and control in the relationships.

### 3.3 Reflexivity

In taking an interpretivist approach, my own positionality is important to that being researched as my own context, background, gender and ethnicity will play a part in the way of seeing too. The rationale and interests for completing the research are important also (Thomas, 2009). These things must be made explicit as all of these considerations will impact upon the degree of subjectivity in the research. My biography and history as the researcher as well as the biography and history of the researched will undoubtedly affect the outcomes. The impact of this element of personal experience is an important consideration for the subjectivity of the research. As the girls' Headteacher it is important to recognise the implications of the relationship between me as the researcher and the girls as students in the school. In the studies of Neal (1995), she tried to present herself as objective due to the power struggles at play. However, this in itself was problematic as in presenting herself as objective the danger in this approach was to try and erase the power structures which shape behaviour and events around us, thus affecting the research outcomes. Therefore, in this research it is important not to impose my own perspective. It would be wrong to take an etic view; examining the girls' experiences, feelings and perceptions and uncovering the meaning the girls give to their experiences and aspirations from an outsider's viewpoint, taking an emic perspective is much more preferable to an interpretivist paradigm (Harris, 1976); as I am part of their culture and within the social setting; our school. This role of the 'insider researcher' and insider epistemology has been considered by many researchers. Asselin and Rose cited in Dwyer and Buckle (2009) stress the need to be acutely aware of biases and your place as the researcher in the whole process. Floyd and Linet (2010) found as insider researchers an 'enhanced sense of trust' (p. 2). I would hope that the girls would trust me and be honest in their responses as someone who holds a position of trust and responsibility within our school. I would hope that as they were familiar with the school's mentoring process they would see this as part of that programme and something that would benefit them and support them to achieve their goals. The issues these considerations raise will be considered further in ethical considerations.

### 3.4 Research Design and Data Collection

The methodological approach taken was a mixed methods one. Armitage (2007) argues that using a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach to practitioner based research is congruent when adopting a pragmatic paradigm. This is supported by the views of Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) who suggest that by using methods that are appropriate and use findings in a positive way then there is an instinctive appeal to a pragmatic approach. Combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research allowed me to collect data that assessed students' views that could be compared over the length of time of the research as well as collecting richer data to provide insights into students' motivations, aspirations and attitudes. Ungar and Liebenberg (2011) believe that a mixed methods approach when looking at resilience is preferable to using just a qualitative approach as it addresses concerns related to validity and generalisability.

The data for this thesis was collected from a number of sources using a range of approaches. Quantitative data was collected on the students throughout the research period in order to track changes in their academic performance as well as track changes in their effort levels.

The students would be familiar with seeing this data on their usual school reports as well as discussing this with their teachers and at parents' evenings. Quantitative data was also collected through the use of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure-28 (CYRM28) which would measure students' resilience pre and post interventions. I also conducted semi-structured interviews to explore the student's feelings around their own progress and achievements. This methodological triangulation was designed to improve validity and overcome any biases that may be inherent in one perspective. It allowed me as the researcher to approach the same problem but in different ways, looking at different aspects of both qualitative and quantitative data. Shannon-Baker (2015) suggests that by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches advantages and disadvantages each presents within the research can be complimentary. In this research, data collection was carried out in parallel looking at aspects of the data at the same time. At other times the approach was more sequential; looking at the quantitative data such as a student's report to assess progress and success and then using a qualitative method – semi structured interviews

to explore the student's feelings around their own progress and how they perceived this, gaining a richer data through an in depth exploration of their thoughts and perceptions. However, critics of a pragmatic, mixed methods approach would suggest that there is a difficulty in integrating the methods fully and that a lot of mixed methods research confines itself

“to a presentation of findings by juxtaposition, that is, putting the data derived through different methods alongside each other and discussing findings separately.”

(Feilzer, 2010 p. 9)

In order to combat this criticism, although the analysis in this thesis presents the findings separately there is an attempt to make linkages to the qualitative responses from the students in the interviews with their responses from the CYRM28 values both post and pre intervention.

The study was a longitudinal study with data collected over a period of two academic years for a group of sixteen Year 10 Pupil Premium students who began Year 9 in September 2014 and finished their GCSEs in July 2017. The approach taken was both a case study and an intervention study. The sample of students was chosen using the school's usual criteria for deciding on whether a student is allocated a mentor to support them with their studies; whether they are underachieving based on their current grades, their current effort grades and whether they were accessing any existing intervention programmes both in and out of school by external providers.

The study group of sixteen Year 10 girls aged between 14 and 15 were chosen from the entire cohort of seventy-five girls in a whole year group cohort of one hundred and thirty seven. Initially, thirty-five students were highlighted as being potential candidates for the group. Year 10 was chosen as the students are at a point when interventions can make a large difference to their outcomes. The groupings were chosen from the January 2016 data collection based on their effort grades for classwork, behaviour and homework and students' current GCSE grades across all their subjects. The key determining factor for choosing the students were their current grades for GCSE. Those students whose current grades were furthest from their target

grades (which are based on their KS2 test scores) and who also demonstrate low effort levels (as measured by their teachers) were chosen.

In my school, data collections inform the intervention process. In year 10 and 11 students have access to a range of interventions based on the information from the data collection. Some students are given a mentor to guide them through their studies, other students will receive targeted interventions such as maths, english or subject booster classes or additional small group sessions in particular subjects. I always mentor female students so choosing a group of girls for this study group was typical. This process has been happening in the school now for the past five years and some students would expect to have me as a mentor, this is a regular process. The final sixteen students were chosen from the initial thirty-five following further data analysis alongside a series of professional discussions with their teachers and tutors. These conversations focused on a number of factors such as things, which were measurable like student attendance, current effort levels and attainment and progress grades. We also considered things which were harder to measure but were based on professional judgment and knowledge of each student which has been built up over a number of years of working with them, such as our perception of their potential 'buy in' to the intervention group and whether they would benefit from an holistic set of interventions. Some students benefit from a targeted intervention, which just focusses in on a particular subject like Maths or English, or homework intervention rather than an intervention programme like this one in the study, which has less of a subject focus. The girls chosen were students, who over the time they had been at our school had often shown a lack of confidence and determination to succeed. They gave up easily especially in their response to subjects like Maths or Science. We also saw that they struggled to sustain a commitment to events like the school show where they would initially be involved then drop out half way through. At a superficial level they were supported by their families, however this support could be misguided. For example, parents would condone absence or support excuses for missed homework. The two factors common to all the girls were underachievement in their GCSEs, based on the distance they had to travel to meet their target grades and effort levels were not consistently high. For some of the students, low attendance in school was an issue, but this was not common to the entire group.

The finalised study group consisted of sixteen Year 10 students, which were split into 2 groups. The first group of students were the group who experienced the interventions first, the second group acted as a control group to compare the impact of intervention versus no intervention. The second group experienced the interventions in the first part of the Autumn term of 2016 once the first group had experienced the interventions.

#### *3.4.1. Research Design – Intervention Case study*

This longitudinal study is a case study. It provides a unique example of a real situation, observing effects in real life contexts and reporting the complex dynamic interactions that exist in situations (Cohen et al., 2001). Merriam (1998) also suggests that this is a particularistic approach which can yield rich, thick description of the students in the study whilst also being heuristic, illuminating the reader's understanding of the students in the study. There are many classifications of case studies by a number of researchers. Sturman (1999) and Stenhouse (1985) identify several different types and along with Atkins and Wallace (2002) note the limitations in using the case study approach particularly the inability of a case study to be used to generalise. Therefore, it is important to understand this and know that in such a small scale case study the results cannot be generalizable based on a small group of students. It is also important to understand that as the research is only focussed on a small aspect of a student's life there may well be other factors at play affecting resilience and academic success that can neither be impacted upon or measured within such a small scale study.

#### *3.4.2 Data Collection - Semi – structured interviews with students*

Whilst it is recognised that using a highly structured approach to interviewing, using the same words and questions for each respondent goes some way to controlling for reliability (Cohen et al., 2000) using a semi structured interview provided the 'best of both worlds' (Thomas, 2009 p. 64). It allowed simple questions to be used as an aid to keeping the interview on track whilst allowing the respondent to answer easily. The structure provides a framework where the respondent can answer freely and answers could then be explored if necessary with further questioning that were tailored to their response. The follow up questions would depend on the understanding developed between me as the researcher and the students as the respondents. Walker (1985) points out that it is important to be aware of the respondents' interpretations of the

researcher's interests, attitudes, values and reactions to their answers. This is an important consideration in this study as the students could answer the questions by responding and saying things they think I wanted to hear. The significance of the power relationships at play here within the interview setting needed careful consideration. It is usual for the students to have me as the Headteacher as their mentor but it is important to recognise the potential impact on responses and actions that this could elicit in the students. The aim of the semi structured interviews was to gain rich descriptions and valuable data to give an insight into the attitudes, aspirations and intrinsic motivational factors of each student. The discussions that take place are a usual part of the mentor-mentee relationship and it was important that these were part of the research.

Each of the students was interviewed twice throughout the project. Once in June 2016 at the start of the intervention phase, and then again in September 2016 at the start of Year 11 after they had received their Year 10 GCSE results, where most sat two examinations in Science and Media and after the interventions had taken place. The interviews took place with me in my office and lasted between 20 and 45 minutes depending on each individual's answers. The first set of interviews covered their feelings surrounding their mock examinations and their feelings of preparedness for these examinations as well as their strengths and weaknesses in school. I was also able to reference some of the data from the careers interviews notably their career aspirations for the future and discuss this further. In the second set of interviews I discussed their summer exam results, well as how they felt about the intervention sessions; problem solving, reading buddies and yoga.

The interview schedule was developed from Kvale's (1996) seven stages of interview investigation. The schedule was drawn up to ensure that there was a basic framework of questions to act as starting points (Appendix 1). These would allow each interview to follow a set structure to ensure all the students were asked the same core questions. The questions were designed to gain a deeper understanding and insight into how the students felt as well as their thoughts about a number of things, including; their most recent mock exam performance, their sense of preparedness for the mock exams and how much work they had done to feel prepared, feedback they had received from teachers on their exam performance, their parents' views on their



results and their future careers aspirations. In the second set of interviews the questions were more focussed on their thoughts and feelings about the interventions.

The interview questions were formulated so there was a core set of questions that each student answered which would enable comparability of responses. As the interviews were semi structured this also allowed for follow up questions to emerge from each student's responses. This could increase the relevance of the content discussed as the follow on questions could be structured according to the individual students and the issues they discussed. The core questions were a mixture of direct e.g. which results were you pleased with and why which would elicit a specific response about specific subjects and indirect questions e.g. how do you feel your mock exams went? Which may produce more frank and open responses (Cohen et al., 2000).

Each interview was recorded and then transcribed. As I was the interviewer as well as the transcriber, there was less chance in losing the meaning of the original interview. However, it is worth noting Kvale's (1996) view that meaning is lost through the very nature of transcription; the data has already begun to be interpreted during transcription.

Analysis of the transcription involved the process of going through the text as well as comparing the different transcriptions several times to provide me with a starting point to break down the text for it to be categorised as well as, at the same time revealing the meaning of the data and contextualising what has been said (Flick, 2009). It is heartening to note that Punch (2009) and Cohen and Manion (2011) stress there is no single right way to 'do' qualitative data analysis, other than to point out that analysis starts from the minute data is seen and the researcher begins working with it. This links back to the earlier points made around transcription by Kvale (1996). Indeed, Atkins and Wallace (2012) go one stage further and believe that the interpretation begins when questions are set and formulated. Therefore, it could be argued that analysis is integral to the whole research process.

### *3.4.3 Data Collection - Performance Data and reports*

Data is collected on the students three times per year in the school. This data is produced by the students' teachers. The data collected includes effort data and attainment data. Each student is given an effort grade using the following criteria:

- A- Excellent Work
- B- Good Work
- C- Requires Improvement
- D- Poor Work

Effort grades are given in three different areas – homework, classwork and behaviour for learning. They are also given a current grade which corresponds to the 1-9 GCSE scale. The current grade is defined as the grade a student is working at based on professional judgement. Students also have 'potential grades' which are aspirational grades calculated from prior attainment data achieved at Key Stage 2, at the end of Year 6 in Primary School. Using the data enabled me to track each student at three points in the year to assess their achievement, attainment and effort levels, to ensure they were closing the gaps between their current and potential grades. This data would be crosschecked against the progress of the whole cohort. I was also able to use the final GCSE results for the students at the end of Year 11 in August 2017. This would enable me to see how well they had achieved in line with their targets.

### *3.4.4 Data Collection - Measuring Resilience*

In order to measure the resilience of each individual student, a measurement tool was needed to assess the measures of resilience both before and after the intervention programme. The results from the tool would then be analysed alongside the students' responses in the questionnaires. The Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) was chosen as the tool for measurement for several reasons. Firstly, the tool has been developed across 14 different communities around the world. It has been constantly reworked from its original design using a qualitative refining process and reflects an understanding of common and unique aspects of resilience across cultures. The development of the tool has considered the shift in focus from psychopathology to the protective factors that are associated with positive development (Ungar and Liebenberg, 2011). It also considers the capacity of the individual to both navigate their way through the resources needed to develop resilience as well as negotiate for

such resources to be provided in the most suitable way possible. By looking at resilience in this way the qualities of the individual and the individual's environment both play a part in the positive development of the individual.

The CYRM was chosen as it included in its design, consideration of the strengths needed by individuals in situations of stress not just the general strengths that are relevant to all young people regardless of stress and the adversity they face. As the CYRM is a standardized measure its development followed an intensive qualitative and quantitative research process which means it is designed for use across cultures. In the CYRM the model considers resilience to be 'doing well despite adversity', this 'doing well' is categorised as staying in school, avoiding the use of illegal drugs, maintaining attachment to their caregivers, avoiding early sexual activity and preparing for adult responsibilities. (Ungar and Leibenberg, 2011).

#### 3.4.5 Data Collection - Implementation of the CYRM

I decided to use the CYRM28 Youth measure rather than the CYRM12. The CYRM12 is a reduced resilience measure consisting of 12 items. The decision to use the CYRM28 was because this was the initial measure used and I hoped it would provide a more inclusive understanding of the processes of resilience for the students in my school. The CYRM28 has 28 questions for each student to answer using a five point Likert scale. (Appendix 2). The Resilience Research Centre advised on the following process outlined in Table 3 for conducting the CYRM, this was because of the cross cultural nature of the measure. These processes would help ensure that the measure remained contextually relevant to our school community.

**Table 3.1 - The Implementation Process**

Component	Task
1	Establish a community advisory committee
2	Prepare the CYRM for local use:  Step 1: Conduct focus group interviews  Step 2: Select site-specific questions for Section B of the CYRM  Step 3: Decide whether or not the CYRM-PMK will also be used

	<p>Step 4: Select the appropriate version of the measure for Section C</p> <p>Step 5: Finalize language of the CYRM (and CYRM-PMK if applicable)</p>
3	Administer the CYRM

(Ungar, 2011 p.5)

The advice to hold meetings with select members of the community is given to provide an input that is contextually relevant into the research implementation. Community members could also comment on findings and help ensure local context is given to interpretations. As I am part of this community, understand the cultural context and take part in regular meetings about the students with a variety of stakeholders including parents and outside agencies as well as colleagues who are regularly teaching and supporting the students. I decided not to set up additional meetings before the questionnaires were administered. I also decided not to add any additional questions into section B as I was going to conduct additional semi structured interviews with students. The CYRM- PMK is a 28 question version used to obtain data from a Person Most Knowledgeable (PMK), a parent, caregiver etc. that would allow you to compare the data collected from the students with the information from the PMK which may aid cross referencing or add new dimensions. I decided not to use the PMK as in all cases the PMK would be the parents/step parents. In all cases I have an existing relationship with these people and this may well affect the outcomes of the research, especially when considering hierarchical relationships. This will be discussed more in the ethical considerations section.

Section C is the main set of questions. I chose the five-point response Likert scale (Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Quite a bit, A lot) as this would give me a more detailed understanding of the resources available to the students. There was no need to change the language of the CYRM for our students as it was culturally appropriate and they would be able to make sense of this. I chose the school's FSSW (Family School Support Worker) to administer the Measure as all the students know her and I decided if they were unsure about an answer or needed to check understanding they may feel more comfortable asking her rather than me as although she is an adult figure she is not a teacher and provides support to the students for non-academic

issues (Appendix 3). I decided that she should administer the CYRM individually rather than in groups to minimise peer pressure when answering.

### 3.5 Methods of Data Analysis

#### 3.5.1 Analysis of the interviews

Qualitative data analysis is somewhat different to the analysis of quantitative data in that qualitative data is interpreted from different perspectives through constant comparisons being made (Thomas, 2011) at every stage of analysis. This methodological approach can potentially give different meanings to the data collected and therefore the outcomes and conclusions which emerge from analysis. Unlike quantitative data analysis, which is often well known and transparent, qualitative data analysis cannot be reproduced in exactly the same way and thus a second analyser may elicit different meaning from the data and draw different outcomes and conclusions (Punch, 2009). This constant comparative technique provides the starting point for all text analysis. The process of going through text over and over again as well as comparing different pieces of data provides a starting point for the researcher breaking down the text to allow it to be categorized as well as, at the same time revealing the meaning of the data and contextualising what has been said (Flick, 2009). It is heartening to note that Punch (2009) and Cohen and Manion (2011) stress there is no single right way to 'do' qualitative data analysis, other than to point out that analysis starts from the minute data is seen and the researcher begins working with it. Indeed, Atkins and Wallace (2012) believe that the interpretation begins when questions are set and formulated. Therefore, analysis is integral to the whole qualitative process. After reading through the students' transcripts several times to ascertain a big picture from what the girls were saying I wanted to reduce the data without losing the significance of the information (Punch, 2009). The way in which I began was to firstly draw out significant points made by each of the students. It is necessary to consider here the issue of significance and the importance of values in research (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). As the researcher my own values system and pre conceived ideas around their attitudes, aspirations and intrinsic motivational factors would play a part.

The next stage was to reduce the data without losing the significance of the information (Punch, 2009). Cohen and Manion (2011) termed this:

'respecting the quality of the data'

(2011, p. 559).

The way in which I began was to firstly draw out significant points made by each of the students (Appendix 4). It is necessary to consider here the issue of significance and the importance of values in research (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). As the Analyst my own values system and pre conceived ideas around each of the students, the education system, the case study setting and my own experiences would affect the significant ideas which I chose to record.

From this list I then focused in on five areas and each was assigned a simplistic open code. (Cohen & Manion, 2011, Flick, 2009) (Appendix 5). This first stage of coding has been given many terms depending on the researcher. Cohen and Manion (2011) call it descriptive coding, Glaser and Strauss 'in vivo' codes and Richards topic coding (cited in Punch, 2009 p176). These codes according to Thomas (2011) provide the essential building blocks to structure further analysis. It is worthwhile remembering that according to Punch (2009) 'qualitative data analysis cannot be reduced to rules' (p180) and therefore there is no one correct way of carrying out the analysis of the data or in the choosing of themes.

At this point I decided to refine the codes further and increase the codes to 7 by splitting the students' views on interventions into the different types of interventions as their views differed depending on the intervention type. A reason for this refinement was to concentrate the study and focus the analysis on the three specific areas of the intervention programme so I was able to analyse the success of each strand.

I then grouped together several of these open codes into themes after looking for commonalities amongst the ideas. I then categorised these and gave these axial codes (Cohen & Manion, 2011). I then went back through each interview and used the axial codes to label pieces of data in order to be able to compare similarities and patterns in the interviews (Appendix 6).

All of the students' interview transcripts have every code evident to a more or lesser degree. Future aspirations and careers were referenced the most as often the students built on their careers interviews. Not all of the students talked about the influence of family or referenced views on all of the interventions, sometimes their answers were focused on the intervention they enjoyed the most and appeared to gain the most from as identified by their answers.

### 3.5.2. *Analysis of the CYRM28*

When analysing the CYRM28 there are three sub scales identified which reflect the three major categories of resilience: individual capacities/resources, relationships with primary caregivers and contextual factors that facilitate a sense of belonging. This was confirmed by Confirmatory Factor Analysis on data gathered across three international sites (Ungar, 2011). Each of the questions within the CYRM28 would provide a link to each of the different subscales. These three sub scales can then be broken down further into sub clusters to indicate each of the constructs' major categories. The first subscale reflects an individual factor that includes the sub - clusters of personal skills, peer support and social skills. The second subscale deals with care giving; this gives a greater insight into physical caregiving and psychological caregiving. The third subscale comprises contextual components that facilitate a sense of belonging in young people. This sub scale is broken into the sub clusters relating to spirituality, culture and education components. Once all the questions have been answered, each of the answers which relate to the different sub scales and sub clusters can be totalled to give an overall CYRM28 score and a score for each of the sub scales and sub clusters. Using Excel to capture all this data also allowed me to calculate the mean for the answers in each sub scale and sub cluster so this could also be compared with the sample.

In order to score each sub scale all that was needed was to sum the total score and the responses to the relevant questions. The higher the score the more resilience components are present in the lives of the students. Once the data was collated and scored I could compare my data with normative data provided by the Resilience Research Centre for the total measure, the sub scales and the sub clusters of questions. My data could be compared with data for three groups of youth; those with complex high needs, a comparison sample of low risk youth and both groups combined. I decided that comparison to the low risk youth sample was the most appropriate for this group of students as they had not faced or were facing high levels of adversity in their lives which compared well with the background from the low risk group sample (Ungar, 2011).



### *3.5.3 Analysis of the Performance Data and reports*

At each data collection point I was able to analyse the students' current GCSE grades and their effort grades. I analysed this data in relation to their target grades and looked at the gap between the two measures. The students' reports also contained their attendance data for the year to date. I was able to analyse this data for the Summer term in year 10 – June 2016, again in Year 11 in September 2016 when they had sat actual GCSE exams in Science and Media and then again in July 2017 when they had sat all of their GCSE exams. I did this to see how much progress the students were making in relation to their targets and to check whether they were on track and ultimately in the analysis of the final grades to see if the students had achieved their potential. The notion of students achieving their potential and meeting target grades is an important topic in our current educational climate. There is much criticism of the current system in schools where the relatively recent introduction of a new Progress accountability measure - the Progress 8 measure uses KS2 SATS scores as a baseline to measure how much children improve at secondary level. The results at KS2 are not only used to generate a whole school progress 8 measure they are also used to set students' personal GCSE targets. The KS2 SAT tests are taken in English and Maths, these results which are a measure of literacy and numeracy levels are then used as the measure to set targets in all subjects at GCSE for students. This means that targets for subjects which are more practical in nature e.g. PE, Art are being set using measures which have tested a different skill set. Everyone in the state sector is working with these measures and the Progress 8 measure allows the Government to see how well secondary schools are doing. However, it has been reported that for years, secondary schools have complained they often find their pupils' primary school test scores rather high and there is a suggestion that they may have been artificially inflated by coaching and cramming. (Abrams, 2017). There is a scepticism around the validity of some of the KS2 results which if not accurate mean that students end up with inflated target grades for GCSE which are difficult to meet.

Research by Coldwell and Willis (2017) showed that because primary and secondary schools have competing interests in regard to the KS2 tests, coupled with the accountability regime in the English education system mistrust has been created on both sides. In their research 18 of the 20 Secondary Schools retested the Year 7

students on entry in order to gain a reliable assessment of student's abilities. This gave them a more accurate picture which they said enabled them to address student need even though there is no recourse to change the GCSE targets which the SATs are based upon. In my school our Year 7 students sit a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) on entry to the school, in some cases as with the schools in the Coldwell and Willis study there is some correlation between the CAT results and the SAT result for students in the middle ability range but there is always a cluster of students whose SATs show them to be above average and their CAT contradicts the result.

### 3.6 Organisation of the Results.

The different methods provided both quantitative and qualitative data. The CYRM28 provided me with a great deal of quantitative data pre and post the intervention programme. I analysed each students' data first and then compared their results to the low risk youth sample and then the study group as a whole. I carried out the same analysis pre and post intervention to look for comparisons in the data as well as looking for trends in the total scores, the different sub scales and sub clusters of the scores across the group. I also looked at the correlations between the sub scales to test the significance of some of the patterns and relationships the data was suggesting.

I used the students' performance data alongside the analysis of the CYRM28 data to explore the potential impact of the interventions on each student's resilience scores and as a result their success at each of the data collection points.

Interview discussion was organised by the themes identified from the analysis; school and exam performance, confidence, future aspirations, parental influence, views on interventions –yoga, views on interventions – primary school reading and views on problem solving sessions. Where appropriate I linked this to the discussion to patterns seen in the CYRM28 scores for the students.

### 3.7 Ethical Considerations and Informed Consent

There are potential limitations and considerations, which should be noted, when carrying out an intervention study especially as the research space is my own school. As a practitioner researcher, an insider who has insider knowledge, I have knowledge

of both the institution and the systems in which the research is taking place and also knowledge of the students as subjects of the research. Costley and Gibbs (2006) suggest that the ethical position of insider researchers is different to that of the researcher who can leave the context of the research space. Being able to leave the research space creates distance between the researcher and the research setting. It allows the researchers to detach themselves emotionally from the research. As an insider researcher with insider knowledge I need to consider my position within the school community as the research space and the relationships that I have within this space. In order to ensure personal and moral relations are safeguarded I need to consider the ethics of care and recognise the moral interdependence between me and the students. The knowledge I hold of both the school and the subjects and my role as Headteacher means I have an investment in the students and the school doing well. Noddings (1995) places importance on the ethic of care and states that decisions about research must be made through caring interactions with the subjects. Rossman and Rallis (2010) also suggest that this ethic of care is enacted when the researcher reflects whilst researching, considering the impact of the research all the way through the process. This intervention study was designed to ultimately improve the outcomes of students academically and personally. I recognise that the improvement of academic outcomes not only benefits the students but also the school as a whole. The current political and educational context puts pressure on schools through accountability measures such as Ofsted and publication of exams results in League Tables. Therefore, if students do well the whole school does well. Costley and Gibbs (2006) recognise that often in insider research, the research focus has been borne out of the need to improve outcomes and questions whether the research is morally and ethically appropriate. However, in this study even though a successful intervention programme would deliver improved results that would benefit the school at the forefront of the work is the philosophy of improving outcomes for students and thus improving their life chances. In this way, I believe that the research aligns with Stringers (1999) view that this research has sought to be non-exploitative, develop, and facilitate better relationships between students and staff by giving them the tools to be more resilient and access learning and thus improve their life chances.

The relationship between researcher and the subjects is also of importance and here the relationship between me, as the Headteacher and the students needs to be considered. Punch (2013) argues that in feminist research there should be a 'non-

hierarchical research relationship' (Punch, 2013 p.148). This would be an ideal situation as the interviewer and respondent would become co-equals. However, my own positionality as the Headteacher of the school must be considered as it may affect the outcomes. A strength of my position could be considered to be my 'insider knowledge and understanding' (Punch, 2013 p. 44) as I understand the context and situation of the school, this could add depth to the analysis and interpretation of the responses. The students know who I am and so there is a relationship already established which can be built upon in the mentoring process. As already previously explained the Senior Leadership Team mentoring programme is well established in the school and the students would expect to have me or another senior member of staff as a mentor. Prior knowledge and experience of the students will have an impact on the outcomes as we all possess pre conceived ideas which are influenced by our experiences. Trying to ensure the interviews are objective is a difficult task. Shah (2004) suggests that interviews are a two-way process where the,

'subjectivities of the research participants influence data collection and the process of 'making meaning''

(2004, p.552).

This point is also supported by Neal (2004) who stated that interviews as a methodological tool cannot be objective. Neal suggested in her studies that she tried to present herself as objective due to the power struggles at play. However, this in itself is problematic as in presenting herself as objective, the danger in this approach is to try and erase the power structures which shape behaviour and events around us. Thus, affecting the research outcomes. It would not be possible to erase the power structures at play in the Headteacher – student, Mentor – mentee relationships so it is very important to be aware of these issues when making ethical considerations in this study due to the nature of the relationships that already exist.

Acknowledgement of the 'Hawthorne effect' is also important here, the idea that

"there is a change in the subject's normal behaviour, attributed to the knowledge that their behaviour is being watched or studied".

needs to be considered. This issue brings a complexity to this study as the very point of the school's mentor and intervention programme is to effect positive change in the student's behaviour and learning habits. The fact that students are being mentored closely should bring about positive change. However, what needs to be considered is whether it is the intervention programme itself that is effecting change or the mentor programme which would translate as the 'being watched or studied'. When this element is coupled with the fact that the research is located in one institution with one set of students it suggests that the research will not be generalizable as there are a unique set of factors at play in this research.

In order to ensure that informed consent was at the forefront of the work, I sought Governor Approval for the project as well as approval from the parents of the students and the students themselves (Appendix 7). The information sheets which outlined the whole process ensured the girls and their parents knew that they could cease being part of the study at any time and at any point in the study as outlined in the BERA guidelines (2018) as well as having contact details of my supervisor and the University (Appendix 8). This was important if they wanted to withdraw and did not want to discuss this with me. I took the time to explain the research to the students; why I was doing it, what it involved and how I would do it. It was also important to ensure the girls and parents were clear even if they chose not to be part of the study they would still receive a mentor as they usually would if they were identified through the school data tracking systems as needing support and interventions. In conjunction with this process, I gained ethical approval from the University of Reading (Appendix 9).

In order to ensure confidentiality, the students were all given pseudonyms to protect their identity, the school name was changed and exact location not given to make precise identification difficult.

### 3.8 Potential problems, limitations and validity

This thesis has applied a pragmatic, mixed methods approach to action research through using a case study school. This is a result of the desire to use a chosen methodological design and data collection instruments that are fit for purpose enabling me to gather the appropriate, relevant information in order to investigate an issue, further understand this issue and attempt to solve a problem and improve outcomes for students. This approach is supported by Armitage who believes that:

“[being able to] gather the most relevant data and information must take precedence in the quest to establish the reality of real life situations, and whilst many will argue that the mixing of such dichotomous positions is untenable the question has to be asked: Why cannot the human consciousness deal with multiple paradigms within the same study?”

(2007, p. 8)

Whilst I believe that the chosen approach is best suited it is important to recognise the limitations that this approach presents as well as the need to ensure validity.

Validity stems more from the appropriateness, thoroughness and effectiveness with which the differing methods have been applied. It is important to consider the different aspects of validity as suggested by Cohen et al. (2000), dealing with catalytic validity when we hope that research will lead to action. Having this opportunity to complete research that has a meaningful and lasting impact upon the students in my own school where the outcomes can positively impact upon student's lives has been a key driving factor. However, this key driver is also my biggest concern as I do not want the desire to affect change to become so big that it overshadows the research taking place. Using a mixed methods approach will give both numerical and rich data, the analysis of this data may be more complex as sense is made of the large body of data collected. Remaining detached from the research is also impossible so acknowledging and accounting for bias and interest will be important.

There are obviously practical constraints as well as ethical constraints associated with carrying out research in my own institution. Whilst the financial constraints as outlined by Gorard and Taylor (2004) were not necessarily an issue, as a proportion of my time in school is already given over to mentoring. It was necessary to just shift the focus and implement the new intervention programme as well as recording my interviews

with the students, something I would not usually do with my usual mentor meetings. However, this aspect of the research does give it ecological validity in that the mentoring process and interventions have taken place every year and it could be argued that the students expect mentor meetings to be set up and take place.

When considering both construct and content validity the choice of semi structured interviews and the use of the CYRM28 to gather data would ensure that qualitative and quantitative data on resilience was collected. Using both methods means there was comprehensive coverage and the data collected could be triangulated to ensure there is a richness of data to explain factors which affect. The concepts and meanings for the focus of this thesis; intrinsic factors affecting the motivations of white British working class females were established through a large literature review. The elements which emerged; resilience, social class, gender and motivation were fully explored and given meaning. However, it could be argued that construct validity was not fully tested as the participants themselves were not asked explicitly about some of the concepts. For example, the students took the CYRM28 before and after the intervention programme which measured their resilience and they were asked about the interventions and whether they enjoyed them they were not asked explicitly whether they felt that the interventions had impacted upon their resilience.

Another limitation is the work surrounding the control group. The comparison with the control group was made on the basis of the CYRM28 results only. The control group did not have semi-structured interviews. This was because although the interviews would be gathering information it was decided that they could also be seen as part of the mentoring process. If the girls had a mentor, part of this process would be to begin conversations around learning behaviours and this could impact upon their CYRM28 scores if they thought the mentoring process had begun. The questions in the interviews were based upon the interventions within the programme including the careers interviews with the Careers advisor. Therefore, the analysis of the control group was only based on the quantitative data harvested from the CYRM28 results carried out at the same times as the intervention group.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Background

The main focus of the study was to investigate whether an intervention programme based upon research in the field of resilience could affect change in female students primarily by impacting upon educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs and hopefully encourage retention into Sixth form or College post Year 11. The intervention programme lasted for 6 weeks; as part of the programme, the students took part in weekly visits to a primary school to support younger pupils reading, attended a careers interview to discuss their future plans, attended weekly sessions which were based on problem solving exercises, participated in a weekly yoga session to explore self-soothing techniques and had a weekly mentor meeting with me to set short-term targets in different subjects. The intervention programme sits within an SEM theoretical framework and was designed to develop both promotive and protective factors that contribute to resilience. These factors can be influenced through the interactions and relationships at all levels within the nested systems of which an individual sits. The programme was designed to support these different elements that contribute to feelings of resilience; individual capacities/resources, relationships with primary caregivers and contextual factors that facilitate a sense of belonging. (Ungar, 2011)

Each student took the Child and Youth Resilience Measure CYRM28 before and after the interventions took place. The CYRM28 questionnaire was used to measure resilience because it was a tool developed across a number of global cultures and reflects an understanding of the common and unique aspects of resilience across these cultures. It was also easy to administer and complete and the results were straightforward to process and analyse. The questions in the CYRM28 are broken down into three sub-scales which reflect the major categories of resilience, these three sub-scales are then broken down further into sub-clusters to indicate each of the constructs' major categories. The first subscale reflects an individual factor that includes the sub-clusters of personal skills, peer support and social skills. The questions in the personal skills section focus upon perceptions of personal strengths and qualities. The peer support questions look at how individuals feel they are supported by their friends and the third sub-cluster focusses on personal skills and the



development of these skills. The second subscale deals with care giving; this gives a greater insight into physical caregiving and psychological caregiving and the relationships young people have with their families and caregivers. The physical sub cluster explores how a young peoples' physical physiological basic needs are met. The psychological sub cluster focuses on the quality of relationships and the perceived support a young person receives from these relationships. The third subscale comprises contextual components that facilitate a sense of belonging in young people. This sub scale is broken into the sub clusters relating to spirituality, culture and education components. The spiritual sub cluster explores religious activity as well as community relationships. The education sub cluster deals simply with a young person's views about school and education and the cultural sub cluster asks questions about cultural identity and perceptions of community as well as a sense of cultural belonging.

All the girls took the CYRM28 questionnaire at the start of the intervention period and then again, after a period of six weeks once the interventions had concluded. Each of the questions were answered on a five point Likert scale.

In order to gain each student's results all that was needed was to total all the scores from the responses to all 28 questions by student. Then the score for each sub scale and sub cluster was calculated by totaling the responses that were specifically linked to each sub scale and sub cluster. Totals and mean scores could be worked out to aid comparison. The higher the score the more resilience components are present in the lives of the students.

The girls' Total CYRM28 scores as well as their sub- scale and sub-cluster scores were compared to the norming data provided by the Resilience Research Centre. The norming data had been developed from carrying out the CYRM28 across different cultures across different communities around the world. By using the tool I could compare the girls' scores with the whole sample as well as against different groups within the whole test sample. The data was presented for three categories of young people: Youth with Complex Needs (n=1071), a comparison sample of Low Risk Youth (n=1128) and both groups combined (n=2199). These groups were further split into males and females. As the study group of girls have not been subject to significant

levels of risk as identified by Ungar (2011) I took the decision to reference their data against the data for females in the Low-Risk Youth Group.

This chapter explores and analyses the results from the CYRM28 questionnaire which was answered individually by each student both before and after the interventions. It also looks at the data collected from the interviews with the students as well as their individual in-school progress data, which was gathered over a period of 2 years; before, during and after the interventions took place. This data includes effort data from each of the student's teachers as well as their current grade, which show the grades they were achieving in each subject at given points in time. Finally, the data presented includes the final GCSE results, which were achieved in August 2017.

#### 4.2 Overview of the analysis

This analysis begins with a comparison of the group's CYRM28 data with the norming data as well as looking at the correlations between the different components of resilience for the students' data. Data on an individual student level, compared the students' pre- intervention CYRM28 scores with their post intervention CYRM28 scores. Structuring the analysis in this way allowed me to make links with the girl's responses in the interviews to add depth and meaning to the scores. The inclusion of each of the student's progress data, their attendance figures and their final GCSE results allowed analysis of the effectiveness of the interventions and whether there had been any impact on success in the GCSE exams. The progress figure for each student is a score, which was calculated by measuring each student's progress from their base line starting point. This base line is based on their score from their key stage 2 SATs, which each student took at the end of Year 6 at Primary School. Our school uses the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) Analysis Tool to calculate the grades each student is expected to achieve in their GCSEs based on their ability. The database used also considers contextual factors like socio-economic status, gender, race and school success when calculating the targets. Using the FFT tool enables us to set individual targets for each student for each subject and then after the final exams, a single progress score is generated which measures average progress by student. A minus score indicates that the student has not met their targets. The analysis then considered the general themes within the student interviews as well as the students' views on the interventions.

### 4.3 General overview of Group One's CYRM28 data

#### 4.3.1 April Data (pre-intervention)

**Table 4.1 CYRM Total Scores Comparison**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Total Mean score</b>
Group 1 Study group	107.63
All females – sample group	114.11
Complex Needs Youth Group (females)	110.43
Low-Risk Youth Group (females)	117.05

Table 4.1 shows the mean Total CYRM28 scores for different groups. The higher the Total Score the greater levels of resilience. The mean Total Score for Group 1 was 107.63, this mean score is below the mean for the Total Score for all females in the norming data for the total sample which was 114.11. It is also below the mean for the total score of the females in the Complex Needs Youth group which was 110.43 and the total score for the females in the Low-Risk Youth group which was 117.05. This might suggest that the resilience for this group of girls in Group 1 as a whole, is lower than for all the female groups referenced in the norming data. The mean score of 107.63 puts the girls in the bottom 23% of the Low Risk Youth group for levels of resilience. Only two students (Eleanor and Phoebe) had mean total scores that were higher than the mean total scores for the Low Risk Group. All the rest of the group had mean total scores of lower than 117.05.

All the Group's Total scores for each of the sub scales were lower than the whole sample's scores as seen in Table 4.2. The Group's mean Individual total of 43.38 puts the group in the bottom 23% of the norming data, the average for mean Individual total of the whole CYRM28 sample was 46.74. The mean scores in each of the Individual sub scale's sub clusters for Group 1 were also below the mean scores for the whole sample. The sub cluster – 'peer support' is the closest to the whole sample's total at 30.13 compared to 30.34 as is the mean score at 4.19 to 4.38.

**Table 4.2: Group 1 Mean Data for Total CYRM28, Sub clusters and sub scales pre and post intervention.**

		Total CYRM28 Score	Mean score by Question	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean
April	<b>Mean</b>	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41
July	<b>Mean</b>	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45
		Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
April	<b>Mean</b>	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
July	<b>Mean</b>	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
		Individual Personal Skills Mean	Individual Peer Support Mean	Individual Social Skills Mean	Caregivers Physical Mean	Caregivers Psychological Mean	Context Spiritual Mean	Context Education Mean	Context Cultural Mean
April	<b>Mean</b>	3.98	4.19	3.78	4.50	4.23	2.25	4.00	3.88
July	<b>Mean</b>	4.15	4.31	4.19	4.50	4.20	2.04	3.88	4.13

The Sub Scale 'Relationship with Caregivers' mean total score of 30.13 was closest to the whole sample score of 30.34 with 41% of the whole sample scoring this or below. This pattern was also mirrored in the mean scores of the sub clusters which made up this sub scale, they were very close to the whole sample's mean scores of 4.45 and

4.29. The greatest difference between the whole sample and Group 1 was in the sub scale for Context – which links to the cultural, spiritual and educational aspects associated with resilience. This group's total Context score was 34.13 which puts the group in the bottom 17% when compared to the whole group sample total Context score of 39.97. When the sub clusters, which make up the context sub scale, are analysed further the 'context education' mean of 4 is closest to the whole group sample mean of 4.43. It is the other two sub clusters mean scores; Context spiritual and Context cultural which are furthest away from the whole sample group mean scores. The group had a mean of 2.25 on the spiritual sub cluster compared to 3.06 of the whole sample and a lower mean of 3.88 on the cultural sub cluster compared to 4.38. The range for the girls' answers in these two sub clusters was a value of 2, which also shows the girls had scored similarly across these sub clusters.

The lower the score indicates lower levels of resilience. Therefore, overall, these lower mean scores might suggest that this group of girls have lower resilience as their mean scores are lower than the low risk group of females from the whole sample.

#### 4.3.2. Correlation between Components

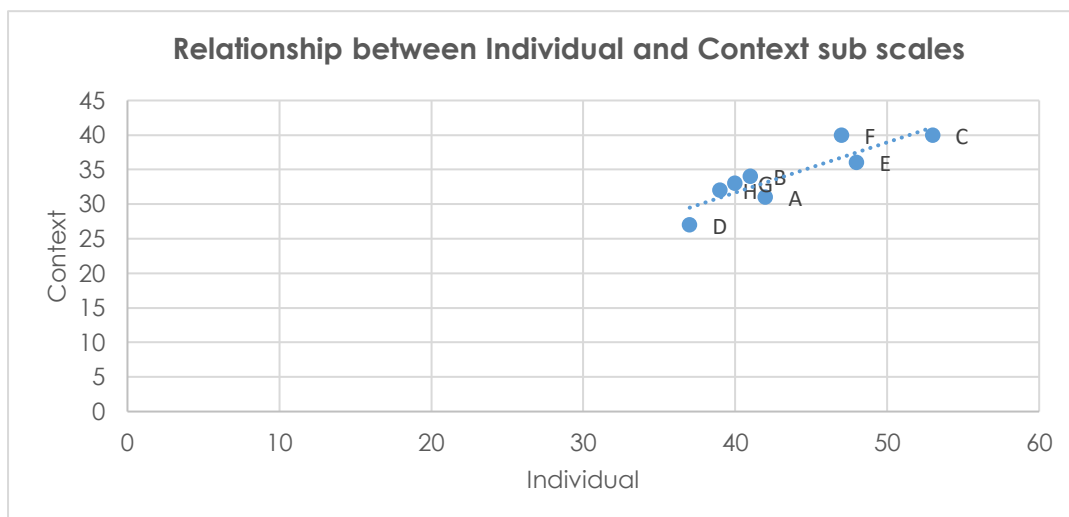
The correlations between components are important factors to consider as it allows analysis of the interaction of factors that affect resilience. Liebenberg et al. (2012) suggest that within the CYRM28, the Context and Individual components are more closely correlated than are the Individual and Caregiver components or the Caregiver and Context components. This is certainly true when the study group's data is analysed in this way (Table 4.3). The Pearson Product Moment correlation shows that the Individual and Context components have a stronger correlation of 0.88 than the other two component correlations. Both the Relationship with Carers and Context components and the Individual and Context correlations are statistically significant at the 0.02 significance level, the correlation between the Individual and Relationship with Caregivers component are not statistically significant at any level.

**Table 4.3: Correlations between components calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation**

Components	Individual/Relationship with Carers	Individual/Context	Relationship with Carers/Context
Correlation	0.591	0.884	0.701

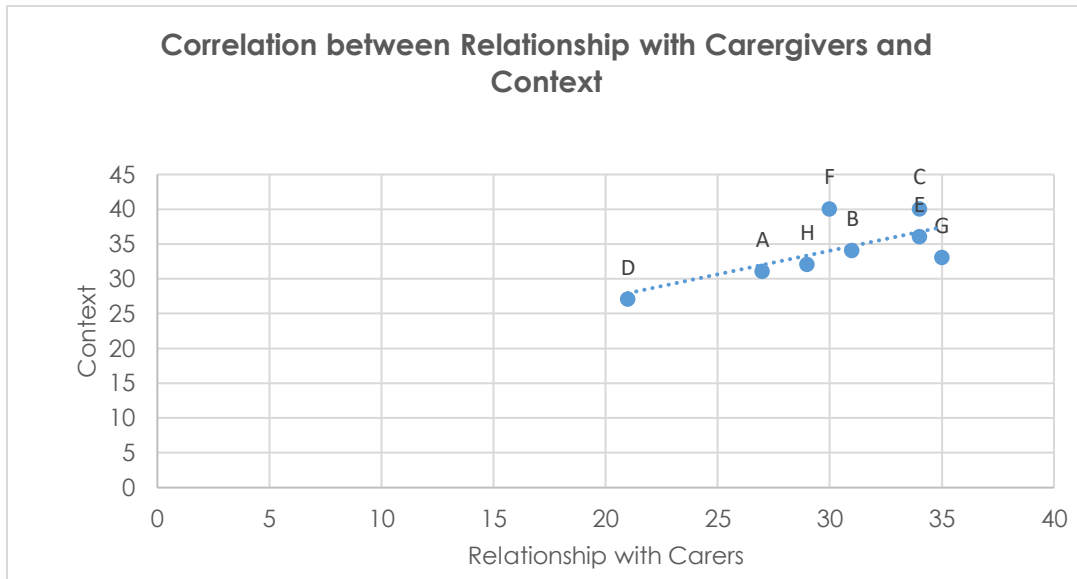
This relationship as described above can be seen visually in the graphs below. Where there is a greater clustering of the points around the trend line for the Relationship between Individual and Context subscales (Graph 4.1) compared to the relationships shown for Relationship with Caregivers and Context subscales (Graph 4.2) and the Relationship between Individual and Relationship with Caregivers sub scales (Graph 4.3).

**Graph 4.1: Relationship between Individual and Context sub scales**

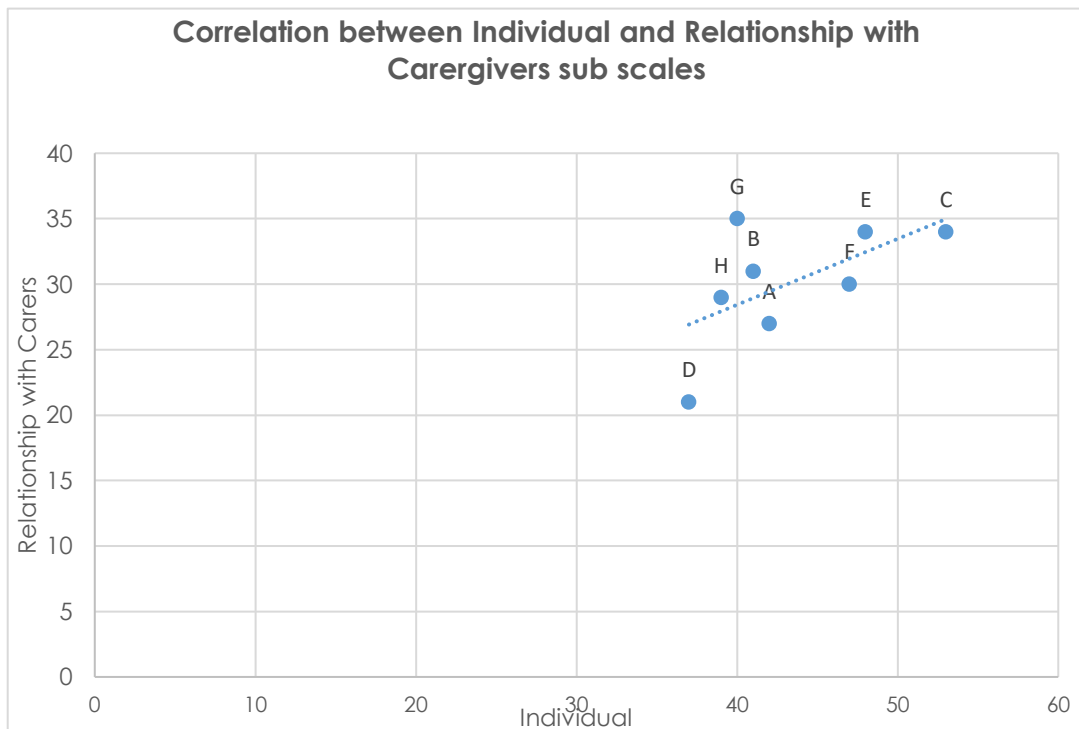


This strong correlation between the Context and Individual components may suggest that when actions are taken within schools and organisations to develop and promote a sense of belonging and community it strengthens a student's abilities and self-belief as well as how they feel about themselves and how they fit in to that place.

**Graph 4.2: Relationship between Relationship with Caregivers and Context sub scales**



**Graph 4.3: Relationship between Individual and Relationship with Caregivers sub scales**



All but one of the students have their highest to lowest sub-scale scores as Individual, Context then Relationship with Caregivers. Annie has the Individual sub scale as the highest score but then Relationship with Caregivers as her second highest followed by Context, however the difference between the two scores was the lowest of all the group with a difference of 2. This can be seen on Graph 4.3 - Relationship between Individual and Relationship with Caregivers. Point G (representing Annie) is the furthest away from the trend line. Student D, Sarah is the furthest away from the trend line on all the graphs; she had the lowest score in all areas and as a result the correlations between her sub scales are weaker.

The analysis that follows will examine each student's total score, sub scale and sub cluster scores before and after interventions in relation to the norming data for the Low Risk Group of females. Then each student's scores will be compared with the scores for the rest of the study group. The detailed analysis of these sub scales will enable the girls' level of resilience to be unpicked in order to look for patterns and trends coupled with a discussion of their comments from the interviews and their progress data.

#### 4.4 Sub Scale and Sub Cluster Analysis by Student

##### 4.4.1 Bethany

**Table 4.4.1a: Bethany's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
Pre		100	3.57	42	27	31	3.82	3.86	3.1	20	8	14	9	18	5	10	16
	Mean	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
Post		114	4.07	50	31	33	4.55	4.43	3.3	23	10	17	10	21	5	9	19
	Mean	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	Diff	14.00	0.50	8.00	4.00	2.00	0.73	0.57	0.20	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	0.00	-1.00	3.00

##### 4.4.1.a Bethany – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

Bethany had a Total CYRM28 score of 100 with Mean answers of 3.57. When comparing her scores to the total sample of 591 female low risk students they translate to her being in the bottom 12%, which is significantly below the group average.



Bethany's totals for each of the sub scales were all below the mean scores for the Low Risk Female group. The Individual Total compares with 19.3% of the total sample who had a score of 42 or below, the Caregivers sub scale total score of 27 compared to 23% of the total sample, and the Context sub scale Total score of 31 compares to 8.5% of the total sample. These scores put Bethany in the bottom 25% of the Low Risk Female group for resilience in these areas, with the context score in the lowest 10% of this group.

#### *4.4.1.b Bethany – comparison against the Study Group*

Bethany's total CYRM28 score of 100 was below the mean total score of the group putting her in the bottom 25%. When Bethany's results are broken down further by sub scale and sub clusters and compared with the rest of the study group there are some interesting differences in the mean and total scores. For Bethany all the total scores for the sub scales are below the mean total sub scale scores for the group. This is the same pattern for the sub clusters with the exception for Physical Caregiving where Bethany has the same total score as the rest of the group mean and her Context Education sub cluster score is higher than the group. The Context Spiritual total score is 5 which is below the mean total score of 6.75 for the group and the cultural total score of 16 is also below the mean total score of 19.38. These two categories show the biggest differences against the norms for Bethany along with the Caregivers Psychological sub cluster.

Bethany's scores had increased the second time she carried out the CYRM28 after the interventions had taken place. Her total score was now above the mean for the whole group and she had the highest increased total score from 100 to 114. Her Total CYRM28 score was not above the mean score for the Low Risk Youth Female sample group but the new score of 114 put her in line with 39% of the whole sample rather than in line with just 12%.

The Sub Scale Context Total overall showed the least increase and within this the sub cluster Spiritual Total had not changed but the Context Cultural Total had increased.

**Table 4.4.1b: Bethany's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	History	Art	Business Studies	RS
10b	5	5	3	C	D	C	C	D
10c	5	3	4	B	G	C	B	D
11a	5	3	5	C	D	C	B	C
11b	5	4	5	C	D	B	B	D
11c	7	4	5	C	C	B	B	C
Actual Grade	6	7	5	C	C	B	C	C
Progress	-4.26							

Bethany's progress data (Table 4.5) shows that she was the second most successful of all the girls when her progress is measured from her Key Stage 2 starting points. Her overall progress score was -4.26 which indicates that she achieved on average a grade below her targets across all subjects. She achieved good passes (at grade C or grade 4 or above) in all her subjects and has gone onto to our school Sixth Form. She was one of the most focussed in the interviews, despite not having carried out further research into courses or which University, she had some ideas about a future career and that she did want to go to University onto further study. She was also confident in her own abilities and clearly listened to her teachers about how she was progressing and what they expected from her to continue making progress:

"She said that I am doing really well but I need to make sure that I ask questions in lessons and make sure I extend my skills and stuff"

"Last night she said that I was her star student..... I always do well in class, I always contribute to discussions and I help out people out and I do really well in my exams and stuff".

History was a problem for Bethany early on in Year 10; she was working at a G grade which was an anomaly compared to her other subjects (Table 4.5). Bethany could

articulate where and what she thought the problem was with History when we discussed it;

“Well I lose focus a lot in History because of people in my class.... I have been moved away, we've all been split up now. We are starting our Controlled Assessment now and I am quite far ahead in that compared to other people because I am just getting on with it. But it [the grade G] is probably because I am talking a lot in class. I did enjoy History, I kind of do.... It's not my favourite.

Clearly, Bethany was able to apply herself and turned things around to focus on what needed to be done to achieve well. Bethany's attendance was also the joint highest in Year 10 at 99.7% and the highest in year 11 at 100%. This is clearly a factor in securing stronger academic results. Several recent studies have found causal relationships between attendance and academic achievement; with lower attendance impacting upon lower achievement even when other student and school led characteristics are considered (Hancock et al., 2017). Bethany's positive attitude, strong attendance and application have played a part in her final grades.

#### 4.4.2 Rebecca

**Table 4.4.2a: Rebecca's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
Pre		106	3.79	41	31	34	3.73	4.43	3.4	20	7	14	10	21	7	8	19
	Mean	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
Post	Diff	117	4.18	45	35	37	4.09	5.00	3.7	18	8	19	10	25	6	6	25
	Mean	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	Diff	11.00	0.39	4.00	4.00	3.00	0.36	0.57	0.30	-2.00	1.00	5.00	0.00	4.00	-1	-2	6.00

#### 4.4.2.a Rebecca - comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

Rebecca had a Total CYRM28 score of 106 with Mean answers of 3.79. This compares with 19.8% of the total sample who had a score of 106 or below. Unlike Bethany, not all of Rebecca's totals for each of the sub scales were below the mean scores for the Low Risk Female group. The Relationships with Caregivers sub scale total score of 31 was above the mean for the Low Risk Female group and compared to 48.4% of the total sample with the same score or below. The two sub-clusters in the caregiving section were above or very close to the mean values. Like Bethany the Context Spiritual scores and Cultural scores were below the mean for Rebecca so too was the Education score. For Rebecca the Individual Peer Support sub cluster mean value of 3.5 had the biggest difference to the mean value for the Low Risk Youth female group and was one of the three lowest in the study group.

#### 4.4.2.b Rebecca – comparison against Study Group

Rebecca's total score of 106 was in the bottom half of the group and just below the mean total score, as a result all her sub scales and sub cluster scores are very close to the mean scores for the group.

Rebecca's mean score had increased following the interventions, she had the second highest growth in score of 11 from 106 to 117. Rebecca's Individual Personal sub cluster total score had decreased, so too had her Context Spiritual and Context Education total scores. The biggest increases were seen in her Individual Social Skills

sub cluster total score which increased by 5 points followed by the sub cluster psychological caregiving total score which increased by 4 points.

**Table 4.4.2b: Rebecca's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	Geography	Dance	Childcare	RS
10b	5	4	2	D	E	F	D	E
10c	5	4	2	E	D	F	D	E
11a	5	4	3	E	E	D	D	C
11b	3	3	1	E	E	E	B	E
11c	3	4	2	E	E	E	B	D
<b>Actual Data</b>	3	3	1	E	E	D	A	E
<b>Progress</b>	-34.26							

Rebecca's progress data (Table 4.6) shows that she made the least amount of progress out of all the girls when her progress is measured from her Key Stage 2 starting points. Her overall progress score was -34.26 which indicates that her final grades were on average at least 4 grades from her potential targets across all subjects. Rebecca achieved only one pass and that was in Childcare. This course was only 10% exam with the rest of the assessment achieved through a portfolio of work. Rebecca did well in this as she was kept on track by her teacher at every milestone throughout the course. Her lowest grade was in Maths. Her actual grades reflected those she achieved in the Year 10 mock exams. In her interview, Rebecca showed she knew where she hadn't done well and that she needed to focus on these areas.

"Because I really don't think I done well. I didn't do the best that I could really. I did not revise at all apart from the ones that I like. I don't know. I didn't revise for the ones that I needed to the most. I think it's because I enjoy other subjects more than others. So obviously I spend more time on the ones that I enjoy than the ones that I actually need to be working on".

Clearly, in her actual exams her results indicate that she had not heeded her own advice and focussed in on the areas where she needed to the most. Rebecca had high Key Stage 2 scores, which indicate she did very well at Primary School, however, she was not able to sustain this level of attainment and progress through into secondary school. It could also indicate as discussed earlier that there is some uncertainty around the accuracy and reliability of the Key Stage 2 tests. Rebecca experienced some challenges in her life, which undoubtedly has affected her Secondary School experience (see vignette 4.1). Her school attendance was also relatively poor at 94.7% in year 10 and at the school target of 95% in Year 11. This is low attendance in comparison to some of the other students. Despite Rebecca's increased CYRM28 score after the interventions, her ability to overcome the challenges she faced and increase her effort in school to secure academic success did not happen. Rebecca's experiences at home have not contributed positively to her achievement in school despite her Psychological Caregiving score increasing post interventions. As the relationship between Rebecca and her family has been volatile, this increase could be down to the interactions between her and her family being more positive at the time of answering the second questionnaire. Lareau, (2011) notes that working class families can put their children at a disadvantage in terms of schooling and certainly Rebecca's father's attitudes to her studies (as seen later) coupled with the adversity she has faced through her family's personal circumstances have to considered a major contributory factor to her underachievement.

#### **Vignette 4.1 Rebecca's Story**

Rebecca has had a difficult childhood. Children's Services were involved from an early age. In her early years she lived with both her mum and dad and there was Domestic Abuse, which Rebecca was witness to. Mum was also an alcoholic. In 2010 Rebecca was removed from the care of both her parents and placed in foster care (with family) due to exposure of Domestic Abuse and alcohol misuse. Some years later Dad managed to change his behaviour and court proceedings allowed him to have full custody of Rebecca. Mum was still misusing alcohol at the time and this eventually contributed to her death in 2015. Dad has raised Rebecca with the help of his partner and the relationship between her and Rebecca has been quite volatile. Both dad and his partner have found raising Rebecca difficult for many reasons. They often have a difference of opinion how to manage Rebecca. Dad is very 'old school' and worried that she would 'end up like her brothers' so is very protective of her and due to this he is reluctant to let Rebecca be a 'normal' teenager. This often causes conflict. Rebecca has three older maternal half-brothers – All are known to the police for drug and alcohol misuse too. She has found teenage years very difficult; she is mindful of her siblings and expressed that she does not wish to be like them, but also worried that she would be and sometimes had thoughts that it should be the same path for her. Rebecca has always been a 'pupil premium' student throughout her schooling.

#### 4.4.3 Eleanor

##### 4.4.3.a Eleanor - comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

**Table 4.4.3a: Eleanor’s CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM28	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
Pre		127	4.54	53	34	40	4.82	4.86	4	25	10	18	10	24	10	7	23
	Me	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
Post	Diff	124	4.43	55	30	39	5.00	4.29	3.9	25	10	20	9	21	6	9	24
	Me	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	Diff	-3.00	-0.11	2.00	-4.00	-1.00	0.18	-0.57	-0.10	0.00	0.00	2.00	-1.00	-3.00	-4.00	2.00	1.00

Eleanor had the highest Total CYRM28 score of the group with 127 and Mean answers of 4.54. This compares with 3% of the total sample and in the top 78% who had a score of 127 or below. All of Eleanor's Total subscale scores were above the Mean Total Scores. Noticeably, all of Eleanor's sub cluster scores are also above the Mean sub cluster scores with the exception of the Context Education mean, which was below by a value of 0.93. This might suggest that Eleanor has higher levels of resilience generally but less resilience in an Educational Context.

##### 4.4.3.b Eleanor – comparison against Study Group

Eleanor's scores were higher than all of the study group with the exception of the sub cluster Context Education score where her total score of 7 was equal to two other students in the group. Eleanor's Individual Total sub scale score was the highest of the whole group at 53. When the break down into the sub cluster scores is analysed, the Individual Personal skills total score was 25 followed by Individual Social Skills at 18 and Peer Support at 10. This might suggest that Eleanor's individual mechanisms for developing and maintaining her resilience are stronger than in other areas.

Eleanor was one of 4 students whose mean total CYRM28 score had decreased following the interventions from 127 to 124. Her Individual sub scale scores remained



a strength and this is one area, which saw an increase of 2 overall. When this sub scale is broken down, it is the Social Skills sub cluster that has increased by 2 with the other two sub clusters which make up this Individual sub scale remaining the same. Eleanor had the highest score in this sub cluster in the second survey. Her Relationship with Caregivers was the sub scale that had decreased the most as both sub clusters in this sub scale had decreased. The Context score had also decreased by 1 from 40 to 39. The sub cluster, which affected this the most, was the Context Spiritual sub cluster as the other sub clusters in this sub scale had increased.

**Table 4.4.3b: Eleanor’s Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	Geography	Drama	Music	RS
10b	5	5	3	D	C	E	D	C
10c	6	5	3	C	C	E	D	C
11a	6	6	3	C	C	E	C	C
11b	5	3	3	F	B	D	B	D
11c	5	4	3	D	B	A	B	C
<b>Actual Grade</b>	5	5	4	C	D	B	C	C
<b>Progress</b>	-3.80							

Eleanor made the most progress from her Key Stage 2 starting points out of the whole group (Table 4.9). Her score of -3.80 indicate that she achieved on average almost in line with her target grades across all subjects. She achieved 7 out of 8 good passes in her actual exams. In some subjects like Music, Drama and Geography, her actual grade was lower than her teacher’s final prediction. In her interview Eleanor talked about not revising everything for some subjects in her Year 10 mock exams as well as losing her book, which she needed for her exams, she also talked about panic in the exams.

“When I have the exams, I sort of panic when I get to do them and then I don’t really think very hard about the exam and what is happening”.

## Vignette 4.2 Eleanor's Story

Eleanor is one of four girls from a stable family unit with close links to her extended family. All of her sisters attend the school; all are interested in Music and play a musical instrument. Her elder sister has had issues with Mental Health, performed well in her GCSEs but then not as well in Sixth Form; subsequently she was unable to finish her Year 13 A Level courses and dropped out of Sixth Form before the final exams. All four girls live at home and whilst parents are supportive of all the school does there does not always seem a lot of support for the girls at home to study hard and achieve well at home.

At times, Eleanor had a casual attitude to her studies and whilst her progress score was the best in the group, Eleanor was expected to achieve better across all her subjects and in particular not achieve any grades that were below a good pass as she did in Geography.

### 4.4.4 Sarah

#### 4.4.4.a Sarah- comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

**Table 4.4.4a: Sarah's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
Pre		85	3.04	37	21	27	3.36	3.00	2.7	18	7	12	6	15	7	7	13
	Mean	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
Post	Diff	81	2.89	36	22	23	3.27	3.14	2.3	17	7	12	7	15	4	6	13
	Mean	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	Diff	-4	-0.14	-1.	1.00	-4.00	-0.09	0.14	-0.40	-1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	-3.00	-1.00	0.00

Sarah had the lowest Total CYRM28 score of the group with 85 and Mean answers of 3.04 (Table 5.0). This compares with 0.2% of the total sample and put her in the bottom

2.2% of those who had a score of 85 or below. The Total score is significantly lower than all the other students' scores and shows the greatest negative distance from the Mean score of the whole female Low Risk Youth sample. This total CYRM28 score value of 85 when examined in the context of the whole sample and the young people with complex needs still sits in the bottom 10% of the sample, 4.8% and 8.1% respectively.

#### 4.4.4.b Sarah – comparison against Study Group

The lowest total sub scale score for Sarah is in the Relationship with Caregivers Sub Scale at 21 where the mean answer score is 3. This is the lowest when compared to the rest of the group and when compared with the difference to the mean for the whole sample. When looking at the sub-scales, Sarah's total scores are the lowest of all the students in the group, with the Relationship with Caregivers being the lowest sub scale. When the sub-clusters in this sub scale are compared with the rest of the group, Sarah has the lowest mean scores in both areas. Sarah has the lowest Individual Social skills sub cluster score as well as having the lowest Context cultural sub scale score at 13.

Sarah's Total CYRM28 score after the intervention programme decreased; notably in the Context sub scale where the Spiritual sub cluster decrease of 3 points had the most influence on the overall score.

**Table 4.4.4b: Sarah's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	Geography	Dance	Drama	RS
10b	5	4	4	D	D	E	C	C
10c	5	4	3	C	E	E	D	C
11a	5	4	5	D	D	E	D	C
11b	4	3	4	F	D	D	C	C
11c	4	4	5	D	D	D	C	C

<b>Actual Grades</b>	3	4	5	D	E	C	C	C
<b>Progress</b>	-19.26							

### Vignette 4.3 Sarah's Story

Sarah had not been at the school since Year 7 like all the other students in the study group. She was an in year admission in Year 9 having been at two other local Secondary Schools. The first move had been because of a House move, the second move to our School was as a result of her being a victim of bullying at her second school. In the admission interview both Sarah and her mother had reported that Sarah had not felt like she 'fitted in' at her second school and so had wanted to move. Sarah settled well into our school in year 9, she made friends easily and did well. As she moved into Year 10 and 11, Sarah fell out with other girls and became less involved with school life especially the performing arts events she had been involved with in the past. Although her attendance was not low, parents condoned frequent short absences.

Sarah's progress score is in the bottom 25% of the whole group (Table 5.3). A progress score of -19.26 shows that she achieved on average 2 grades below her targets across all subjects however Sarah did achieve 5 good passes out of the 8 GCSEs she took. She was one of the least talkative girls in the group and did not respond as well as the others to the problem solving activities and group talks. Her attendance at the yoga and at the reading sessions in the primary school was poor compared to the other girls. Her attendance at after school sessions and boosters for other subjects was also sporadic due to missed days and excuses that were always supported by her parents. Her overall attendance was greater than the school's set target (95%) at 95.8% in year 10 but lower at 93.6% in year 11. Sarah did not want to stay in our Sixth Form instead, she was very keen on going to a College or finding a job straight after school. She said she had changed her mind about her career path since choosing her options in Year 9.

"I'm not really keen on performing anymore. I've been dancing since I was 3 so over 10/11 years but as I've got older I've got more self-conscious and my

effort and performance skills have gone back so when I chose my options I was fine with it and I liked it but now it is more ... iffy".

As time went on Sarah seemed to 'buy in' less to the school and her lessons. This is shown in her decreased Context score in the CYRM28 from 27 to 23 (Table 5.0) and the drop in her attendance as well as her general attitude to taking part and joining in with the things she had once been interested in.

#### 4.4.5. Phoebe

##### 4.4.5.a Phoebe – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

**Table 4.4.5.a: Phoebe's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
Pre		118	4.21	48	34	36	4.36	4.86	3.6	19	10	19	10	24	5	8	23
	M	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
Post		112	4.00	49	31	32	4.45	4.43	3.2	22	9	18	9	22	5	7	20
	M	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	Di	-6.00	-0.21	1.00	-3.00	-4.00	0.09	-0.43	-0.40	3.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-2.00	0.00	-1.00	-3.00

Phoebe had the second highest Total CYRM28 score of the group with 118 and Mean answers of 4.21. This compares with 3.4% of the total sample and 48.2% who had a score of 118 or below. Looking at the sub scale scores the Individual Total score of 48 was significantly higher than the Relationship with Carers and Context scores which were 34 and 36 respectively. Phoebe's score for Individual Total sub scale score of 48 was also higher than the Mean score for the female low risk youth group, so was her Relationship to Carers Total score but her Context total score was not. When this Context sub scale is broken down into the sub clusters, Phoebe's mean score of 1.67 for the spiritual sub cluster was significantly below the mean score for the female low risk youth sample which was 3.06.

#### 4.4.5.b Phoebe – comparison against Study Group

Phoebe was one of two students who had the highest sub cluster total score for Individual Peer support, which was 10 (Table 5.2). Phoebe also had the highest sub cluster total score of the group for Individual Social Skills at 19. Her mean scores of 15.13 was also higher than the mean score of the female low risk youth group in the whole sample. Whilst Phoebe's score for the sub cluster Context Spiritual was significantly below the mean score for the female low risk youth sample) it is also one of the lowest scores for the study group too, only one student had a score which was lower.

After the interventions Phoebe's Total CYRM28 score fell the most dramatically by 6 points. The biggest decrease being in the Context sub scale and within this in the Context Cultural sub cluster. Phoebe had six sub clusters that showed a decrease, this was the most clusters to decrease out of all the four students whose Total Scores decreased. She only had one area which increased and this was in the Individual Personal Skills sub cluster which increased by 3 points.

Phoebe's drop in Total CYRM28 score to 112 moved her position in comparison with the total female low risk youth sample to the bottom third rather than being in almost in line with 50% of the sample.

**Table 4.4.5.b: Phoebe's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	Geography	Bus. Studies	Dance	RS
10b	5	5	4	B	C	A	D	D
10c	5	3	4	B	B	B	C	D
11a	5	5	4	C	A	B	D	D
11b	5	4	4	D	B	B	C	C
11c	5	5	5	C	B	B	B	B
Act	6	5	5	C	C	B	C	C
Progress	-15.43							

Phoebe's progress score of -15.43 (Table 5.3) put her in the bottom half of the group for progress, her score means that she achieved on average 2 grades below her targets across all subjects. It indicates that she achieved better in her Key Stage 2 tests at primary school and did not achieve in line with what her prior attainment suggests she should. However, she did achieve 8 good passes from the 8 GCSEs she sat. It was only in English that she out performed any of her teachers' predictions. In four other areas, she achieved in line with her teacher's last prediction and achieved below their last prediction in three subjects. Phoebe was another student who was quiet and conformed during school time. She did not want to stay into Sixth Form and was interested in apprenticeships. Her attendance for both year 10 and year 11 was low at 90% and 90.8% respectively. This is somewhat under the school target of 95% and indicates that she had approx. 19 days absent in Year 10 and 17 days absence in Year 11. In Phoebe's case these were frequent short absences sometimes just missing a day.

#### 4.4.6. Maisie

##### 4.4.6.a Maisie – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

**Table 4.4.6.a: Maisie's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

	Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
<b>F</b>	117	4.18	47	30	40	4.27	4.29	4	23	9	15	9	21	10	9	21
<b>Me</b>	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
<b>F</b>	113	4.04	46	28	39	4.18	4.00	3.9	22	8	16	9	19	9	9	21
<b>Me</b>	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
<b>Diff</b>	-4.00	-0.14	-1.00	-2.00	-1.00	-0.09	-0.29	-0.10	-1.00	-1.00	1.00	0.00	-2.00	-1.00	0.00	0.00

Maisie had the third highest Total CYRM28 score of the group with 117 and Mean answers of 4.18. This compares with 2.3% of the total sample and 44.8% who had a score of 117 or below. Looking at the sub scale scores the Individual Total score of 47 was her highest and relationship with Caregivers Total her lowest at 30. Compared to the total Sub cluster scores, Maisie's total sub cluster scores are relatively close to these

means. Whilst the Sub scale scores show that the Individual Social Skills mean is the furthest from the whole sample mean for all the sub scale scores, it is not the lowest score in the study group.

#### 4.4.6.b Maisie – comparison against Study Group

Maisie had one of the highest Context Spiritual Total scores at 10, it was the second highest in the group and above the group mean. She also had the second highest Individual Personal skills total score in the whole group both these Totals fell after the intervention programme by one point in each sub cluster. Maisie's total CYRM28 score dropped by 4 points after the intervention and Maisie was the only student who had a decreased score where no sub cluster score was increased.

**Table 4.4.6.b: Maisie's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	Music	French	Drama	RS
10b	5	5	2	C	E	B	D	B
10c	6	5	2	U	D	B	D	B
11a	6	6	2	D	C	B	D	C
11b	6	4	2	G	C	C	C	D
11c	6	4	3	F	C	C	A	C
Act	5	5	2	D	C	D	A	C
Progress	-10.80							

Maisie's progress score puts her in the top half of the group. She achieved 5 good passes out of the 8 GCSEs she sat. Her overall progress score was -10.80 (Table 5.5) which indicates that she achieved on average a grade below her targets across all subjects. Science, Maths and French were the subjects where Maisie did less well. Maisie had highlighted all of these in her interview as being areas she struggled with and areas where her confidence was low. In Maths she said:



“Maths is a hard subject and I can't do it very well”

She said similar things about languages too:

“I don't find it easy. I find it hard for pronunciation and word order is really hard. I don't know”.

A common thread for Maisie in her interview was whether she had revised enough for her mock exams, at times she had a perception that before the exams she felt she had worked really hard and revised hard and then after her exams she often thought that she had not focussed in the right place.

“I think I would probably take a lot more time out of my day to revise because I revised quite hard, not really for Media because I felt that I did revise for Media but not as much as I did for Science. Because there is Physics, Chemistry and Biology I focused on one more than the others and I feel like if I spaced it out a bit more I would have more of an understanding because when it came to the Physics one which is the one I didn't revise as much on, I revised more on Biology and Chemistry, I feel that if I spaced it all out and revised each equally I would have a better understanding”.

Maisie's Total CYRM28 score fell by 4 points indicating her resilience was lower. This can be seen in her general approach to her studies and ultimately her final grades. Maisie's attendance at 98.9% and 98.4% in Year 10 and 11 respectively was above the whole school target.

#### **Vignette 4.4 Maisie's Story**

Maisie was a standard admission to our school in Year 7, moving with her friends from her local primary school. In her lower school years, she was a frequent performer in our music events but not necessarily whole school shows or House Drama events. She has always been a good student who has achieved good effort scores and rewards. As she moved into her GCSEs she became less involved with extra-curricular activities as she very much enjoyed performing her chosen songs and not pushing herself out of her comfort zone. Maisie would not flex her style or her approach to work with others so she did not get involved with House events regularly as she became older. As a result of this she was not always asked to perform. Maisie lives in a supportive family who are very proud of her and her singing. They are very protective and have always supported Maisie. Often this support was not in Maisie's best interests especially around revision and the amount she needed to be doing as she moved closer to the exams. Often parents would ask for support from the school but when this did not suit Maisie e.g. staying after school for support, they would support her decision to miss booster sessions and after school support.

#### 4.4.7. Annie

##### 4.4.7.a Annie – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

**Table 4.4.7.a: Annie's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
<b>Pre</b>		108	3.86	40	35	33	3.64	5.00	3.3	16	9	15	10	25	4	8	21
	<b>Me</b>	107.63	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
		118	4.21	46	34	38	4.18	4.86	3.8	21	9	16	10	24	7	8	23
<b>Post</b>	<b>Me</b>	110.63	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	<b>Diff</b>	10.00	0.36	6.00	-1.00	5.00	0.55	-0.14	0.50	5.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	-1.00	3.00	0.00	2.00

Annie had a Total CYRM28 score of 108 and Mean answers of 3.86. This compares with 1.8% of the total sample and 23.5% who had a score of 108 or below. Looking at the sub scale scores the Relationship with Caregivers score was above the Mean for the whole sample and at 35 was the highest score in this sub scale for the whole group (Table 5.6). This is also reflected in the Caregiving sub cluster scores which showed a mean of 5. These mean scores were higher than for the whole female low risk youth sample and whilst other students in the study group had a mean score of 5 for the sub cluster Physical Caregiving, none of the students had a mean of 5 for the sub cluster psychological Caregiving. Annie's low mean score for the sub cluster Context Spiritual at 1.33 was much lower than the mean for the female low risk youth sample which was 3.06. Annie's score in this sub cluster was also the lowest for the whole study group.

##### 4.4.7.b Annie – comparison against Study Group

Whilst Annie's Relationship with Caregivers total score was well above the mean for the group her Individual sub scale total was lower, she has the third lowest in the group. However, after the interventions this did increase by six points to 46 and was much more in line with the mean for the whole group. Annie's Relationship with Caregivers sub scale total score fell by one after the interventions and this was from the Psychological Caregiving sub cluster element. This was the only area where Annie

saw a decrease, her score remained the same after intervention in three sub clusters and increased in 4. Annie's Context score had increased by 5 after the interventions in the Cultural and Spiritual sub clusters, there was also an increase of 6 in the Individual Total sub scale from an increase in the Individual Personal Skills and Social Skills sub clusters.

**Table 4.4.7.b: Annie's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	German	Geography	Art	RS
10b	5	5	4	B	B	E	D	C
10c	6	5	3	B	B	D	D	C
11a	6	6	3	B	B	C	D	C
11b	7	4	3	D	B	D	D	C
11c	6	4	4	C	B	D	C	B
Act	6	5	4	B	C	C	C	D
Progress	-18.93							

Annie's progress data (Table 5.7) puts her in the bottom half of the group for making the least progress from her Key Stage 2 starting points. She achieved 7 out of 8 good passes in her GCSEs, achieving above her teachers' last predictions in English Literature, Science and Geography, she did less well in Religious Studies, achieving significantly below the predictions. Her actual grade D was 2 grades below her teacher's prediction of a B grade. Whilst Annie did well, she like Eleanor did not achieve her full potential that was indicated by her Key Stage 2 tests results sat at Primary School. Her overall progress score was -18.93 which indicates that she achieved on average 2 grades below her targets across all subjects. Annie's attendance was poor in year 10 at 88.2%, which would equate to 23 days absent across a year; it improved to 94.7% in Year 11 but this was still below the school's target. During the interviews Annie was often unsure of herself and her own abilities, she said she felt pressured at school and wasn't able to be her normal self. She could not really state where her strengths lay and did not have definite ideas about future plans and next steps using phrases like,

“hopefully I will get into university”

This lack of conviction and assuredness was also apparent when she discussed what her plans were after GCSEs, she hadn't really thought about what she wanted to study or where, she was more set on what she didn't want to do,

“With School it just seems like, they, I don't know, it just seems....at College they give you a little bit more responsibility and get you prepared for that sort of stuff so it seems a lot different compared to school and I think in Sixth Form here it would be a bit like how we are now in Year 10 and Year 11. It would feel exactly the same and you will have the same rules and stuff and I thought College might be a bit of a challenge and prepare me better for University and stuff”.

Her decisions about future careers were also more about ruling things out than coming from a positive 'I want to do this...' standpoint.

“because I used to want to be a Vet but then when I looked into it I didn't like the thought of having to operate on animals but then I considered being a Nurse but then I still wouldn't be comfortable giving vaccines and things to them. Then I sort of looked into Beauty and stuff like Hair, Nails and stuff like that but then I don't know, I thought do I want to be stuck doing that for the rest of my life? I thought maybe not and then my family suggested that because I like learning languages that I should be an interpreter which I am unsure about”

When discussing roles and responsibilities she was also unsure of herself.

“I don't think I would be good for it [student voice]”

She always came from the negative viewpoint of what she didn't want to do and why she wouldn't be able to do it.

#### 4.4.8 Lisa

##### 4.4.8.a Lisa – comparison against Low Risk Youth Female Sample

**Table 4.4.8.a: Lisa's CYRM28 data compared to the study group**

		Total CYRM	Mean Score	Individual Total	Relationship with Caregivers Total	Context Total	Individual Mean	Relationship with Caregivers Mean	Context Mean	Individual Personal Skills Total	Individual Peer Support Total	Individual Social Skills Total	Caregivers Physical Total	Caregivers Psychological Total	Context Spiritual Total	Context Education Total	Context Cultural Total
Pre		100	3.57	39	29	32	3.55	4.14	3.2	18	7	14	8	21	6	7	19
	Me	107.6	3.84	43.38	30.13	34.13	3.94	4.30	3.41	19.88	8.38	15.13	9.00	21.13	6.75	8.00	19.38
Post		106	3.79	42	29	35	3.82	4.14	3.5	18	8	16	8	21	7	8	20
	Me	110.6	3.95	46.13	30.00	34.50	4.19	4.29	3.45	20.75	8.63	16.75	9.00	21.00	6.13	7.75	20.63
	Diff	6	0.21	3	0	3	0.27	0	0.3	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	1

Lisa had a Total CYRM28 score of 100 and Mean answers of 3.57. This is the same Total CYRM28 score as Bethany. Their profile is very similar having the same patterns in the Total scores for the sub scales, the Individual Total being the highest and the Relationship with Caregivers being the lowest. Lisa was one of three students with the lowest Context Education sub scale score of 7 and mean answers of 3.5. Lisa had one of the lowest Individual Peer Support mean scores at 3.5 too. This compares with 1.8% of the total sample and 23.5% who had a score of 108 or below.

##### 4.4.8.b Lisa – comparison against Study Group

In comparison to the rest of the study group Lisa's Total CYRM28 score put her in the bottom third of the group. The biggest difference to the group mean was in the Individual sub scale total score, all the sub clusters which make up the Individual Total were all below the mean score all by a value of greater than 1. The Individual Personal Skills sub cluster was the cluster with the greatest difference at -1.88. After the

interventions Lisa's Total CYRM28 score increased by 6 from 100 to 106 (Table 5.8) and unlike with all the other students in the study group there were no sub scales or sub clusters where Lisa's scores decreased. Some scores stayed the same, noticeably both sub clusters in the Caregivers Sub Scale. Lisa was the only student whose scores did not change in this sub scale. Interestingly the only other area where there was no increase was the Individual Personal Skills sub cluster which was the sub cluster where Lisa had the greatest difference compared to the group mean. As Lisa did not increase this score after the interventions this sub cluster was even further away from the group mean with a difference of 2.75.

**Table 4.4.8.b: Lisa's Progress Data**

GCSEs	English Language	English Literature	Maths	Science	Geography	Catering	Art	RS
10b	3	3	3	C	D	B	D	C
10c	3	3	3	C	C	B	C	C
11a	5	5	3	C	C	B	C	C
11b	4	3	3	F	C	A	C	D
11c	5	4	4	E	B	A	C	C
Act	4	4	4	C	D	A	C	E
Progress	-6.80							

Out of the 8 GCSEs Lisa sat she achieved passes in 6 of the subjects. In Geography and Religious Studies, she underperformed by two grades from the teacher's last prediction. Lisa's overall progress score of -6.80 (Table 5.9) put her third in the group. This overall progress score indicates that she achieved on average a grade below her targets across all subjects. Her attendance was strong at 99.5% in both year 10 and 11. Lisa was positive about her studies generally; after her year 10 mocks she had taken advice from staff about how she could improve her revision techniques.

"I spoke to my teachers in Maths and English and they gave me some tips to revise differently. So, I think I will try them in future as they seem better ways of revising rather than just reading it over and over".

In the core subjects of Maths, Science and English Lisa did improve her grades from Year 10 through into year 11. Lisa worked steadily across both years always achieving good effort grades across all subjects. Catering was the subject where she achieved her best and she was clear about her plans for the assessments and how she was going to plan and prepare for her practical exams. She was also definite that a career in catering was a possibility for her as she could visualise herself in this role.

“I would be able to see myself in catering. A sous chef was one of the choices from the PSHE careers programme. I think this would be a job where working with other people would improve my confidence and social skills as I am not that confident and I am quite shy so I think that would help”.

Lisa had clear plans and a clear commitment to her studies as seen in her comments, effort grades and strong attendance.

#### 4.5 Whole Group Analysis for Group 1 – July Data (post-intervention)

Following the programme of interventions, the students answered another CYRM28 questionnaire and the analysis of the data showed that of the eight students four had increased CYRM28 scores whilst four students had CYRM28 scores that had decreased. Of the four students who had increased scores the biggest increases were in the Individual sub scales with the exception of Lisa who had the same increase in her Context Sub Scale score. Analysing the Individual sub scales by the sub cluster components showed there was less of a pattern as to which sub cluster contributed the most to the increased scores; it was different for each student. The Individual Sub scale score overall for all eight students showed that six of the eight students all had positive increases in their scores with only two students scoring -1 (Sarah and Maisie). For both these students it was in the Personal Skills section where they scored -1. The Individual sub scale score remained the highest sub scale both pre and post intervention. There was an increase in this sub scale of 2.75 which was a larger increase than in the other sub scales. This increase contributed the most to the increase in the Mean Total score for the group, which increased overall from 107.63 to 110.63.

Context was the next sub scale to contribute to the increase in the total CYRM28 score, not all of the students had a positive increase in this sub scale as a result the mean increase was much smaller at only 0.37.

The overall mean score for the subscale Relationship with Caregivers decreased by 0.13 overall, 5 of the students had a negative score for this sub scale, this included all of the students who had overall decreased scores and one student whose overall score had increased.

The four students whose Total CYRM28 scores had decreased had decreased in less value than the value of increase of the four students whose scores had increased. All four students showed a decreased Context sub scale score with the Context Spiritual Sub cluster score either being a decreased or neutral score. There were no evident patterns in the other components of the Context score.

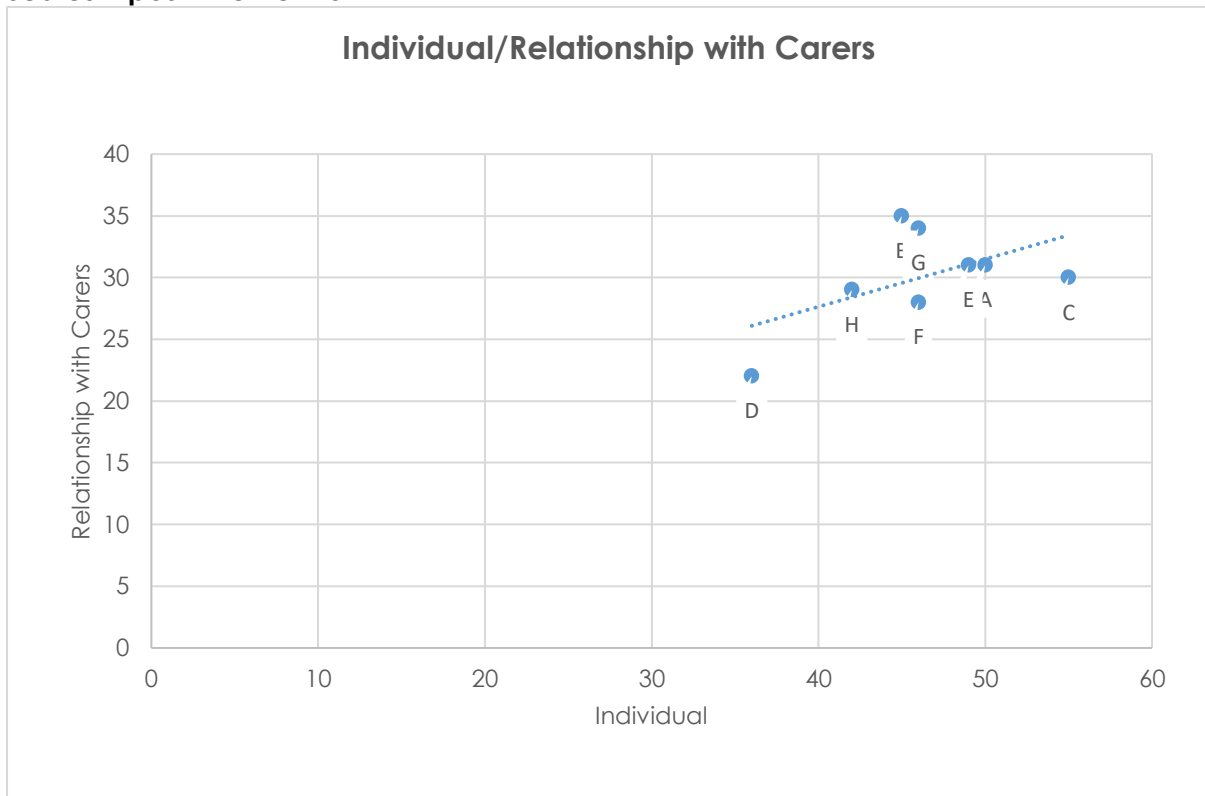
**Table 5: Correlations between components calculated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation**

Components	Individual/Relationship with Carers	Individual/Context	Relationship with Carers/Context
Correlation	0.54	0.65	0.70

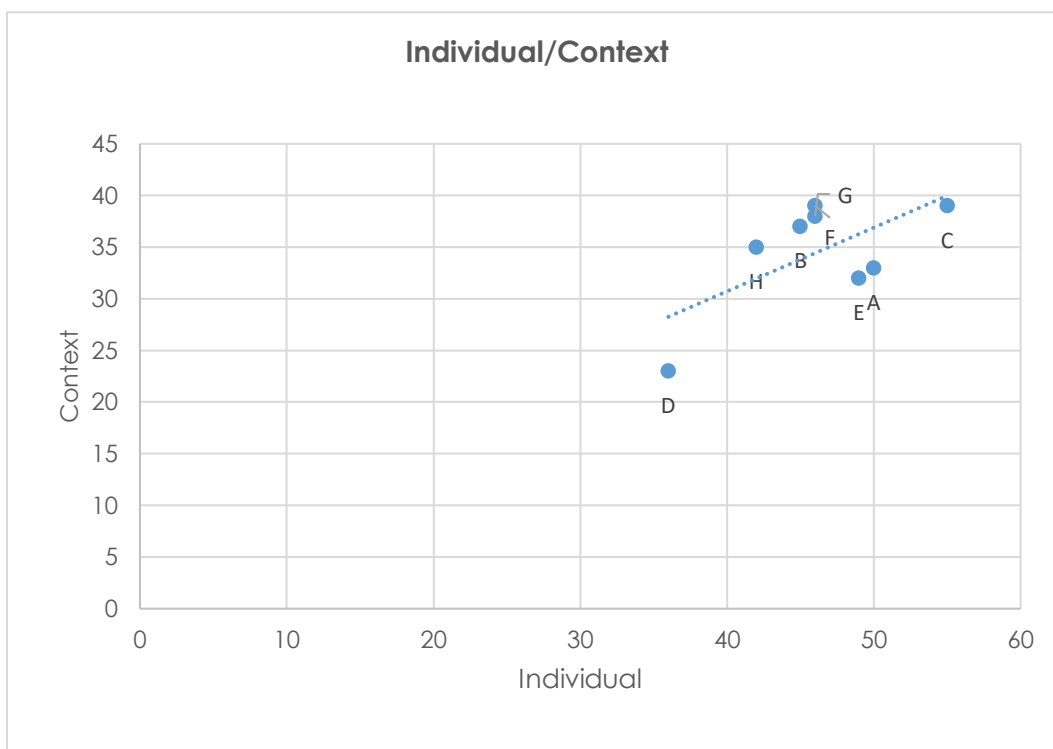
Using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, correlations between the components were calculated. The correlations between each of the components were much weaker than pre intervention (Table 5). The Individual/Relationship with Carers components did not demonstrate a strong correlation which supports the findings of Liebenberg et al. (2012). The Individual and Context components were statistically significant at 0.10. This time the strongest correlation was between the Relationship with Carers and Context with a statistically significant correlation at 0.10 and 0.05, however, this was not as strong as the correlation seen between the Individual and Context components pre interventions.



**Graph 4.4: Relationship between Individual and Relationship with Caregivers sub scales – post intervention**

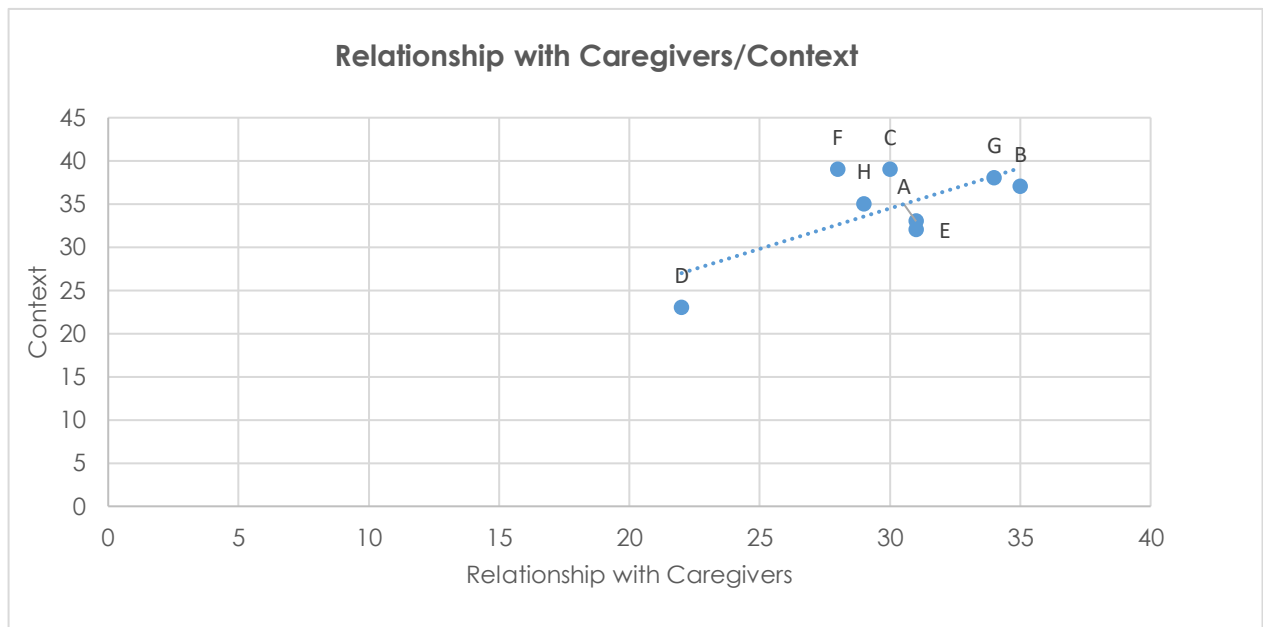


**Graph 4.5: Relationship between Individual and Context sub scales – post intervention**



When the relationships are plotted onto graphs, the same patterns between the correlations are represented visually. All three graphs show less clustering around the trend line indicating a weaker correlation between the components. Sarah (student D) continues to be the outlier as the student with the lowest scores and so furthest from the trends the other girls are displaying.

**Graph 4.6: Relationship between Relationship with Caregivers and context sub scales – post intervention**



It could be argued that the weaker correlations are down to the small overall increase in each of the sub scales of the group and that in some cases the scores have not increased evenly; some sub clusters like Context spiritual have remained low whilst other sub scales like the Individual Social Skills have increased.

#### 4.6 Interview Analysis

Each of the students was interviewed twice throughout the project. Both before and after intervention. In the first interview, the students were asked about how well they thought they were doing in their subjects and in school generally as well as future choices and careers. In the second interview, the students were able to discuss their Year 10 results from the mock exams sat in the summer as well as actual results for GCSE Media and Science, which had been sat in the summer. They had also completed the programme of interventions and had experienced a careers interview. Both interviews took place with me in my office and lasted between 20 and

45 minutes depending on each individual's answers. The interviews covered their feelings surrounding examinations and results, their feelings of preparedness for these examinations, perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses in school as well as how they felt about the intervention sessions.

#### 4.6.1 School and Exam Performance

During the interviews, the girls were more often than not under confident about their performance in school and often negative about their own personal study skills. In discussing their current grades, which they had received from their mock exams, they were very quick to explain where they felt they had let themselves down. Every one of the girls expressed a degree of negativity in some way, this ranged from thinking they hadn't done well in their mock exams to explaining that they felt under confident in their own abilities either to revise or in their study skills to prepare themselves for the mock exams.

Many of the girls were very unsure about revising and the techniques they were using; whether the quality of the work they were doing was going to make a difference and whether their revision methods were going to work. Some were very clear and knew they had not revised enough. Some commented on the issues they experienced with the actual exams and the act of sitting the exam. Many expressed that they found things easy in class but then this did not translate into exam confidence; some cited stress as a factor in affecting their exam performance.

"If I had a better way of revising I would have been able to remember more things"

(Eleanor)

"When I have the exams, I sort of panic when I get to do them and then I don't think very hard about the exam and what is happening"

(Eleanor)

"In Dance I just think it's about getting self-conscious and anxiety and everything, it's more when we do exams"

(Sarah)

Rebecca was negative about herself and all her exams;

"I don't think I done very well"

"I need to improve a lot in Science"

"I don't understand some of the work we do in maths then I cannot be bothered to keep trying"

(Rebecca)

Her comments were generalised about her study skills, she kept stating that she just needed to do better without really making any comment on how she might do this. She knew which subjects needed to improve and where she needed to focus herself in lessons and work harder but she wasn't specific about how she could do this.

In contrast some of the other girls knew exactly in which subjects they needed to improve and in which areas.

"With poetry I can annotate and find points but I cannot write essays about it. I find it difficult"

"In Art I spend too long on things when I should just do experiments and stuff, I take too long because I am trying to get them as accurate as possible, I need to fix the time control."

(Rebecca)

For Maisie she was very clear about the subjects where she wasn't doing well and she could discuss her own thoughts as to why this might be the case.

"Maths is a hard subject and I cannot do it very well, I don't know how to help myself because I do revise but it doesn't really make a difference when it comes to it."

She knew that revision would help her overall and knew she needed to do more:

"I think I would probably take a lot more time out of my day to revise because I revised quite hard, but not for Media as much as I did for Science."

Some students were quite hard about their own qualities and were quite open to saying what they were not good at.

"I don't have a very good memory".

"I'm not very good at Maths"

(Maisie)

#### 4.6.2 Confidence

Many of the girls spoke about their confidence levels or lack of them, not just in school in terms of their study skills and success in exams but also in their life outside of school. Some of the girls knew the subjects where they had real confidence and felt good about their performance and successes. Maisie in particular used the word confidence in her answers a lot. She referenced the subjects where she felt self-conscious like in Modern Foreign Languages:

"I think again I have improved with confidence because I never used to answer anything because it is a small class. I feel that if I get a question wrong it is quite embarrassing because everyone can hear but now I've just got over that and if I get it wrong, I get it wrong."

(Maisie)

However, she recognised the dichotomy of her ability to be able to sing on stage without any nerves or self-confidence whilst at the same time in a drama lesson lacking self confidence in her own performances which was evident in the way she had said her teacher had told her she had to stop looking at others for cues. Maisie explained that because she knew she was good at singing and had confidence in her own ability to sing well in front of others and potentially pursue a career on the West End Stage it was something she found easy. However, in subjects where she wasn't quite sure of how good she was and felt less secure in her own abilities she lacked confidence.

"I know I'm good at singing, when it comes to dance and things like that I'm not good at dancing, I feel intimidated because I don't dance well so I don't have confidence."

(Maisie)

Self-esteem, self-belief and self-efficacy are key components of resilience that can not only be grown and developed but which can also diminish depending on exposure to certain events or experiences. (Hill et al., 2007). It is not surprising then that as Maisie has moved further into the GCSE Music course and her grades have improved that her confidence has grown. The improvement in grades and feedback from staff have led to a growing confidence in her own abilities.

#### 4.6.3 Future Aspirations

All of the girls had attended a Careers Appointment with the Careers Coordinator in school. At the interview they could discuss their thoughts about next steps with regard to life after School, whether this was Sixth Form in school, at another school, college or apprenticeship. They also had the opportunity to discuss the job/career they wanted to pursue and what they would need to achieve this. They were given some follow up work from the Careers Coordinator for them to research further into pathways from their chosen careers.

During my interviews with each of the girls, we discussed the choices of jobs and careers they had discussed with the Careers Coordinator. Some of the girls had listed several jobs/careers they thought they might wish to pursue. These ranged from jobs that had direct links to their option choices to jobs which interested them and they thought they might like to do. Whilst all of the girls talked about a few jobs they would like to do, it was only Maisie and Rebecca that expressed a real excitement and passion about their future careers. Maisie was very clear about her route to be a West End Singer, she knew she wanted to go to the Brit School of Performing Arts. However, it was clear she hadn't thoroughly researched this as she wanted to go there after Sixth Form rather than go there for Sixth Form. She also said that because she liked History she might consider being a lawyer. Maisie's views around gaining experience for her chosen career were also interesting when it came to thinking about the Whole School Show as a vehicle for gaining experience to boost her applications. We discussed this as a potential opportunity to gain experience performing as she had not auditioned or performed in a School Show before. We discussed how this would make any applications she was making more interesting and give her experience. However, her confidence was getting in the way of this:

"I haven't been in School Shows before or auditioned as I feel intimidated because I don't dance and I don't have the confidence"

(Maisie)

Maisie had a quite an idealistic view of her road to success, she enjoyed singing and was good at this but didn't want to push herself to perform in areas where she felt less strong like dancing. As a result, although it was clear to see that Maisie enjoyed her

singing she hadn't taken any further action in trying to realise her dreams either by researching fully the next steps or by pushing herself to gain more experience and give her an advantage in a competitive environment. There is a clear difference here between aspiration and expectations; what Maisie hoped for but also what she believed would happen, although her expectation was not yet fully formed. This issue of confidence arises as a barrier to Maisie auditioning for opportunities and experiences which would support her future aspirations.

Rebecca was very clear about wanting to work with children and thoroughly enjoyed helping in the Primary School.

"I loved it. That's just what I want to do when I leave school. I really like seriously want to do something like that"

(Rebecca)

She had been consistent in her Careers interview, her top two jobs involved working with children and she had clearly thought about how to get a career in this field. She knew that she wanted to either go to College and study Childcare or complete a Childcare Apprenticeship. She hadn't considered staying in Sixth Form in school and studying the Level 3 Childcare Course. We discussed this possibility and the importance of gaining her other GCSEs to be able to access the course. Rebecca was very clear about what she needed to do and at that point in time believed she could do it;

"I am determined, I really want to do it".

(Rebecca)

The five other girls were less focussed on their future careers and had fewer concrete ideas about next steps. All their ideas were things they had considered but none of them had really looked in to what they needed to do or the best route to get there.

The future career aspirations of the girls are all very gendered. When you look at the girls' option choices, their choices are all in subjects of gender stereotypical fields of study, Vleuten et al. (2018) suggests that girls are more likely to enter the feminine fields of the Humanities and the Arts rather than masculine fields such as engineering. This is certainly the case with this study group. All of their choices are in the Arts, Humanities or caring/service fields such as childcare and catering.



**Table 6. Results from Careers Interviews: Choices of Career from the Study Group**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Career/Job Choice 1</b>	<b>Career/Job Choice 2</b>	<b>Career/Job Choice 3</b>
<b>Eleanor</b>	Midwife	Primary School Teacher	Police
<b>Lisa</b>	Hair and Beauty	Chef	
<b>Rebecca</b>	Nursery	Children's Holiday Rep	Weather Forecaster
<b>Annie</b>	Beauty	Nursery	Interpreter
<b>Phoebe</b>	Accountancy		
<b>Maisie</b>	Actress/Singer	Lawyer	
<b>Bethany</b>	Interior Designer	Fashion Designer	
<b>Sarah</b>	Makeup Artist		

For Phoebe, Lisa and Annie they were unsure about the actual job or career they wanted to pursue, they had several ideas but none were concrete. What they were all very clear about was that they did not want to stay at school; they wanted to pursue either apprenticeships or a college course. When we discussed why they did not want to stay in Sixth Form they all felt that they wanted a different experience as they were not really enjoying school currently. They felt they would enjoy college more, citing more freedom and more experiences to prepare them for their next steps;

“I feel I would get more experience and work from an apprenticeship and I would get used to working and get into that routine”

(Phoebe)

“I thought College might be more of a challenge and prepare me better for University and stuff”

(Annie)

Lisa was unsure of what she wanted to do, discussed her ideas about Hair and Beauty and about Catering as it was her favourite subject in school. She had just completed her practical and felt very confident about what she had prepared. She could tell me exactly what she had made and how she had made me it and the grade she had achieved for the practical. She was very proud of her grade and of the work she had put in to the practical element of the course.

“I really enjoyed the practical and making afternoon tea, Miss Johnson was very pleased with the finish result and I felt confident”.

(Lisa)

When we discussed further about whether a career in catering might be a possibility she wasn't sure, her go to idea was Hair and Beauty although she had been swayed by family and friends' opinions of what she should do:

“Well I have some ideas. At first, I wasn't quite sure and then I thought about a Beauty Therapist or something. One of mum's friends said that it was quite a lot of work and you don't get as much money for it as well so that kind of put me off that idea. I thought about catering as well so I'm not quite sure what I want to do”.

(Lisa)

We talked about the guidance she had received in school and the packages and programmes the students can use to help them think about careers

“It comes out as Hair and Beauty and maybe a Chef. I would be able to see myself doing that but I don't know. I think working with people would improve my confidence and social skills as I am not that confident and I am quite shy so I think that would help.”

(Lisa)

Even with the guidance Lisa was not sure about her next steps after school, she clearly had been thinking about things and looked for other avenues of support and guidance as well as school but she still wasn't clear.

Like Lisa, Sarah also cited her confidence as a factor in thinking about her next steps. Sarah had chosen her options originally as she wanted to work in performance and

so had chosen dance and drama. During her careers interview she had said she was interested in film and theatre make up as she wasn't keen on performing anymore. We unpicked this a little more during the interview.

"I am not as keen on Drama make up and stuff like that, more every day and Prom make up and stuff like that. It's more about making people feel better about themselves. I've always liked doing other people's make up and so it is something I enjoy and I find it therapeutic. I think that it makes me feel better when I make other people feel better. So, it's reflecting on me."

(Sarah)

Like all the other girls she had based her idea of future careers on what she enjoyed doing in her free time, she hadn't really researched what it takes to be successful in the career or what she would need to be able to access the course.

Both Eleanor and Bethany were clear that they wanted to stay at school and complete A Levels and then go on to University. Bethany had some clear ideas about her choice of career as a Fashion or Interior Designer whilst Eleanor had changed her mind several times; all her chosen jobs/careers involved working with people and to some degree involved helping others – a Midwife, Police, a Play Therapist or Educational Psychologist. Neither of the two girls had done much research into the qualifications they might need in order to access courses at University to gain careers in the fields they had been thinking about. All the girls had received careers advice throughout their time at school in the form of assemblies, PSHE days and tutor sessions, they had access to on line packages and tools to help them think carefully about chosen careers. They would also have had access to the school's Careers Coordinator and outside Careers advice from local independent providers. Despite all of this both of them were unclear about what they really wanted to do and how they could access University.

#### 4.6.4 Parental Influence

All the girls apart from Rebecca talked about their family in positive ways in relation to the different questions they were asked. Rebecca was negative about her family on numerous occasions and it was clear that they were influential at all different levels.

"We've had maths homework every week and obviously because if me and Lynn and Dad had an argument and they wouldn't let me on the computer so that's why I didn't do that for that reason but now I can't do MyMaths homework".

(Rebecca)

Rebecca was expressing her frustration at not getting a good grade in her Maths homework report; she felt this was the worst area on her report and this was linked to her access to the Maths Homework programme. This negative attitude to her parents was not matched by the CYRM28 Score for Relationships with Caregivers, the sub scale total score of 31 was above the mean for the Low Risk Female group and compared to 48.4% of the total sample with the same score or below. The two sub-clusters in the caregiving section were above or very close to the mean values. Looking at the questions, which affect the Caregiving Cluster Rebecca's individual scores, are interesting:

My Parents watch me closely - 5

My parents know a lot about me - 5

I talk to family about how I feel - 3

My family stands by me at difficult times -3

I feel safe with my family - 5

I enjoy my family's traditions - 5

Whilst Rebecca gives a high score for the first two questions and adults would view these elements as positive scores, they wouldn't necessarily be viewed in this way by Rebecca who would see the element of control, her family watching her closely and knowing lots about her, as negative. Hill et al. (2007) see autonomy as one of the malleable, intrinsic factors especially in girls (NCH, 2007). You can see from Rebecca's first two answers on the CYRM28 that she does not perceive she has too much autonomy. Rebecca's answers in the interviews show that her family are clearly influential in terms of controlling her homework time as well as her views. In discussion with Rebecca about her report the Religious Studies (RS) grade and effort scores were low. It was clear from Rebecca's answer that whether consciously or sub-consciously her Father's attitudes had affected her behaviour in this subject:

"I had a conversation with Dad about RS and he was saying that he doesn't think I need to learn it because it's not stuff that I really want to know about and stuff that I need and obviously I just sit there and obviously I don't want to learn about other religions."

(Rebecca)

Rebecca's Father may perceive that he is being encouraging in talking to Rebecca about her work and by banning computer time to discipline her, but his actions are not supportive. This is something that was recognised by Ball et al. (1999) who found that parents of working class children did offer support and were encouraging and pressurising in equal measure, but this support was sometimes misplaced because they could not offer tangible support or the ability to facilitate opportunities for their children. Gewirtz et al. (2005) support this view in their study on Education Action Zones they found parents were supportive and did value education but they lacked the right kind of cultural and social capital in terms of knowledge and social contacts with professionals, that middle class parents may possess, which would be advantageous for their children. Rebecca's Father's views on studying Religious Education gave Rebecca the excuse not to complete her work and justified her behaviour in lesson. Rebecca's Father would attend all parents' evenings but would make his views known about certain subjects. He would often prefer to talk than listen to the teacher's advice about what Rebecca really needed to do to improve. Sanders et al. (2016) noted that the relationship between parent and school is a factor in increasing student levels of engagement, however, if the interaction is not fully supportive the desired outcome e.g. increased grades may not be fully realised which was the case for Rebecca's final outcomes.

Rebecca's Relationship with Caregivers CYRM28 sub scale score had increased after the interventions, in particular the sub cluster Psychological Caregiving. In the second CYRM28 Rebecca had the highest score of the group for this sub scale. Rebecca's relationship with her parents is very volatile and as a result this could be the reason why her score has increased; how the relationship was at the time of answering would very much affect Rebecca's answers. The relationship between students and their parents clearly does influence student educational motivation. (Cheung and Pomerantz, 2012) for Rebecca this relationship is not a simple cause and effect

relationship it is much more complex than the interplay of relationships between parents and school.

Annie had the highest score of the CYRM28 Score for Relationships with Caregivers, the sub scale total score of 35 was above the mean for the Low Risk Female group at 30.34. She scored 5 for all of the answers. This compared to 14.7% of the total low risk group who had scored 35 which was the largest proportion of the sample putting Annie in the top 100% for comparison. She clearly listened to her family and relied upon them for advice.

"I thought maybe not [about beauty] and then my family suggested that because I like languages that I should be an interpreter which I am unsure about"

(Annie)

We discussed why she was unsure and how she found it difficult to talk to people apart from when she was with her family and friends;

"When I am with my family I am my normal self and I feel school pressures are gone and I am more like them [family]...at school I find it difficult to be myself, when I'm not at school I don't feel pressure and I feel more at ease"

(Annie)

Phoebe also had a high score of 34 for the sub scale Relationships with Caregivers which compared with 14.1% of the total sample putting her in the top 85% of the sample. She talked about the disappointment of her mum with her report grades;

"Well my mum was disappointed because my potential grades were A\* but they are not exactly bad grades but she [mum] said I had to work harder to get my potential grades"

(Phoebe)

Phoebe agreed that she could and should be working harder and that she could be doing better with her effort levels in class and could get more work completed.

The five other girls did not explicitly mention family at all in our interviews, even though Eleanor had the third highest score of 34 for the Sub cluster Relationship with Caregivers in the CYRM28.

#### 4.6.5 Views on Interventions - Yoga

The girls had very mixed views on their participation in the interventions. The yoga was something that was new to them all and involved a weekly session for 6 weeks with a known PE teacher who is a trained Yoga teacher. The girls participated in the Yoga session rather than their normal PE lesson. They had to get to the sessions themselves; they were told where the session was taking place each week. Only five of the eight girls attended all the sessions. The other three girls missed sessions due to absence. The five girls that attended all of the sessions really enjoyed the yoga and cited it as relaxing and beneficial. They preferred it to their normal PE lessons and said that they would like to do this regularly, they enjoyed it because it was different. Two of the girls even talked about how they had used some of the deep breathing techniques in their mock exams when they had felt stressed and it had helped them.

"I enjoy it, it's different because it's easier and helps calm you down"

(Bethany)

One of the girls said that on the day they had Yoga she thought she slept better in the evening. Maisie found it relaxing especially because it was at the end of the day. She said she enjoyed it because it gave her the chance to do something different

"you can move around and do different things after you have just had a day of just sitting at a table. It is nice, just stretching out"

(Rebecca)

It was Sarah, Eleanor and Phoebe who appeared to have benefited the least from the yoga and had missed three sessions. For Sarah she felt self-conscious during the sessions, which linked, with how she had felt in her drama and dance lessons. However, she could not articulate why she felt this way:

"There are no mirrors so I don't know why I feel self-conscious"

(Sarah)

One week she was in school but said she had a swollen eye so did not want to do the yoga, for the other two weeks she was absent from school. For Eleanor and Phoebe, they preferred staying in their normal PE lesson rather than doing the yoga sessions so did not attend all 6 sessions. Eleanor and Phoebe had the highest scores of the group

in the Individual Peer Support sub cluster in the CYRM28, which might indicate they gained support from the positive relationships they had with their peers, which may exist in PE in an all-female lesson. Sarah had the lowest score for peer support; the self-consciousness she felt could be a result of poor body image, which according to recent Government Research is having a significantly negative impact on women's educational and workplace aspirations, active citizenship, and participation in public life (Government Equalities Office, 2015).

#### 4.6.6 Views on Interventions – Primary School Reading

All the girls really enjoyed the Primary School reading sessions with the Year 2 children. They took place weekly for a period of 6 weeks. The girls were taken to the Primary School each week by minibus by a teacher and on the first occasion, introduced to the class and the individual children they would be reading with. Each week they listened to the child read and had a period of time to talk through the story as well as anything else that came up. The girls were very positive about these sessions. Their comments were really positive about the children:

“It was fun, I really enjoyed helping her sound out the tricky words she didn't know”

(Maisie)

“I absolutely loved it. It's what I really want to do. I loved helping them read and just talking to them, they were interesting and I really felt like I was helping them. I liked the way all the children talked to us and wanted to read with us.”

(Rebecca)

Lisa who said she was quite shy said it gave her the opportunity of doing something that she hadn't done before:

“I am a shy person but I had to take a step forward and be the sort of boss as they are smaller and they don't always know what they are doing so you have to be more talkative, I haven't really had to do that before”.

(Lisa)



Sarah had been paired with a child who could read well and quickly but needed support understanding the story. After one session Sarah had realised that this was what he needed without having to be told:

“He was really good at reading, almost perfect. He read really quickly and wanted to keep reading books.... I asked him to explain what the stories were about and he needed some help with this. He really enjoyed reading and was quite shy when I first met him and after we read together it was really nice because he was smiling after”.

(Sarah)

It was clear from speaking to Sarah about this that she enjoyed going and reading with her partner, she enjoyed the fact that he liked reading to her and that it made him happy. Unlike the yoga she did not miss any of the sessions and like Rebecca she told me she really looked forward to the sessions. Annie also enjoyed the sessions she said she was used to being around small children because of her brother and sister, she felt comfortable around the children and read with them well. She enjoyed going to the Primary school and felt that it was important as she was helping the children. When I asked her whether she would like to take on a similar role of responsibility at our school such as a peer mentor where she could help and support younger students she was more reluctant:

“I wouldn't want to do that...I don't know [why] I don't think I would be good for it”

(Sarah)

Annie's sense of self efficacy and esteem were boosted by the reading intervention in the primary school but at this stage it did not translate into her feeling able to carry out a similar role in her own school with older students even though they would still be younger than her. The findings of a report from the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (2010) noted that in over half of the schools they surveyed, the unexpected outcomes of peer mentoring schemes, where peer mentors benefited just as much as the mentees having reported increased self-esteem and self-confidence demonstrate the power of helping and supporting others to develop our own sense of self. The six-week programme of reading did have an impact on Annie,

the lasting impact and continuation of the increased self-esteem are harder to measure.

#### 4.6.7 Views on the Problem-Solving sessions

The girls met as a group for six weeks to work on problem solving activities for 30 minutes each week. The activities ranged from practical tasks, which used equipment like LEGO to solve problems to word problems, and logic based problems. In the sessions, the girls were given the problem by me and then left to their own devices. In the first few weeks, I needed to provide more intervention and structure in order to get them started and keep them on track. As they became more familiar with the sessions, they needed less input. The girls' own views on the sessions were interesting. Some of the girls had very positive views, these tended to be the girls who took more of a lead in the sessions and got involved during the activities. Bethany and Eleanor both enjoyed the activities:

"I enjoyed the problem solving as I liked to get answers or solve the problems. Some of the problems were more difficult than others but it was good to work together and solve the problems as a team"

(Bethany)

They both enjoyed the element of working together:

"It took some hard work to figure out the problems but it was satisfying when we got the answer".

(Eleanor)

Some of the girls were not as positive and didn't enjoy the sessions, these were the girls who were less likely to get involved, they sat back and let others take the lead. Sometimes they got involved but then gave up. Rebecca found it difficult to get involved and often gave up after her first go:

"it was alright but I found it annoying when something didn't work".

(Rebecca)

At times rather than working as a whole team the girls broke off into pairs or threes when they felt less involved. When this happened, they were less successful in solving

the problem, this often resulted in one or two of the smaller groups solving the problem and the other groups not engaging:

“some of the problems were really hard and if it didn't work straight away I didn't want to keep trying [as] sometimes it seemed pointless”.

(Maisie)

“I'm not very good at things like that I get confused and don't understand what I should be doing”.

(Rebecca)

In the problem solving sessions the girls' abilities to persevere and stick with things became really apparent. The comments some of the girls made about the problem solving activities mirrored some of the comments they made about their subjects, particularly maths. These patterns are not surprising and are highlighted in an OECD Study (2015) which reports that many girls have low levels of confidence in their ability to solve science and mathematics problems and express high levels of anxiety towards mathematics. This is made worse by the very high correlation between mathematical and science test performance and self-confidence in those subjects.

The impact of the problem solving sessions on the girl's overall resilience scores is hard to measure as there was a mixed response depending on the type of problem they were faced with. There were links with some of the girl's attitudes towards subjects like maths and their attitudes to the problem solving sessions but this was not the case for all the girls.

#### 4.6.8 Summary of Analysis

The qualitative and quantitative nature of the data collected provides a rich evidence base on which to draw conclusions and to assess the effectiveness of the mentoring intervention programme in promoting change in the educational aspirations, attitudes and beliefs of the focus group of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls. The evidence shows that some aspects of the programme were more successful than others. The discussion section will explore the extent of the success of the programme by bringing together the analysis of all the data.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Overview of discussion

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate whether an intervention programme based upon research in the field of resilience could effect change in a group of under achieving, disadvantaged, female students in order to impact upon their educational aspirations, attitudes and beliefs. The theoretical framework for this thesis, based on a Social Ecological Model (SEM) highlighted how an individual is nested within different systems and it is how these systems interact with the individual and with one another that shape an individual's characteristics, aspirations, attitudes and beliefs.

The focus on resilience as a concept emerged from a desire to effect change for a group of students identified each year in my school who exhibited similar aspirations. These aspirations were typically low and they avoided situations and experiences that put them out of their comfort zone and lived experience. Their attitudes to learning and their behavioural traits were also similar; they would often give up easily and would be reluctant to apply time or effort to work which was borne out of a fear of failure. Research shows that for this group of students, classified as white, British, disadvantaged, are most likely to demonstrate negative changes and a decline in attitudes and aspirations over time (Strand, 2009). This is linked to the fear of failure with a mentality that if they do not try then they cannot fail. Often coupled with lack of support from home with schoolwork, as well as a lack of cultural and social capital leads to low feelings of self-worth that they are not good enough and cannot achieve well. This in turn affects their attainment in school and future life chances as well as opportunities, potentially perpetuating a negative cycle of decline for future generations.

Richards (2018) reports that often disadvantaged students especially in more prosperous areas become lost as they move through the education system; their lack of achievement is masked in the data by those who achieve well. Nationally, white British, disadvantaged girls are a group who are doing less well than their non-disadvantaged peers and the focus in this thesis on girls was intentional in view of the challenges they face in today's society that they previously did not. This group are also exposed to increased societal pressures to achieve and a future sold on instant

gratification from a digital – always 'on', reality TV, celebrity driven culture (Dieu,2015). The desire to achieve instant gratification has resulted in a loss of identity and sense of belonging for this group. Factors such as these contribute to issues surrounding resilience, well-being and mental health.

The thesis aimed to explore the following question:

Can a targeted intervention programme based on resilience research promote change in the educational aspirations, attitudes and beliefs of a group of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls?

Two sub-questions were developed to break down the different aspects:

- What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of disadvantaged students?
- Can these educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs be changed?

Each of these questions will be considered separately through analysis of the data captured from the interviews, CYRM28 results, and individual student's effort and achievement data. The key concepts of barriers to academic success, resilience and mentoring will be considered throughout as well as capital and gender and the impact of these on attitudes, educational attainment and aspiration.

#### 5.1.1 What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls? - Aspirations

The students who participated in the study had a general idea of the careers they wished to pursue in the future. Their choices were traditionally gendered and were focused on caring or service based roles which generally matched the subject options they had chosen at GCSE. Throughout the course of the intervention programme the girls did not change their career aspirations or choices. This could be because the intervention programme was for a time limited period of six weeks, which may be too short a time for students to change their aspirations based on a sustained change in self-efficacy that had been brought about by the intervention programme. For some of the girls, the volunteering elements of the programme, the reading sessions at the Primary School consolidated their views on their existing choices about future aspirations and career choices. They enjoyed this element and it confirmed

they wanted to work with children or in a career that involved working with and helping others. Fuller and Macfayden (2012) support and note it is this group of low attaining disadvantaged female students, who seek careers more influenced by gender. All the students enjoyed the reading sessions and the sense of importance they felt in having a reading buddy. The interviews clearly evidenced that they enjoyed the responsibility for a younger child who looked forward to their visit and valued their time. Bandura et al.'s (2001) research states that self-efficacy is the main determinate of factors such as career choice and development, aspirations and the ability to fulfil the educational requirements necessary for chosen careers. This element of the intervention programme did develop their sense of self-worth and sense of importance and value. It is much more difficult to measure whether or not this development of self-worth and self-importance would translate into a sustained inner belief and a change in aspirations in the longer term rather than sticking with a career aspiration that was influenced by home and familial links, pressure from their peers and influences from the media and society in general. Chambers et al.'s (2018) work found that career aspirations and the pathways to achieve future jobs and careers do reflect the different life experiences according to gender to which children are still subject. They also note that once choices are made they can be deeply embedded and that ambition and potential are capped by horizons that are narrowed by gender. Their work also stated that this group of students' lack of access to role models and awareness of the different jobs available is a particular concern for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Parental influence in career choices and aspirations are evident and it was clear from the interviews that the girls had spoken to parents about future careers and aspirations. It is clear that parents' social class and economic status do play a part in developing aspirations. If the habitus created for these girls by their parents did not provide them with a myriad of opportunities that developed their cultural capital, then their views on future careers and exposure to opportunities to gain knowledge on future careers may be limited. Tan (2017) suggests that parents with higher socioeconomic status (SES) have a better understanding of the expectations of schools and job markets and as such can provide their children with the necessary cultural capital to promote academic and career success. They may also have navigated the system themselves and as such have a better understanding of what

is expected of their children in order to achieve and do well. Rimkute et al. (2012) suggested that parents' expectations of what their children might achieve and how school might help them to fulfill their potential is shaped by their own internal habitus. The interviews demonstrated that where girls had spoken with their parents about future aspirations and school success advice had been given and discussed but their parents had not always providing opportunities or the necessary cultural capital which would allow them to know what to do next or look for opportunities to find more knowledge on certain careers and grow aspirations. Tan (2015) also noted that higher SES students had knowledge and the financial backing to pursue careers in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) which often require longer periods of study, this may be another factor when understanding the gendered choices of the girls' future career aspirations. Combine this with the family being one of the most important sources of gender socialisation; through sex-role learning - either through conveying ideas about appropriate gender stereotypical behaviour or because parents' own behaviour displays are gender stereotypical (Vleuten et al., 2018) the girls' gendered career choices and future aspirations are not necessarily surprising. This shows the direct impact the girls' microsystem – family and school can have on aspirations.

This study did not consider parental occupations. However, having some anecdotal knowledge of the girls' parents' occupations I knew that their fathers were either unemployed or worked in Level 3 or lower occupations and their mothers either worked in the home as a wife and mother or were employed in typical female gender occupations e.g. cleaners or carers.

All of the girls would be the first in family to go to University (if they decided to make that choice) and as such all of the girls lacked any exposure to a higher education experience through familial links. Some would have received this exposure through school based learning and programmes, but this would depend on their curriculum pathways. The students would also have an element of choice as to whether they chose to participate in the activities if they were offered the opportunity. The short term nature of the intervention in this study may not have been enough to effect any change in future career aspirations at this point but if the intervention programme contributed to them achieving better GCSE results they would then have the

necessary qualifications to allow them to access further study, higher education and foster increased aspiration.

#### 5.1.2 What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls? - Beliefs

When considering the issue of beliefs, attention will be given here to the girls' own sense of self-belief and self-worth through exploring the concept of resilience. Multiple studies by New Philanthropy Capital (2014), the National Children's Society (2015) and the GirlGuiding Association (2013) show that gender plays a key role in levels of resilience. All the organisations reported that girls' resilience was much more fragile than that seen in boys and that there are multiple impacts on levels of resilience. These include the increasing use and permeating nature of media in the lives of young people that intensify the exposure to sexualised imagery and sexism.

The girls' resilience was measured by the CYRM28. Before any interventions took place, the girl's group total scores for the whole CYRM28 and for each of the sub scales were lower than the whole sample's scores. The group's total scores were also below the mean for the total scores in the Complex Needs Youth Group and for the females in the Low Risk Youth Group. The lower the score the lower the overall resilience level. Overall, these lower mean scores might suggest that this group of girls have lower resilience as their mean scores are lower than the low risk group of females from the whole sample.

The data suggested that the girls as a whole group possessed less of the internal capabilities associated with resilience processes particularly those that focused on social skills and the spiritual and cultural aspects of their community. All of the girls scored 1 for the question 'I participate in organized religious activities' both pre and post intervention, which is no surprise as the intervention programme would not necessarily change this aspect of their lives. Sense of future and purpose including religious faith is one of the intrinsic factors Hill et al. (2007) suggests can build resilience. If the girls are scoring low in this area, they could be missing an experience that can contribute to building and changing their own intrinsic levels of resilience. However, the data demonstrated that in most cases the girls felt supported by their family,



therefore there may be less of a need for other adults from the community to provide support and care that would compensate for parental support.

All the girls are white British and may not have the support from their community that might often be found with students from minority ethnic groups (Berrington et al., 2016). This community support can also provide ethnic capital which Strand (2014) identifies along with a broader set of community values and networks as promoting educational attainment. Sacker et al. (2002) support this view, their research found that the wider community was more important to educational and psychosocial resources as children moved into adolescence. This ethnic capital supports educational resilience and positive academic self-concept. Strand (2002) suggests that immigrants devote themselves more to education than the native population because they lack financial capital and see education as a way out of poverty. In contrast the white disadvantaged population suffer from low aspirations and attainment, especially in deprived communities where traditionally unskilled, low paid jobs in industry offered stability and a steady income, children would look to leave school as soon as possible and gain jobs through familial links (DCSF, 2008). The case study school is situated in a market town in the south east of England and whilst there are very few industrial jobs on offer, students will often gain jobs through links with their family in service sector employment or jobs involving manual labour. Despite the introduction of the Raising Participation Age Policy in 2013 requiring all young people to stay in education, employment and training until they are 18 the pattern of leaving school to get a job with family is still evident in my school for some students. The low aspirations and attainment reflected in the low scores for cultural identity in the CYRM28 could also be linked to a marginalisation and perceived loss of a traditional white working class culture as our towns become more globalised (Demie and Lewis, 2014). In an area that has less deprivation overall, white working class families may also feel more marginalised as theirs are not the dominant voices in the local community. This symbolic power means that those families that identify as white working class may find it hard to establish their own networks and place within the area.

After the interventions had taken place, the analysis showed four of the girls had an increased total CYRM28 score and 4 of the girls had a decreased CYRM28 score. Of

the four students who had increased scores the biggest increase was in the Individual sub scale score with the exception of one student who had the same increase in her Context Sub Scale score. It was less clear which of the sub cluster components had contributed to the increase in the overall Individual sub scale score. The increase in this sub scale of 2.75 was the largest increase in the sub scales between pre and post intervention measurements, it was this increase which contributed the most to the Mean Total score for the group which increased overall from 107.63 to 110.63. The increase in the Individual sub scale score for 4 students and for the group as a whole indicates levels of resilience have risen and may suggest that the intervention programme has had an impact on student's self-belief. The intervention programme has facilitated positive interactions between the girls' microsystems and exosystems as they have been contributing to their wider community through the reading buddy scheme. As a result of these positive interactions their individual characteristics, attitudes, aspirations and resilience have changed.

Context was the next sub scale to contribute to the increase in the total CYRM28 score, not all of the students had a positive increase in this sub scale and as a result the mean increase was much smaller at only 0.37. Positive interactions between the microsystem, mesosystems and each girl through participation in this intervention programme may have resulted in the increase to the Context score for some of the students. Through the intervention programme they may have experienced a greater connection with the School context which in turn made them feel increased self-belief and as a result their resiliency score in this area increased. This was followed by a decrease of 0.13 overall in the mean score for the subscale Relationship with Caregivers, 5 of the students had a negative score for this sub scale, this included all of the students who had overall decreased scores and one student whose overall score had increased.

The four students whose Total CYRM28 scores had decreased had a smaller decrease than the value of increase for the four students whose scores had increased. It was the Context sub scale score which had decreased for the four students with the Context Spiritual Sub cluster score either being a decreased or neutral score. The interactions between each of our systems are delicate and finely balanced. Students' responses to the CYRM28 could be affected by the immediate state of their relationship with their parents and family if their resilience levels and self-belief are not

fully developed and established. This may account for the drop in this score and for this particular sub scale.

### 5.1.3 What are the educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls? - Educational Attitudes

It has been recognised that the factors that affect educational attitudes and achievement of white disadvantaged children are a set of complex and inter related factors. They include poor parental engagement, poor standards of literacy as well as poor transition and a lack of student aspiration and engagement. My school measures student engagement in learning by measuring attitudes to learning. The girls' attitudes to learning were measured as part of their usual reporting cycle. Alongside this data their academic data was also considered. In my school, attitudes to learning are measured in three categories across all their subjects; classwork, behaviour for learning and homework.

These three categories were measured after the intervention programme had taken place. This data was compared with their average attitude to learning scores from data taken pre intervention. After the intervention programme the results in the classwork category showed that four girls had improved their average scores and four girls had worse average scores across their subjects. In the behaviour for learning category five girls had improved their average scores, one girl's score had stayed the same and one girl's score had declined. For the homework category one girl had an improved score, whilst five girls had worse scores and one girl's scores had stayed the same. Only one girl's score had worsened across all three categories.

Homework was the area that saw the most decline in effort scores. Using this analysis alone it does not seem that there are any clear patterns in the data. The girl whose attitude to learning in all three areas had declined was one of the girls who showed the most increases in GCSE grades and who had the smallest progress differential of the whole group. However, she was the girl who had the highest Total CYRM28 score of all the group pre interventions with a score that was also higher than the low risk female group. Her highest sub cluster score was in the Personal Skills section. This supports the view that even though her attitudes to learning scores declined over the

course of her studies, Eleanor's resilience is stronger and put her in a good position to achieve relatively well in her final GCSEs and then to allow her to gain access into further study on level 3 courses in the School Sixth Form.

Goldthorpe's (2007) view that the school system cannot re-socialise a person or their habitus may have some resonance here. Homework scores saw the most decline across the intervention period, it could be argued that as homework progresses and increases in difficulty the parents of this group of girls did not have the experience to support them or the necessary social and cultural capital to access increased support for them for their homework to improve. Sacker et al. (2002) noted in their study;

"towards the end of their children's schooling, parents could be seen to adjust their expectations in the light of their children's achievements and the actuality for children in their socio-economic group and neighbourhood context"

(2002, p. 874)

This could have been the case with parents not able to provide access to support or help their children due to their own limitations. They may well have altered their expectations about what their daughter was going to achieve when they saw the reports coming home. If this was the case it is very difficult for a school to fight the messages that are coming from home. The interactions taking place in the mesosystem between the individual, the family and school show how these interactions can also impact negatively on an individual.

Ball et al. (1999) recognises that schools can influence students' paths but it is about how the school does this against the backdrop and messages heard in the family home, especially if parents have lowered their expectations of what their child can achieve. It should also be noted that if parents are constantly being called due to problems and issues e.g. forgotten homework, behavioural problems it may be easier to ignore the school and support their child as we saw with the messages Rebecca received from her parents with regard to Religious Studies (RS).

A study by the Department for Children, schools and Families (2008) found that educational failure is increased by a lack of parental interest in schooling and that

students were disadvantaged by a lack of parental interest rather than social class. However, it could be argued that social class is a barrier itself, which in turn has caused the parents to lack the social and cultural capital and confidence themselves to participate and be interested especially when their children are studying for GCSEs.

There were four students who had increased attitudes to learning scores across two out of the three categories. Three of these four girls had increased total CYRM28 scores post the intervention programme, they had the top three most increased scores. The one student whose Total CYRM28 score had decreased was Sarah, she had the lowest Total CYRM28 score pre and post the intervention programme, her total CYRM28 score was significantly lower than all the other students and showed the greatest negative distance from the Mean score of the whole female Low Risk Youth sample as well as the study group. Sarah was the least engaged in the programme and struggled to find her place in the school already having attended two Secondary Schools prior to attending our school. Her resiliency appeared low; although school attendance was not significantly lower than expected she found ways to avoid the different sessions in the intervention programme.

Having resilience allows students to be open to learning and receptive to challenge. Resilience gives them the skills to bounce back if they fail or stumble upon a concept which is difficult. Some of the girls' showed in their interviews that often they became stuck and gave up, this may then have led to incomplete homework, chatting in the classroom rather than persevering with the challenge which would inevitably result in a weaker attitude to learning and effort scores from their teachers. Developing resilience allows students to keep going and find different ways to deal with becoming 'stuck' which inevitably would lead to increased effort scores. So, whilst not dealing with significant adversity in this context, resiliency skills do make a difference to a student's ability to persevere and succeed.

The data shows that out of the eight girls, four increased their final GCSE grades from the data collection point pre intervention. Two out of these four girls achieved good passes in all of their subjects. Of these four girls, two recorded an increased total CYRM28 score which could suggest their resilience factors had increased. Although all the girls achieved a number of good GCSE passes (grade C or Grade 4 or above) none of the girls achieved a positive progress score (measuring their Key Stage 2 SAT

scores against their final GCSE outcomes). This could indicate they did not fulfil their full potential, which they demonstrated in their Key Stage 2 SATS. It could also indicate that the methods for measuring progress in the wider education system is flawed as suggested earlier in the thesis. This demonstrates how the macro system affects individuals, in this case negatively. The cultural values placed on academic success and achievement mean that the pressure felt by primary schools for pupils to achieve well result in teaching to the test and cramming. The outcomes are not a true reflection of academic ability and as a result students end up with inflated targets that are in some cases impossible to achieve.

Two of the girls received attitude to learning results where two grades stayed the same and two decreased, both of these had Total CYRM28 scores which had decreased post intervention. One girl had an equal number of grades that had increased and decreased and grades, which did not change; she too had a reduced Total CYRM28 score post intervention. Only one student had more grades which had decreased than had increased or stayed the same, she had recorded the second largest increase in her Total CYRM28 score post intervention. This student was the one who appeared to have experienced the most adversity and trauma, suffering bereavement as well as having agency involvement throughout her life. These results reflect a complex picture and show how the interplay between the systems framed in the SEM interact in different ways to affect the individual.

## 5.2 Can these educational attitudes, aspirations and beliefs be changed?

The evidence to be able to suggest that the intervention programme has had a universally positive effect on the whole groups and their resilience levels as measured by the CYRM28 Total score is hard to prove. The definition of resilience in an educational context is centred upon a student's ability to bounce back in the face of challenge or failure and a refusal to let issues such as friendship problems or arguments affect the focus on their studies. A student who shows resilience possesses the protective factors that support them to be successful. Whilst the total scores for four of the girls did increase, four girls had scores, which did not. For these girls some of their sub clusters scores did increase post intervention. This would suggest then that resilience is a highly complex concept that can and does change as evidenced by the changing CYRM28 scores. It is also a property that is changeable and one which reacts to adversity. In the definition given by Roisman et al., (2002)

*'Resilience is an emergent property of a hierarchically organized set of protective systems that cumulatively buffer the effects of adversity and can therefore rarely, if ever, be regarded as an intrinsic property of individuals.'*

(2002, [p. 1216](#))

Resilience is not something which is intrinsic but something that does change in response to the challenges, problems and issues encountered on a daily basis. If it is something that is not static and something that changes depending on the adversity we encounter, then measuring this at any given point in time could prove to be problematic especially for a group of girls whose levels of adversity faced is not the same in scale to the low risk group.

The intervention programme was designed to build resilience in students through exposing them to a variety of activities, each tackling aspects that promote and build resilience and are evident in much of the research. Masten (2001), Newman (2004), Adelman and Taylor (2008) and Young Minds (2015) all identified opportunities to develop problem solving skills, build strong caring relationships with peers and significant adults, develop a sense of community through supporting others and develop techniques to self soothe and know oneself as key elements of developing resilience. Masten (2001) identified other promotive and protective factors in her 'short list' of resilience traits notably in the Family and Community sectors that this intervention programme did not tackle. Family is a vital area as Kidd (2018) emphasises:

"the fact remains that without parental support and understanding it is a large uphill struggle to get any child to understand how education might lead them towards a better future".

(2018, p. 234)

All of the students in the group had low scores both pre and post intervention in the cultural and spiritual sub scales of the CYRM28. This indicates that the intervention programme did nothing to effect any change in these areas.

It may be easier to see the effects of the intervention programme on academic outcomes as these are measures of multiple inputs e.g. effort, school attendance, work rate, ability to produce work set as well as resilience. Academic outcomes can

indirectly measure resilience, in that a student's ability to overcome a range of adverse situations of varying degrees, whether extreme family breakup, a bereavement or an event which is more of an everyday occurrence such as poor test marks, a friendship disagreement or argument with family members, will involve degrees of resiliency factors and strong, individual characteristics. If a student succeeds and achieves well academically despite having to overcome and deal with issues such as those listed above, then their resilience will have played a part.

### 5.3 Results from the control group

The control group did not experience the interventions in between them taking the first CYRM28 and the second CYRM28. The results of their CYRM28 were as follows:

**Table 7: Results for CYRM28 – control group's score**

		CYRM Total Score				Individual			Caregivers		Context			
			Individual	Relationship with Caregivers	Context/Sense of Belonging	Personal Skills	Peer Support	Social Skills	Physical	Psychological	Spiritual	Education	Cultural	
<b>Post</b>	Total		311	209	229	135	59	117	64	145	46	57	126	
	Mean	93.6	3.53	3.73	2.86	3.38	3.69	3.66	4.00	3.63	1.92	3.56	3.15	
<b>Pre</b>	Total		321	209	238	142	61	118	63	146	45	60	133	
	Mean	96	3.65	3.73	2.98	3.55	3.81	3.69	3.94	3.65	1.88	3.75	3.33	
<b>Comparative</b>			-2.4	-0.11	0.00	-0.11	-0.18	-0.13	-0.03	0.06	-0.02	0.04	-0.19	-0.18

As a whole group the mean total CYRM28 score of 96 put them below the mean score for the females in the complex needs youth group from the whole sample. After the six week period their total mean score had decreased from 96 to 93.6.

When the data was interrogated further the biggest changes were in the Individual and Context sub scales with no change in the Relationship with Caregivers. Notably the biggest changes in the Individual sub scale were in the personal skills and the Peer Support sub clusters. In the Context sub scale the biggest changes were in the Education and Cultural sub clusters. Of the eight students in the control group, three had scores with no change, five had scores that had decreased with values between 2 and 7. Two of these students had changes to their scores which were relatively high, a difference of 5 and 7 respectively. These students both experienced incidents and



issues during this time that meant they were put under increased scrutiny by the school as their behaviour and attendance declined significantly. This is clearly reflected in their change of scores. There were no students who had increased their scores between the two CYRM28 surveys.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Overview of findings

The starting point for this study was a consideration of the mentoring programme in our school. Every year in the summer term following analysis of the students' performance data the school chooses a number of Year 10 students who receive mentoring from Senior Members of staff in order to ensure that the students achieve their full potential in their final Year 11 GCSE exams. Experience shows that many of the students display similar characteristics in terms of their status, backgrounds and learning behaviours. These may include being at risk of CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation), involvement of social services, risk taking behaviour outside of school, behavioural problems and challenging behaviour in school, a lack of motivation and willingness to apply effort, poor attendance, historical poor parental engagement, limited aspirations, low self-confidence and low self-esteem and no 'academic' familial background. All of these factors pose challenges and barriers to learning and as a result the ability of the students to achieve their full potential. More often than not, these students are White British, girls and many of them will be in receipt of FSM. For this group of students, their achievement is behind that of their more well off peers nationally and within our school as evidenced in the national and in school data highlighting the achievement gap. It is for this reason that these students are the ones primarily chosen for the mentoring programme each year. We see that their achievement is lower and as a result so is their ability often to move onto further education and remain there to finish a course and thus access higher education or higher levels of training beyond Level 2 and 3 qualifications.

It was from this starting point and through the literature review that the research question was formulated:

Can a targeted intervention programme promote change in the educational aspirations, attitudes and beliefs of a group of underachieving white British disadvantaged girls?

The study aimed to focus on developing an intervention programme that affects change in students in order to impact upon their levels of achievement and possible future aspirations, their resilience factors and retention into Sixth form or College Post Year 11. Resilience became the focus of the study as it is this characteristic that according to Young Minds (2015), the Young People's mental health and well-being charity, growing and developing resilience enables:

- students to achieve good educational outcomes despite adversity
- individuals to do better than schools might have expected
- Disadvantaged students to behave better and achieve better results.

Initial research showed that the work being carried out on resilience in schools was found to be much more closely linked to concerns around mental health and emotional and social developmental more so than on academic development and achievement. In a review of school based interventions to enhance resilience Ungar et al. (2014) demonstrated that in interventions where improved academic achievement was desired the focus was often on how the student could better engage with the school or vice versa to impact positively on academic achievement. Interestingly many programmes in the study focussed on building students' social capital in the different arenas of home and school by developing relationships with supportive adults in these places and with their peers who behaved in socially acceptable ways. It also found that successful programmes were ones which interrupted patterns of behaviour that were likely to lead to academic failure and disengagement from school by changing a students' social ecology.

Studies on resilience seem much more primarily focussed on the emotional, behavioural and social aspects of students' lives which in turn has an effect on academic achievements. The desire to affect student resilience through an intervention programme by developing the mentoring system that was already in place was the focus for this study.

## 6.2 The effects of increasing resilience as an intrinsic concept

The findings from this study showed that resilience is a complex facet, which every individual possesses but to varying degrees. Many things affect resilience at different times. Roisin (2002) believes that it is not intrinsic to individuals but rather a set of protective systems that can and do accumulate. This may well be the case; the results from the CYRM28 show that the students' scores did change over time. Some students increased their resiliency measure at the end of the intervention programme whilst for others their resiliency measure had decreased. This could suggest that resilience in individuals is not necessarily a fixed entity or at a fixed capacity but one that can change depending on experiences and the variety of factors happening within and between the systems in which an individual is nested. If a number of events occur in someone's life that 'knock' these levels of resilience out of place, then an individual's ability to deal with adversity is affected.

It is because of this complexity that increasing resiliency within students is also a complex task. The majority of students enjoyed the different elements of the intervention programme; some had favourite elements and embraced these. Some students were keen to share their thoughts about the different elements of the programme in terms of what they enjoyed and what they did not. Some were less keen to share their thoughts; some also actively avoided engaging in the programme. The findings show that this was the case for Sarah, whose resiliency measures were lower than the whole sample group as well as the in school group both pre and post intervention. She was the one student who did not enjoy various elements of the programme, so much so that she avoided some parts of the programme like the yoga sessions. For other students their resiliency measures did increase between pre and post intervention especially in areas, potentially affected by the programme like personal skills, and facets. The one area, which the programme did not appear to affect, was the Context elements of the CYRM 28 measure, which involved community, and a sense of belonging. This is not surprising as the responses in the CYRM28 showed that none of the girls felt they belonged to a religious or cultural community. The programme would not really be able to change this aspect directly. What may have to be considered is this sense of belonging to something larger and being part of something where an identity is shared and from which you can gain strength and support.

In conclusion, resilience can be both positively and negatively affected. The intervention programme may well have had an impact upon resilience, this could be dependent on the degree of 'buy in' there was from each individual. In the interviews the girls shared their favourite elements of the programme and those they enjoyed the most. However, they were not asked how much they thought the programme might help them do better academically. Those girls who enjoyed the programme did increase their resiliency scores and some achieved well in their final GCSE outcomes.

### 6.3 The effects of increasing resilience to improve outcomes for students.

The desire to improve outcomes for white British disadvantaged students was a key driver for this research. Seeing students over a number of years fail to achieve their full potential because of a lack of resilience and all that is enmeshed within this is something that needs to be addressed not just in our school but also in the vast majority of comprehensive schools in England. If you are a child today living in a disadvantaged family, life can be challenging. Reay (2017) suggests that to be white, British and disadvantaged is hard; real wages have fallen as a result of austerity measures, working conditions are unstable due to casual working and zero hours' contracts, parents may work long unsociable hours. Children may be left to fend for themselves, get themselves to school on time, complete homework on their own without the support of a parent and parents may not attend parents' evenings because they are working long hours. For some children where these hardships and difficulties are part of their normal life their lack of resilience, low esteem, lack of self-efficacy and low aspiration should not necessarily be surprising. The desire to achieve and succeed at school and the skills and tools needed to do this may not be in their toolkit.

The development of our school's existing mentoring programme to include elements that developed resilience in order to give students the tools to achieve better results and develop aspirations, for this research had mixed success. The GCSE results showed that some girls achieved well, gaining over 5 good passes to take them onto the next stage in their education and some of the girls did not. However, all did stay on either into Sixth Form or left to go to College to follow more vocational pathways. Only one student, Rebecca chose an apprenticeship in a local nursery. There is no

real way of knowing whether if they had not been involved with the six week intervention programme the girls would have achieved the same results in their final outcomes. The CYRM28 results showed that the girls' resiliency measures did change after the programme, some went up and some went down. The results for this group of girls showed greater changes than for the girls' scores in the control group who did not receive the interventions in the same timeframe.

The girls' learning behaviours, attitudes to learning and aspirations did show fluctuations across the intervention period as captured in their interviews and report data. It was clear that the influences of home and their own and their families' habitus affected their aspirations. At times it seemed clear from talking to the girls that their families did not possess the social, economic or cultural capital to help and support them grow and develop or overcome setbacks and adversity. Their sense of self, their own self efficacy linked to their potential, their strengths and weaknesses also fluctuated depending on the subjects they were discussing or what data and feedback they had received from teachers in their reports.

Given that resilience is not something that is intrinsically stockpiled, it could be that the six-week intervention programme needed to be longer lasting throughout the whole of Year 11. It could be argued that as students from disadvantaged backgrounds start school far behind their peers, strategies and techniques to build resilience need to start even earlier and be embedded into the school curriculum and culture and not used as 'sticking plasters' to cover over the widening gaps. Implications for possible contributions to practice will be explored in this next section.

#### 6.4 Possible Contributions for Practice

We are reminded on a daily basis that the gap between the disadvantaged in society and those who are not is widening. Government pledges to invest more money in closing these gaps, often directed through schools or through parenting and literacy programmes (Crerar, 2018), need to do more than just close the gaps. They need to ensure that the gaps are minimised in the first place and not allowed to grow as children move through their school lives.

In the case study school where nearly a third of students are pupil premium and the majority are white British, closing these gaps is important for the students themselves

and also important for the wider school community; its reputation and long term sustainability. Finding new ways to close gaps that do more than just intervene and play the inevitable game of catch up at the key points before students are due to sit exams is crucial to securing long term sustainable change.

This study did not aim to be generalizable across other schools, as the sample size was small, focussing on eight female students who whilst all white British and disadvantaged had different backgrounds and personal histories. As Kidd (2018) points out each student has a unique set of circumstances where;

“solutions cannot be reduced to simple silver bullets”

(2018, p. 233)

The contribution to practice for other institutions could come from the points raised below.

The study has shown resilience can change and with this in mind, it is important that leaders in schools find ways to include opportunities to build and develop resilience into daily school life. In doing so would be to take an important step towards affecting change for all students. The study showed that resilience fluctuated and changed, it could be developed but it could also decrease. This then suggests that these opportunities need to happen each and every day and be 'drip fed' to students throughout the 5 years they spend in school. This means making a cultural shift in the life and ethos of a school, ensuring staff are aware of how resilience is built and how resilient students will lead to benefits for all.

In this study the sense of personal value was increased by the reading buddy project. Whilst roles of responsibility do exist in schools like peer mentors and prefects, not everybody gains these roles. Often the type of students who have been the focus for this study will not apply for a leadership role in school due to low self-worth and thinking they wouldn't be chosen if they did apply. Developing a whole school peer coaching system whereby everyone gets to be someone else's buddy whether that be for more academic support e.g. reading, learning times tables, support with revision or pastoral support to provide friendship or a friendly face to younger students could lead to that increased feeling of self-worth and a greater self-efficacy.

Ensuring that all students really do have key adults to speak to and who know them is a crucial element of building resilience, the Young Minds Charity (2015) believes that as a result of key conversations with adults, children feel cared for. They help students settle down, concentrate and feel better about themselves knowing that adults know about them and care about them is important.

In most Secondary Schools all students are placed within a tutor group so that they have one point of contact each and every day, the role of the tutor is often seen as administrative and time with the tutor is squeezed. Developing the role of the tutor and making the whole school community see that as the first person to come into contact with students each and every day this role has to be elevated in importance. This would be part of the cultural shift communicating with staff the importance of having a meaningful interaction with students each and every day and are not just a transactional conversation when answering the register.

Timetabling all students to do yoga may not be the answer to providing an opportunity for self-soothing as an identified method leading to greater resilience. However, allowing this to be an option for students to choose as part of the PE curriculum or as part of an extra-curricular session may well be the way forward for those students who staff feel would benefit from the self-soothing elements of yoga practice. These students could be supported and targeted to attend. There are obvious constraints to this, notably the cost to deliver such a programme if qualified practitioners are not readily available. However, there is a move to develop mindfulness practice in schools and my school is currently involved in the MYRIAD project in conjunction with Oxford University. This provides training for all staff and as such may be a more cost effective option for leaders to build self-soothing sessions into the curriculum.

Whilst schools can continue to 'apply the sticking plaster' and close some of the gaps some of the time, it will not be consistent and what works one year will not work the next. I believe more whole scale cultural change is needed coupled with providing opportunities for all students throughout their education that will make the greatest differences. There will always be a need for greater interventions at given points but this could be reduced by changing the traditional approach as supported by the philosophy of Young Minds,



“Building resilience involves doing a whole bundle of things that don't always happen in the classroom. We know from years of research that supporting pupils to build resilience improves their academic results”

(Young Minds, 2015)

### 6.5 Key Findings and Contribution to Knowledge

Much of the research previously has been undertaken into the resilience of young people in the face of adversity, often severe adversity. There has been a focus on the protective factors developed by young people in order for them to cope and survive. Often these studies have focussed on young people from minority groups facing severe adversity in areas where deprivation and crime rates are high or on young people who have faced traumatic situations; the death of a parent, living with HIV or after a disaster or tragedy. This study aimed to focus on a group of white British, disadvantaged female students who as a majority had not faced severe adversity. They do not live in a deprived, geographical location but who because of their white British, disadvantaged, female status might find life challenging at times. They lack the habitus to be able to develop resilience that enables them to be successful. They are a sample from a demographic who in Government reports are often referred to as,

“vulnerable to underachievement and disadvantaged by low expectations”

(Richards, 2017, p. 1)

These low expectations and low self-esteem really do have an impact on their sense of self-worth and as a result their emotional and mental well-being that will inevitably affect their future success.

The key contribution to knowledge from this study is firstly that each of these girls has a unique voice and story, they may share some similar traits and characteristics but the way in which these coalesce within each girl give rise to totally different motivations and feelings. That means whilst one part of the intervention programme

worked for one girl it may not work for another or have the same impact at the same time.

The second contribution to knowledge is the addition of a temporal dimension to the SEM. In particular when analysing how an individual's motivation, resilience, determination, and aspiration are affected by the systems in which they exist and the relationships between them. The SEM suggests that the different systems within the model interact with each other and with the individual but it does not reference changes or fluctuations in the individual taking place through time. This study introduced a dynamic element to the SEM than previously suggested in that the girls' resilience was variable and not fixed. Different elements of their resilience ebbed and flowed, evidenced in the CYRM scores pre and post intervention. The girls' interview responses also demonstrated how their levels of resilience oscillated over time dependent on their interactions between the different systems. The interactions between the individual and the different systems could increase their resilience as well as decrease resilience, demonstrating that resilience is not fixed and changes through time.

Within the SEM the different systems within the model interact with each other as well as with the individual. If there are several interactions between the different systems taking place an intervention taking place at the same time may not be effective. This could be because there are too many other interactions taking place that have a greater impact on the individual than an intervention can counteract.

It is because of this dynamism within an individual's life at any given time that a quick fix intervention programme is not necessarily the answer. Whilst the programme did impact upon resilience positively for some of the girls and several girls achieved good outcomes in their final GCSEs it is important to 'drip feed' these opportunities over a longer period of time. This ensures the effects are sustained, long lasting and internalised and that protective factors are present in order to counteract anything that challenges resilience at any given time. Providing opportunities to build resilience throughout a student's education means individuals can develop these protective factors at their own pace so that they can be used in times of adversity, hardship or difficulty whether this be inside or outside of the classroom.

This study also adds weight to the research of Hart and Blincow (2012) supported by the Young Minds charity that developing resilience in schools to improve academic outcomes involves strategic planning. This intervention study brought together elements of programmes from previous research that had been successful in developing better engagement in school. Strong leadership and well communicated practice is needed to choose the right interventions at the right time. Involving all members of the school community to develop an understanding of how young people can be better served by becoming more resilient is also the key to success. As a result, many of our disadvantaged students will be able to close the gaps and do better than predictions suggest.

#### 6.6 Review and Limitations of the Methodology

This study adopted a mixed methods approach using qualitative and quantitative data to assess students own personal views through the semi structured interviews and sessions as well as using the CYRM28 to measure student resilience at different points throughout the study. Using student data allowed me to track their academic progress and attitudes to learning throughout the intervention period and led to richer data triangulation to provide insights into students' motivations, aspirations and attitudes.

A limitation of the study, which I did not factor in, was to ask the girls about their CYRM28 scores. I spoke to them about their academic data and we discussed how they felt about this and what had contributed to their progress but I did not discuss with them the questionnaire or the concept of resilience. Looking back, it would have been useful to discuss their overall CYRM28 results and sub section results with the girls. Doing this would have provided richer information on the girls' understanding of resilience as well as explanations to their answers in categories where they had scored higher or lower. It would also have allowed the girls to see how their scores had changed over the period of intervention and would have given them the opportunity to verbalise how and why they thought their scores had changed in a particular area. It may have given them the opportunity to think about the changes carefully and more mindfully so they could focus on an element of the programme, which they thought, might address the issues. It may also have given them the opportunity to verbalise their feelings more accounting for richer data.

My role as researcher and Headteacher has to be considered here as does the consideration of power in the relationship I had with the girls. The mentoring programme is a longstanding part of school life for our year 11 students they know that they may receive a senior team mentor to guide them through their final year. No one has ever complained or refused and no parent has done so either. Although the right to withdraw and not participate was communicated to the girls and their parents at the start of the project no one did so. There has to be an awareness that the girls did not see this intervention programme as any different to what usually happens in our school and therefore this adds an extra dimension to the research. As Tyson (2018) points out the teacher student relationships implies a power relationship and as such there is an expectation that students will participate. This was certainly the case from the girls and their parents on their part but not on mine.

Another consideration was capturing additional information as part of the problem solving skills sessions which I led. Whilst I did not record any of the girls' responses during these sessions their comments, behaviours and action did inform my analysis of their scores and their comments made in the semi structured interviews. Swain (2018) discusses the issues that these 'informal' considerations can bring around consent and ethics but given that the girls had agreed to be part of the whole study I felt that this did not compromise my ethical position.

To improve the study further I would introduce both a quantitative method and qualitative method to capture the girls' thoughts on their own resilience and CYRM28 scores. This was a missing dimension as through the methodology the girls did not have the opportunity to comment on their own resilience and their understanding of resilience.

This was a small-scale study set in a relatively affluent area of South East England that focussed on a specific group of white British disadvantaged girls that were primarily chosen as a result of their academic data. Therefore, the study is not generalisable at such a small scale. It does pose further questions around the merits of interventions versus whole school cultural shifts to lever change for our most disadvantaged students in order for them to improve their academic achievements and academic resilience.

## 6.7 Possibilities for future research and influence on practice.

Research into academic resilience is less well publicised compared to research into young people's resilience when faced with adversity among groups of minority students who may also be vulnerable. This was a small scale study focussing on a small sample of eight white British disadvantaged female students. The purpose of the research was to try and effect some change on academic resilience in order for this group of female students to achieve their potential in terms of their GCSE grades and develop resilient behaviours that would enable them to move onto the next stage of education and remain there increasing retention. Given that the findings showed some benefits, further research could focus upon two areas.

The first area involves the timings of the programme. The strategies from the intervention programme - supporting others, problem solving sessions, a self-soothing activity and regular time to talk with a trusted adult could be embedded firmly into the curriculum rather than sessions which are fitted in to the existing timetable. This would allow students to participate in the activities but not miss any other areas of their curriculum. This could be done over the course of a year so students are gaining the benefits these sessions bring regularly rather than in a short burst, when they may not need it. Carrying out the CYRM28 questionnaire at the same time as academic data collection points would enable the researcher to see whether delivering the programme through the curriculum on a regular basis would have a greater impact on developing resilience as well as having an impact on academic achievement. Further development of this idea could be carrying out a longer longitudinal study over the course of five years where all of the sessions are fitted into the whole school timetable on a regular basis. In order to do this whole scale cultural change would be needed within the school. This may also mean the researcher has to look at sample size, it may be more beneficial to look at a whole cohort as they move through the school. This would enable the researcher to investigate the impacts upon different groups within a cohort.

The second area could be to look at increasing parental engagement in the intervention to assess the impact this would have on building resilience. This would involve increasing parental awareness of the strategies being used with the girls. Parents can then support their children in participation in the programme, improving

or maintaining school attendance and reinforcing the messages being given through the problem solving activities and self-soothing techniques. If parents are included it could result in the students buying in to the programme more as they know their parents are interested in what they are doing. It also allows the school to check that those key-building blocks for developing resilience are in place and if not, they can be compensated for as part of the intervention. Castro et al. (2015) recognise that parental engagement is not just about the practical support provided for education but also parental expectations on their child's future, gaining parental buy in could help support parents in giving the right messages to their children which are supportive of school and not based on their own experiences which may not have been favourable.

This research has impacts for our school's professional practice as currently we are developing a more sustained intervention programme based on this research into resilience to target a small group of Year 7 and 8 students who have gaps in their attainment, are disengaged with school and do not demonstrate the protective factors linked to resilience. This programme is being funded by the Local Authority's 'Spend to Save' programme in order to try and resolve problems and issues with early intervention strategies before they become insurmountable. The programme involves adapting the students' timetable so that they have more time to focus on the basics in Maths and English in order for them to access the wider curriculum more easily. They also have problem solving activities sessions, a trusted adult they spend time with throughout the week, an adapted PE curriculum so they participate in things they are good at and enjoy doing whilst promoting health and fitness. We have also built in a session of mindfulness building on the work we have carried out with The MYRIAD project from Oxford University.

We are also undertaking a review of our curriculum and have built in a session timetabled for Personal, Social and Health Education and Character Education. It is within this session that we plan to incorporate some of the strategies developed in this research e.g. giving time for students to undertake self-soothing activities and volunteering to help others. This will develop the promotive and protective qualities within students that develop and grow resilience.

## 6.8 Final Summary

The findings from this study demonstrate that academic resilience does impact both positively and negatively upon academic achievement, attitudes to learning and as a result, future life chances and aspirations. They also show that resilience is a complex issue and something that can be developed through developing protective factors in the right conditions but also something that can decrease depending on situations, experiences and interactions. The study group of eight White British disadvantaged girls demonstrated that even though not all may have faced adversity in their lives they are a group within our society who do not necessarily identify with a culture or belief system. As a result, lack one of the structures which are key to building resilience which is often available to young people from other cultures or belief systems. This missing part of their lives is not something that could be replicated within the intervention programme but it is something that should be considered by schools when they are looking at developing strategies and plans to build the protective factors that build resilience. Schools will need to look at how they can provide a first class quality education system and how they can give these children the sense of identity and feelings of self-worth and tools to build resilience that has either been lost or was never there in the first place.

## Bibliography

Abrams, F. (2017). SATs tests@ why cheating and cramming mean the numbers don't add up. *The Guardian* [online] Available at:

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/jun/06/sats-tests-cheating-cramming-primary-school-exam> [Accessed 9 September 2019].

Adelman, H and Taylor, L. (2008). School wide approaches to addressing barriers to teaching and learning. In: B. Doll & J. Cummins. Eds., *Transforming School Mental Health Services: Population based approaches to promoting the competency and wellness of children*. Thousand Oaks CA:Corwin Press, pp 277-306.

Archer, L. (2005). 'Dropping out and drifting away': an investigation of factors affecting inner-city pupils' identities, aspirations and post-16 routes. London: Institute for Policy Studies in Education.

Armitage, A. (2007). Mutual Research Designs: Redefining Mixed Methods Research Design Paper. In: *The British Educational Research Association Annual Conference*. London: Institute of Education.

Atkins, L. and Wallace, S. (2012). *Qualitative Research in Education*. London:SAGE.

Atwood, R. (2010). Aim Higher brought down by Coalition Axe. *Times Education Supplement*, [online]. Available at: [www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/414416.article](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/414416.article) [Accessed 20 August.2018].

Ball, S., MaCrae,S. and Maguire, M. (1999).Young Lives, diverse choices and imagined futures in an education and training market. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 3(3), pp. 195-224.

Ball, S.J. (2003). *Class strategies and the Education Market: The Middle Classes and Social Advantage*. Abingdon:Routledge Falmer.

Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G.V. and Pastorelli, C. (2001). Self efficacy beliefs as shapers of children's aspirations and career trajectories. *Child Development*, 72(1), pp. 187-206.

Bates, L. (2015). *The Everyday Sexism Project*. London: Simon and Schuster:

Bennett, R. (2016). Parents told to put their phones away. *The Times*, p5.

Berrington, A., Roberts, S. and Tammes, P. (2016). Educational aspirations among UK Young Teenagers: Exploring the role of gender, class and ethnicity. *British Educational Research Journal*, 42(5), 729-755.



Biddulph, S. (2013). *Raising Girls*. London:Harper Thorsons.

Bourdieu, P. (1997). The Forms of Capital. In A. H. Halsey, ed., *Education, Culture Economy, Society*. Oxford:OUP, pp 46-58.

BERA. (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* London:BERA:

Brown, C. (2018). Education Policy and the Binds of Poverty: Lack of aspiration or a failure of the imagination? In I. Gilbert, Ed., *The Working Class*. Wales: Independent Thinking Press, pp38-64.

Busby, E. (2018). Pupils self-harm and express suicidal feelings due to exam stress and school pressure, warn teachers. *The Independent* [online] p.10. Available at: <https://www.independent.co.uk/> [Accessed 3 May 2018].

Carpenter, H., Papps, I., Bragg, J., Dyson, A., Harris, D., Kerr, K., Todd, L., and Laing, K. (2013). *Evaluation of Pupil Premium Research Report*. London: Department for Education.

Carter-Wall, C. and Whitfield, G. (2012). *The role of aspirations, attitudes and behaviour in closing the educational attainment gap*. London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Castro, M., Expósito-Casas, E., López-Martín, E., Lizasoain, L., Navarro-Asencio, E. and Luis Gaviria, J. (2015). Parental involvement on student academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review* 14(1), pp33–46.

Centreforum. (2016). *Commission on children and young people's mental health: state of the nation*. Available at: [www.nhsconfed.org/resources/2016/04/camhs-state-of-the-nation-report-by-centreforum-released](http://www.nhsconfed.org/resources/2016/04/camhs-state-of-the-nation-report-by-centreforum-released).

Chambers, N., Kashfepakdel, E.T., Rehill, J. and Percy, C. (2018). *Exploring the career aspirations of primary school children from around the world: Drawing the Future*. London:Education and Employers.

Cheung, C. S.-S., and Pomerantz, E. M. (2012). Why does parents' involvement enhance children's achievement? The role of parent-oriented motivation. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(3), pp820-832.

Chowdry, H., Crawford, C. and Goodman, A. (2010). *The role of attitudes and behaviours in explaining socio-economic differences in attainment at age 16*. London: ESRC.

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

Colley, H. (2003). Engagement mentoring for 'disaffected' youth: a new model of mentoring for social inclusion, *British Educational Research Journal*, 29(4), pp.521–542.

Condly, S.J. (2006). Resilience in Children: A review of literature with implications for education. *Urban Education* 41(3), pp.211-236.

Costley, C. and Gibbs, P. (2006). 'Reseraching others:care as an ethic for practioner researchers'. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31 (1), pp. 89-98.

Coughlan, S. (2014). Poor white pupils 'need best teachers and long days'. *BBC News Online* [online]. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education> [Accessed 3 May 2018].

Crawford, E and Morrin, M (2016). *Achieving Educational Excellence in Knowsley: A Review of Attainment*. ResPublica: London

Crerar, P. (2018). Children Starting school cannot communicate in full sentences. *The Guardian* [online]. Available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education>. [Accessed 2 August 2108].

Cummings,C., Laing, K., Law, J., McLaughlin, J., Papps, I., Todd, L., and Woolner, P. (2012). *Can changing aspirations and attitudes impact on educational attainment? A review of Interventions*. London:Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Department for Children, Schools and Families. (2008). *Aspiration and attainment amongst young people in deprived communities: Analysis and discussion paper* London:DCSF.

Demie, F. (2014). *The Educational Attainment of White Working Class Pupils*. London: Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit

Demie, F. and Lewis, K. (2010). *Outstanding Secondary Schools: Good Practice*. Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit, Lambeth LA.

Demie, F., and Lewis, K. (2014). *Raising the Achievement of White Working Class Pupils*. London:Lambeth Research and Statistics Unit.

Dearden, L., Sibieta, L. and Sylva, K. (2010). *The socio-economic gradient in early child outcomes: evidence from the Millennium Cohort Study IFS Working Paper 03/11* London:IFS.

Department for Children, schools and families. (2008). *The Impact of Parental Involvement on Children's Education*. Nottingham: DCSF.

Department for Education. (2013). *Educational Excellence Everywhere*. London: DfE.

[Department for Education. \(2014\). \*Raising the Achievement of disadvantaged children\*. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/raising-the-achievement-of-disadvantaged-children>.](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/raising-the-achievement-of-disadvantaged-children)

Department for Skills and Education. (2007). *Gender and education: the evidence on pupils in England*. London: DfSE

Dieu, N. (2015), Look out, Generation Z is about to enter your workplace. *The Daily Telegraph*, [online]. Available at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation/11746954/Look-out-Generation-Z-is-about-to-enter-your-workplace.html> [Accessed 19 July. 2015].

Doll, B., Jones, K., Osborn, A., Dooley, K. and Turner, A. (2011). The promise and the caution of resilience models for schools. *Psychology in Schools*, 48(7), pp.652-659.

Dwyer, S. and Buckle, L. (2009). The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), pp.55-63.

Ecclestone, K. (2013). *Emotional Well-being in Educational Policy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Feilzer, M. (2009). Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of Pragmatism. *Journal of mixed methods research*, 4(1), pp.6-16.

Fielding, M. (2006). Leadership, personalization and high performance schooling: naming the new totalitarianism. *School Leadership and Management*, 26(4), pp. 347-369.

Finch, L., Hargrave, R., Nicholls, . and van Vilet, A. (2014). *Measure what you Treasure-Well-being and young people, how it can be measured and what the data tells us*. London: NPC.

Flick, U. (2009). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research (Fourth Edition)*. London: SAGE.

Floyd, A. and Linet, A. (2010). Researching from Within: Moral and Ethical Issues and Dilemmas. In: SRHE Annual Conference. [online] Celtic Manor Resort, Wales: OU, pp.1-6. Available at <http://oro.open.ac.uk/43841/> [Accessed 16 September 2018].

Formby, E. and Wolstenholme, C. (2012). 'If there's going to be a subject that you don't have to do ...' Findings from a mapping study of PSHE education in English Secondary Schools. *Pastoral Care in Education*, 30(1), pp. 5-18.

Fuller, C. (2009.) *Sociology, Gender and Educational Aspirations*. London: Continuum.

Fuller, C. and MacFadyen, T. (2012). ['What with your grades?': Students motivation for and experience of vocational courses in further education](#). *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 64 (1), pp. 87-101.

Fuller, C. & Fox, S. (2014). *The outdoors indoors: the role of outdoor residential experiences and students' perceptions of confidence in school*. Research Paper.

Garnezy, N. (1985). Stress-resistant children: The search for protective factors. In: J. E. Stevenson, Ed., *Recent research in developmental psychopathology: Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry Book Supplement #4*. Oxford: Pergamon, pp. 213–233.

Gewirtz, S., Dickson, M., Power, S. Halpin, D. & Whitty, G. (2005). *The deployment of social capital theory in educational policy and provision: the case of Education Action Zones in England*. *British Educational Research Journal*, 31(6), pp. 651-673

GirlGuiding Association. (2013). *Girls' Attitudes Survey 2013*. Available at: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/globalassets/docs-and-resources/research-and-campaigns/girls-attitudes-survey-2013.pdf>.

Glover, J. (2009). *Bouncing back: How can resilience be promoted in vulnerable children and young people?* London: Barnardo's.

Golden, S. D. and Jo Anne L. Earp, J. A. L. (2012). Social Ecological Approaches to Individuals and Their Contexts: Twenty Years of Health Education & Behavior Health Promotion Interventions. *Health Education & Behavior*, 39(3), pp. 364–372.

Goldthorpe, J.H. (2007). *'Cultural Capital': Some Critical Observations*. *Sociology Working Papers 2007-07*: Oxford:University of Oxford. pp.1-32.

Goodman, R. and Burton, D. (2012). What is the nature of the achievement gap, why does it persist and are government goals sufficient to create social justice in the education system? *Education 3-13 International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years education*, 40(5), pp.500-514.

Goodman,A. and Gregg, P. (2010). [Poorer children's educational attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour?](#) London:Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

- Gorard, S., and Taylor, C. (2004). *Combining Methods in Educational and Social Research*. Maidenhead: OUP.
- Gorard, S. (2012). Who is eligible for free school meals? Characterising free school meals as a measure of disadvantage. *England British Educational Research Journal*, 38(6), pp.1003–1017.
- Government Equalities Office. (2015). *Body Confidence Campaign: Progress Report*. London.
- Guba, E. G. (Ed.). (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Hall, J.C. (2003). *Mentoring and young people: a literature review: SCRE Research Report 114*. Glasgow: Glasgow SCRE Centre.
- Hamilton, M. (2009). *What's happening to our girls?* Penguin: London.
- Hancock, K.J., Lawrence, D., Shepherd, C.C.J., Mitrou, F. and Zubrick, S.R. (2017). Associations between school absence and academic achievement: Do socioeconomics matter? *British Educational Research Journal*, 43(3), pp.415-440.
- Harris, M. (1976). History and Significance of the emic/etic distinction. *Annual review of Anthropology*, 5, pp.329-250.
- Harris, D. and Williams, J. (2012). The association of classroom interactions, year group and social class. *British Educational Research Journal*, 38(3), pp. 373–39.
- Hart, A. and Blincow, D. (2012). Resilience Framework (Children & Young People). [online] [www.boingboing.org.uk](http://www.boingboing.org.uk). Available at: <https://www.boingboing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Resilience-Framework-children-and-young-people-2015.pdf> [Accessed 14 Oct 2012].
- Hart, A. and Heaver, B. (2013). Evaluating resilience-based programs for schools using a systematic consultative review. *Journal of Child and Youth Development*, 1(1), pp.27 – 53.
- Hart, A., Fernandez-Rodrigo, L., Cruz Molina, M., Izquierdo, R. and Maitland, J. (2018). *The Academic Resilience Approach in the promotion of young people's mental health = proposals for its use in schools*. Lleida: Publicacions de la Universitat de Lleida.

Hill, M., Stafford, A., Seaman, P., Ross, N. and Daniel, B. (2007) *Parenting and resilience*. Glasgow:Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Hunt, J. (2018). Blog [online]. <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/blog/women-across-the-world-are-demanding-change-the-time-for-action-is-now>

Iniesta- Martinez, S. and Evans, H. (2012). *Pupil entitled but not claiming FSM*. London: DfE.

Kemmis, S., and McTaggart, R. (1992). *The Action Research Planner (3rd ed.)*. Geelong: Deakin University Press.

Kidd, D. (2018). Lifting Heads, not ripping up Roots. In: I. Gilbert, I., Ed., *The Working Class*. Wales: Independent Thinking Press, pp232-237.

Kilanowski, J. (2017). Breadth of the Socio- Ecological Model. *Journal of Agromedicine*, 22 (4), pp. 295-297.

Kiss, J. (2015). Turning off technology is about mental wellbeing – not becoming a digital hermit. *The Guardian*, [online]. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/apr/30/turning-off-technology-mental-wellbeing> [Accessed 18 March 2018].

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews*. London:Sage.

Lal, S., Ungar, M., Malla, A.K., Frankish, J. and Suto, M. J. (2014). Meanings of well-being from the perspectives of youth recently diagnosed with psychosis. *Journal of Mental Health*. 23 (1), pp. 25-30.

Libenberg, L., Ungar, M. and Van de Vijver, F. (2012). Validation of the child and youth resilience measure – 28 (CYRM28) among Canadian youth. *Research on Social Work Practise*, 22 (2), pp.219 – 226.

MacConville, R. and Rae, T. (2012). *Building Happiness, Resilience and Motivation in Adolescents*. London:JKP.

Mansell, W. (2013.) *The Problem with Pupil Premium*. Education Journal:23.

McNiff, J. (2002). *Action Research: Principles and Practice*. London:Routledge.

Masten, A.S. (2001). Ordinary Magic: Resilience processes in development. *The American Psychologist*, 56(3), pp.227-38.

Masten, A.S. (2018). Resilience Theory and Research on Children and Families: Past, Present, and Promise. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 10(1), pp.12-31

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA:Jossey-Bass.

Minnard, C.V. (2002). A strong building: Foundation of protective factors in schools. *Children & Schools*, 24(4), pp.233-246.

Mongon, D. and Chapman, C. (2008). *Successful leadership for promoting the achievement of White Working Class pupils*. London:National College for School Leadership.

National Children's Bureau. (2013). *Greater expectations; raising aspirations for our children*. London:National Children's Bureau

NCH – The Bridge Child Care Development Service. (2007). *Literature Review: Resilience in Children and Young People*. London:NCH.

Neal, S. (1995). Researching Powerful people from a Feminist and Anti-racist Perspective: a note on gender, collusion and marginality. *British Educational Research Journal*, 21(4), pp.517-531.

Newman, T. (2004). *What Works in Building Resilience*. Barkingside:Barnardo's.

Noddings, N. (1995). *Philosophy of Education*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

O'Dougherty Wright, M., Masten, A.S. and Narayan, A.J. (2013). Resilience processes in development: Four waves of research on positive adaptation in the context of adversity. In S, Goldstein and R. B. Brooks, eds., *Handbook of Resilience in Children*. New York:Springer, pp15-37.

OECD (2015), *The ABC of Gender Equality in Education: Aptitude, Behaviour, Confidence*, PISA, OECD Publishing. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264229945-en>

Ofsted. (2010). *The London Challenge: Report Summary*. Manchester:Ofsted.

Ofsted. (2013). *The Pupil Premium*. Manchester:Ofsted.

Ofsted. (2014). *The Pupil Premium Update*. Manchester:Ofsted.

Orly, S, L. and Ben-Amram, M. (2018) Exploring the social ecological model based on national student achievements: extracting educational leaders' role. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 21 (3), pp.380-398.

Oswald, D., Sherrat, F. and Smith, S. (2014). Handling the Hawthorne effect: The challenges surrounding a participant observer. *Review of Social Studies (RoSS)*, 1(1), pp.53-73.

Passey, R., and Morris, M. (2010). *Evaluation of Aimhigher: learner attainment and progression*. London:NFER.

Perry, E. and Francis, B. (2010). *The social class gap for educational achievement: a review of the literature*. Available at: [file:///staff-server/redirection\\$/cwilson/Downloads/RSA-Social-Justice-paper.pdf](file:///staff-server/redirection$/cwilson/Downloads/RSA-Social-Justice-paper.pdf) [Accessed 18 March 2018].

Pianta, R.C. and Walsh, D.J. (1998). Applying the construct of resilience in schools: Cautions from a developmental systems perspective. *School Psychology Review*, 27(3), pp.407-417.

Pipher, M. (1994). *Reviving Ophelia: Helping You to Understand and Cope With Your Teenage Daughter*. Vermillion:London.

Prince-Embury, S. (2008). Translating resiliency theory for assessment and application in schools. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 23(1), pp.4-10.

Prince-Embury, S. and Courville, T. (2008). Measurement invariance of the resiliency scales for children and adolescents with respect to sex and age cohorts. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 23(1), pp.26-40.

Prince-Embury, S. and Courville, T. (2008). Comparison of one-, two- and three-factor models of personal resiliency using the resiliency scales for children and adolescents. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 23(1), pp.11-25.

Prince-Embury, S. (2008). The resiliency scales for children and adolescents, psychological symptoms, and clinical status in adolescents. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* 2 (1), pp.41-56.

Public Health England/UCL Institute of Health Equity. (2014). *Local action on health inequalities: Building children and young people's resilience in schools*. London:UCL.

Punch, K. F. (2009). *Research Methods in Education*. London:SAGE.

Rae, T. and Piggott, E. (2014). *Supporting the wellbeing of Girls*. Abingdon.Routledge.

Reay, D. (2017). *Miseducation (21st Century Standpoints)*. Policy Press: Bristol.

Richards, G. (2018). *Working Class Girls, Education and Post Industrial Britain: Aspirations and Achievements*. Switzerland:Palgrave Macmillan.



Rienzo, C., Rolfe, H. and Wilkinson, D. (2015). Changing Mindsets: Evaluation report and executive summary. *Education Endowment Foundation/National Institute of Economic and Social Research*. London:EEF

Rimkute, L., Hirvonen, R., Tolvanen, K. and Nurmi, J. (2012). Parents' Role in Adolescents' Educational Expectations. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 56(6), pp571-590.

Roisman, G.I., Padrón, E., Sroufe, L.A., and Egeland, B. (2002). Earned-secure attachment status in retrospect and prospect. *Child Development*, 73(4), pp.1204-1219.

Rose, R., and Jones, K., (2007). The efficacy of a volunteering mentoring scheme in supporting young people at risk, *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 21(1), pp.3-14.

Rossman, G.B. and Rallis, S.F., (2010). Everyday ethics: reflections on practice. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 23 (4), pp. 379-391.

Sacker, A., School, I. and Bartley, M. (2002). Social Inequality in educational achievement and psychosocial adjustment throughout childhood: magnitude and mechanisms. *Social Science and Medicine*, 55(5), pp.863-880.

Sanders, J., Munford, R. and Thimasarn-Anwar, T. (2016). Staying on-track despite the odds: Factors that assist young people facing adversity to continue with their education. *British Educational Research Journal* 42(1), pp.56-73.

Sarojini Hart, C. (2013) *Aspirations, Education and Social Justice Applying Sen and Bourdieu*. London:Continuum.

Savage, M., Devine, F., Cunningham, N., Taylor, M., Li, Y., Hjellbrekke, J., Bergen, U., Le Roux, B., Friedman, F. and Miles, A. (2013). A New Model of Social Class? Findings from the BBC's Great British Class Survey Experiment. *Sociology*, 47(2) pp.219–250.

Secret Teacher. (2018). Secret Teacher: I fear for the wellbeing of students under pressure to perform. *The Guardian*, [online]. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2018/apr/28/secret-teacher-i-fear-for-the-wellbeing-of-students-under-pressure-to-perform> [Accessed 3 May 2018].

Sannon-Baker, P. (2015). Making Paradigms Meaningful in Mixed Methods Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 2016, 10(4), pp.319–334.

Siddique, H. (2018). Workplace gender discrimination remains rife, survey finds. *The Guardian* [online]. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/13/workplace-gender-discrimination-remains-rife-survey-finds> [Accessed 9 September 2019]

Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission. (2014). *Cracking the Code: how schools can improve social mobility*. London: Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission.

Stenhouse, L. (1985). Case study methods. In T. Husen and T. N. Postlethwaite, ed., *International Encyclopaedia of Education*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Oxford: Pergamon, pp.640-6.

Strand, S. (2002). Pupil mobility, attainment and progress during key stage 1: a study in cautious interpretation. *British Educational Research Journal*, 28(1), pp.63–78.

Strand, S. (2010). Do some schools narrow the gap? Differential School Effectiveness and School Improvement. *International Journal of Research Policy and Practice*, 21(3), pp.289-314.

Strand, S. (2014). Ethnicity, gender, social class and achievement gaps at age 16: intersectionality and 'getting it' for the white working class. *Research Papers in Education*, 29(2), pp.131-171.

Stringer, E.T. (1999). *Action Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sturman, A. (1999). Case study methods. In J.P. Keeves and G. Lakomski eds., *Issues in Educational Research*. Oxford: Elsevier Science Ltd., pp.103-12.

Tan, C.Y. (2015). The contribution of cultural capital to students' mathematics achievement in medium and high socioeconomic gradient economies. *British Educational Research Journal* 41(6), pp.1050-1067.

Tan, C.Y. (2017). Do parental attitudes toward and expectations for their children's education and future jobs matter for their children's school achievement? *British Educational Research Journal* 43(6), pp.1111-1130.

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology. Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

The National Children's Society. (2015). *The Good Childhood Report London: The Children's Society*. London: NCS

The Sutton Trust. (2014). *The Teaching and Learning Toolkit* [pdf]. Available at: [www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/about-the-toolkit/](http://www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/toolkit/about-the-toolkit/) [Accessed 10 Dec 2017].

Thomas, G. (2009). *How to do your Research Project*. London: SAGE.

Time to Mind (2016). *A Manifesto for adolescent and child mental health services*. [online] Available at: <https://extras.thetimes.co.uk/public/timetomind/> [Accessed 5 May. 2016]

Tyson, C. (2018). The practical and ethical challenges of a research project with secondary school students. *Research Intelligence BERA*, 136, pp.18-19.

Ungar, M., Connelly, G., Liebenberg, L. et al. (2017). How Schools Enhance the Development of Young People's Resilience. *Social Indicators Research*. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-017-1728-8>.

Ungar, M. (2015). Practitioner Review: Diagnosing childhood resilience—a systemic approach to the diagnosis of adaptation in adverse social and physical ecologies *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 56 (1), pp 4–17.

Ungar, M., Russell, P. and Connelly, G. (2014). The social ecology of resilience: Addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 81, pp1-17.

Ungar, M. & Libenberg, L. (2011). Assessing resilience across cultures using mixed methods: construction of the child and youth resilience measure. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 5(2), pp.126 – 149.

Ungar, M., Brown, M., Liebenberg, L., Othman, R., Kwong, W. M., Armstrong, M., et al. (2007). Unique pathways to resilience across cultures. *Adolescence*, 42(166), pp.287–310.

Unicef, (2013). *Child well-being in rich countries: A comparative overview*  
UNICEF:Italy

Valenti, J (2015). Worldwide sexism increases suicide risk in young women. *The Guardian*, [online]. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/28/worldwide-sexism-increases-suicide-risk-in-young-women> [Accessed 28 May 2018].

Van Rensburg, L. and Rothmann, T. S. (2019). A Social Ecological Modeled Explanation of the Resilience Processes of a Sample of Black Sesotho-Speaking Adolescents. *Psychological Reports*, 122 (4). Pp. 1211–1234.

Vleuten, M., Jaspers, E., Maas, I. and van der Lippe, T. (2018). Intergenerational transmission of gender segregation: How parents' occupational field affects gender

differences in field of study choices. *British Educational Research Journal* 44(2), pp.294-318.

Watt, N. (2014). Pupil premium struggling to close GCSE attainment gap. *The Guardian*, [online]. Available at: [www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jan/28/pupil-premium-gcse-attainment-gap](http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/jan/28/pupil-premium-gcse-attainment-gap) [Accessed 7 June 2018].

Walker, R.(1985). An Introduction to Applied Qualitative Research In: R. Walker, ed., *Applied Qualitative Research*. Aldershot:Gower, pp.3-26.

Weber, R. P. (1990). *Basic Content Analysis*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks CA:Sage.

Wilshaw, M. (2013). *Unseen children: access and achievement 20 years on Evidence report*. Manchester:Ofsted.

Willis, P. (1973). *Learning to Labour, How working class kids get working class jobs*. Farnham: Ashgate.

Windel, G. and Salisbury, K. (2010). Interventions to Promote Resilience Prepared as part of the work programme for the Resilience Network. Available at: [http://resilience.bangor.ac.uk/Intervention%20tables%20 final .pdf](http://resilience.bangor.ac.uk/Intervention%20tables%20final_.pdf) [Accessed 8 June 2018].

Worsely, L (2010). The Resilience Donut Available at: [www.theresiliencedoughnut.com.au](http://www.theresiliencedoughnut.com.au) [Accessed 19 Aug 2017].

Wyness, M. and Lang, P. (2016). The social and emotional dimensions of schooling: A case study in challenging the 'barriers to learning'. *British Educational Research Journal* 42(6), pp.1041 – 1055.

Young Minds (2015). *Mentally healthy Schools* [online] Available at: <https://youngminds.org.uk/> [accessed 5 May. 2015].

Younger, M., and Warrington, M. (2009). Mentoring and target setting in a secondary school in England: an evaluation of aims and benefits. *Oxford Review of Education*, 35(2), pp.169-185.

## **Appendix 1 - Fixed Base Interview questions for semi structured interviews**

- 1. Let's look at your last report – how did you feel about your report?**
  - 2. How did you feel about the comments you received at your recent Parents' Evening?**
  - 3. Do you understand your current progress and where you are at the moment with all your subjects?**
  - 4. Which subjects do you feel confident about?**
  - 5. Are there any areas where you feel less confident?**
  - 6. If you could change the way you prepared for the exams would you do anything differently?**
  - 7. Was your careers interview useful?**
  - 8. How have you found each of the interventions you have been involved with?**
    - Yoga**
    - Problem Solving**
    - Primary School Reading**
-

## Appendix 2 – Youth CYRM -28 – Sample Survey

### OPTION 1: SECTION C

To what extent do the sentences below describe you? Circle one answer for each statement.

	Not at All	A Little	Some -what	Quite a Bit	A Lot
1. I have people I look up to	1	2	3	4	5
2. I cooperate with people around me	1	2	3	4	5
3. Getting an education is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know how to behave in different social situations	1	2	3	4	5
5. My parent(s)/caregiver(s) watch me closely	1	2	3	4	5
6. My parent(s)/caregiver(s) know a lot about me	1	2	3	4	5
7. If I am hungry, there is enough to eat	1	2	3	4	5
8. I try to finish what I start	1	2	3	4	5
9. Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength for me	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am proud of my ethnic background	1	2	3	4	5
11. People think that I am fun to be with	1	2	3	4	5
12. I talk to my family/caregiver(s) about how I feel	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am able to solve problems without harming myself or others (for example by using drugs and/or being violent)	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel supported by my friends	1	2	3	4	5
15. I know where to go in my community to get help	1	2	3	4	5
16. I feel I belong at my school	1	2	3	4	5
17. My family stands by me during difficult times	1	2	3	4	5
18. My friends stand by me during difficult times	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am treated fairly in my community	1	2	3	4	5
20. I have opportunities to show others that I am becoming an adult and can act responsibly	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am aware of my own strengths	1	2	3	4	5
22. I participate in organized religious activities	1	2	3	4	5
23. I think it is important to serve my community	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel safe when I am with my family/caregiver(s)	1	2	3	4	5
25. I have opportunities to develop skills that will be useful later in life (like job skills and skills to care for others)	1	2	3	4	5
26. I enjoy my family's/caregiver's cultural and family traditions	1	2	3	4	5
27. I enjoy my community's traditions	1	2	3	4	5
28. I am proud to be a citizen of _____ (insert country)	1	2	3	4	5

1. Ungar, M., and Liebenberg, L. (2011). Assessing resilience across cultures using mixed-methods: Construction of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure-28. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 5(2), 126-149.

2. Liebenberg, L., Ungar, M., and Van de Vijver, F. R. R. (2012). Validation of the Child and Youth Resilience Measure-28 (CYRM-28) Among Canadian Youth with Complex Needs. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 22(2), 219-226.

Institute of Education

Contract between researcher(s) and data collector(s)

[to be used when the researcher(s) is/are not collecting their own data but outsourcing this processing to third parties on their behalf]

Project title	<b>Improving Student Resilience: An intervention study to increase student resilience to positively impact academic outcomes.</b>
Name(s) of researcher(s)	Charlotte Wilson
Position of researcher(s)	
Address	1 Posting House Mews Newbury RG14 1QW
email	Headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org
Name of supervisor (if the researcher is an MA/PhD student)	Dr Carol Fuller
Name of data collector(s)	Mrs Tania Slater
Position of data collector(s)	Family School Support Worker
Address	c/o Trinity School, Newbury, RG14 1QW
email	tslater@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org
Starting time and finishing time of the project	Start February 2016 End June 2016
<b>The researcher(s) agree to:</b>	
1) provide the data collector(s) with all the data collection instruments, including information sheets and consent forms for participants and instructions on how to collect the data, if necessary;	
2) respect the legal and ethical requirements for data collection in the UK and in the country in which the data are collected, in particular that data are kept secure;	
3) regularly check the data processing of the collector is done in accordance with the requirements mentioned under (1) and (2);	
4) notify and seek approval from your supervisor for the processing of any personal data as part of your research studies before it takes place.	
<b>The data collector(s) agree to:</b>	
1) collect the data in the above project for the above-mentioned researcher(s), using the data collection instruments, including information sheets and consent forms for participants and instructions on how to collect the data;	
2) undertake training to protect the data, for instance the data protection and the information security online training modules prior to data collection;	
3) regularly report to the researcher(s) the work is done in accordance with the requirements mentioned under (1) and (2);	
4) keep data secure;	
5) act only on the instructions of the researchers;	
6) respect the legal and ethical requirements for data collection in the UK and in the country in which the data are collected.	

**The data collector(s)**

**The researcher(s)**

**The supervisor (if the researcher is a student)**

Name(s ) T Slater

Signature(s)

Place, date

Na

Signature(s)

Plac



nature:

Name: Dr C Fuller

Place, date

#### **Appendix 4 - Significant Point Drawn from Interviews**

**Significant Points from interviews**



- Teachers attitudes
- Relationships with teachers
- Attitudes towards school
- Perceptions of own ability at school.
- Confidence in self
- Exam performance
- Extra-curricular opportunities
- Positions of responsibility
- Parents attitudes to school/support of school
- Motivators to work.
- Favourite subjects
- Importance of qualifications
- Awareness of pathways and future careers
- Views on interventions

## Appendix 5 – Simplistic and Refined Coding of Interview Responses

Simplistic Codes and Themes	AXIAL CODES	
<b>FAMILY/PARENTS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents attitudes to school</li> <li>• Parents support of school</li> </ul>	Family/Parents	
<b>SELF PERCEPTION</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of own ability at school.</li> <li>• Confidence in self</li> <li>• Areas of strength</li> </ul>	Self-perception	
<b>ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers' attitudes</li> </ul>	Attitudes to school/teachers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship with teachers</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extra-curricular opportunities</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivators to work</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positions of responsibility</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favourite subjects</li> </ul>		
<b>INTERVENTIONS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Difficulties</li> </ul>	Interventions	Yoga Intervention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Attendance</li> </ul>	Interventions	Primary School Reading Intervention

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulties</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Attendance</li> <li>• Difficulties</li> </ul>	Interventions	Problem Solving Intervention
<b>IMPORTANCE OF QUALIFICATIONS</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of qualifications</li> <li>• Importance of qualifications</li> <li>• Awareness of pathways and future careers</li> <li>• Exam performance</li> </ul>	Future	

## Appendix 6 – Interview Analysis example

<b>Colour</b>	<b>Code</b>
	Family/Parents (FAM)
	Interventions –Yoga (INYOG)
	Interventions –Problem Solving (INPROB)
	Interventions –Primary School Reading (INPSR)
	Future (FUT)
	Self perception and confidence (SP)
	Attitudes towards school/teachers (ATT)

## Transcript 1

**INTERVIEWER: Let's look at your last report – how did you feel about your report?**

Student: I was pleased overall with my report but I didn't understand some of the comments.

**INTERVIEWER: Which comments were those?**

Student: I didn't understand why in German it said I needed to put in more effort. I don't find it easy. I find it hard for pronunciation and word order is really hard. I don't know what else I can do to improve. I don't understand why I got a 3 in PE for effort either as I try really hard.

**INTERVIEWER: How did you feel about the comments you received at your recent Parents' Evening?**

Student: Miss W said that I have improved my confidence when I can answer questions, and it says that it has paid off when it comes to work and everything

**INTERVIEWER: Do you agree with that?**

Student: Yes, cause [sic] at the start I was quiet I don't know if that was because it was a new teacher. I was a lot quieter...I think it was when we came back from the Christmas holidays. Now I am more involved with the lesson and share my answers.

**INTERVIEWER: Have you started to do that in other lessons?**

Student: No I don't. I don't do this in Maths. Maths is a hard subject and I can't do it very well. I do try but recently we did our Mocks and I revised quite hard. I don't even know what went wrong but I didn't get a very good grade in the Mock either. I improved from the first one but I didn't get it as I wanted. I don't know whether, I don't know how to help myself because I do revise but it doesn't really seem to make a difference because when it comes to it, I don't know if it is exam stress or something, but all the knowledge goes out of my head. I think it is because I am over thinking.

**INTERVIEWER: What has your Maths teacher said?**

Student: He said that I am good in lessons and that I am quite quick at answering questions but when it comes to tests it seems

FAM = 2

INYOG = 1

INPROB = 1

INPSR = 1

FUT = 7

SP = 11

ATT = 2

that I can't have been there because when I answer questions in tests I don't know the answers.

**INTERVIEWER: Do you understand your current progress and where you are at the moment with all your subjects?**

Student: In Science I think I am improving somewhat because I revise a lot over the past few months with the new GCSE. I think I did somewhat good but at the same time it is quite confusing and stuff but I think I have definitely improved and I tried my best. In drama my teacher said that I need to be more confident in myself because in my last performances I always look around to see what other people are doing. I need confidence in what I am doing is right and also I need to change my voices.

In Music I think again I have improved with confidence because I never used to answer questions or anything because it is a small class. I feel that if I get a question wrong it is quite embarrassing because everyone can hear but now I've just got over that and if I get it wrong, I get it wrong.

**INTERVIEWER: What has Miss J said about this progress that has been made in your confidence?**

Student: She said that if I keep improving my confidence and go over key terms and things like that now I will improve on the theory side. I also need to sing louder. If I sing louder then you will be able to hear the tones and things.

**INTERVIEWER: Which subjects do you feel confident about?**

Student: In RS, I revised loads more on different topics. Animal Testing and things like that I wasn't really strong in. When I did the other tests I never used to include religious quotes and teachings I used to forget them but now I revise properly I include them which has helped.

**INTERVIEWER: If you could change the way you prepared for the exams would you do anything differently?**

Student: I think I would probably take a lot more time out of my day to revise because I revised quite hard, not really for Media because I felt that I did revise for Media but not as much as I did for Science. Because there is Physics, Chemistry and Biology I focused on one more than the others and I feel like if I spaced it out a bit more I would have more of an understanding because

when it came to the Physics one which is the one I didn't revise as much on, I revised more on Biology and Chemistry, I feel that if I spaced it all out and revised each equally I would have a better understanding. Media, I felt that I did fine with Media as it is not something I struggle with, but I should have done more revision for comedy.

**INTERVIEWER: Was your careers interview useful?**

Student: Yes it was good to talk things through I know what I want to do I want to go to the Brits School Performing Arts School for Music Careers.

**INTERVIEWER: Did you talk about what you would need to get in there?**

Student: We did talk about this but I don't think you do at the moment because you can do other courses, because if I wanted to work and go to Sixth Form and then there is a Year 11 or 12, so I don't think you have to have proper GCSEs to get in but I think you have to have music grades.

**INTERVIEWER: So will you want to stay here for Sixth Form and then go afterwards?**

Student: yes I would like to that and then I want to be an Actress/Singer. I don't really want to be famous or anything like that. I want to work in the West End or something like that. I kind of do history, I do like Law and things like that so maybe a Lawyer.

**INTERVIEWER: So you have a few options to think about. What did Miss C say were your next steps?**

Student: She said I had to research different careers, become involved in School Shows because and do all the music events but then I haven't done them for a long time.

**INTERVIEWER: What has stopped you from being in school shows, do you think?**

Student: I don't know I feel intimidated because I don't dance so I don't have confidence.

**INTERVIEWER: Talk to me about how it is easier to stand up and sing?**

Student: I know that I'm good at it. When it comes to dance and things like that I'm not good at dancing. I like acting and I'm quite confident when it comes to acting. I think that I will try and have a go and audition for next year's show. My mum says I am much better at singing; she enjoys coming to the shows to watch me.

**INTERVIEWER: Have you talked to your parents about what you want to do in the future?**

Student: Yes they know what I want to do and are really supportive, they want me to be happy and they know I enjoy singing and that I am good at it.

**INTERVIEWER: How have you found each of the interventions you have been involved with?**

#### **-Yoga**

Student: I like it because it's relaxing and at the end of the day, after you have just had a day of just sitting at a table you get to move around and do different things. It is nice, stretching out. I'm not sure if it has helped me get better at things and school and stuff, but I like it.

#### **-Problem Solving**

Student: The sessions were ok some of the problems were really hard and if it didn't work straight away I didn't want to keep trying [as] sometimes it seemed pointless. I'm not very good at things like that I get confused and don't understand what I should be doing. It's a bit like maths I felt embarrassed if I suggested something and then it didn't work.

#### **-Primary School Reading**

Student: I really enjoyed going to the primary school, it was good to work with the children. Some of them were really confident and good readers. I liked going every week and the fact that they recognised us and waited for us to come. They were funny sometimes too. I liked it that it made them feel special as when we went to get them from the class the other children wanted to read as well.

--	--

## Appendix 7 – Governor Consent Form

Researcher: Charlotte Wilson

T: [REDACTED]

Email: [headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org](mailto:headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org)

Supervisor: Dr Carol Fuller

T: T: [REDACTED]

Email: [c.l.fuller@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.l.fuller@reading.ac.uk)

# Governor Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me.  
All my questions have been answered.

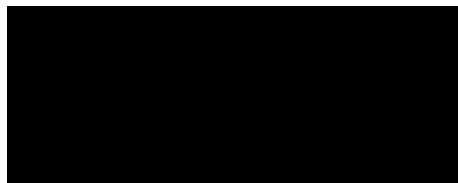
Name of Governor: Sheila Loy

Name of School: Trinity

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to the involvement of my school in the project as outlined in the Information Sheet

Signed:





Date:17/04/2016

## **Appendix 8.1 – Governor Information Sheet**

### Governor Information Sheet

Dear Mrs Loy

The Governors of the school are already aware that I am undertaking the EdD in Education Course at Reading University and I am now about to start my Research Project. The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of the project and to give you information about how the school will be involved.

#### **What is the project?**

The project aims to look at how resiliency can be increased in students to enable them to achieve better outcomes in terms of attainment and progress. It hopes to demonstrate that specific interventions can be used with students to improve individual outcomes which in turn would influence the curriculum and experiences students may be exposed to in future.

#### **Why has Trinity School been chosen?**

My work in school each year always involves mentoring a group of students who are underachieving. This project hopes to develop this work further and look at how whole school curriculum changes could be made which improve students' resilience and in turn affect their outcomes.

#### **Does Trinity School have to take part?**

It is entirely up to you whether you give permission for the school to participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any repercussions to the school, by contacting me at [Headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org](mailto:Headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org) or 01635510507

#### **What will happen if Trinity School takes part?**

A group of 12 Year 10 students would be chosen for this project. The 12 students will be girls as currently I mentor female students and this would be a continuation of the typical process. A group of 6 students will experience the interventions first, the second group of 6 will act as a control group to compare the impact of intervention versus no intervention. This second group would then experience the interventions afterwards in the summer term once the first group have experienced the interventions.

All the students will take a measure of resiliency test (The Child and Youth Resiliency Measure - CYRM) prior to beginning the intervention. The interventions will then be as follows:

Two weekly group mentor meetings to work on problem solving skills and understanding resilience and discussion around academic performance and how they are finding their learning and lessons.

Development of a Careers plan with the Careers Coordinator

Switching a PE lesson for a Yoga session delivered by a Yoga teacher (this could create the opportunity to develop self-soothing and mindfulness techniques as well as providing the students with an activity they enjoy.)

Each individual would provide guided reading support for a student in Primary School (this would create a peer mentoring/volunteering opportunity)

The interventions have been designed as elements that could be replicated easily with larger groups of students, indeed whole year groups if the curriculum was redesigned and time was given to a targeted programme of interventions. My interest in interventions that can make a real difference to outcomes for students is a key driver of this work.

The interventions would take place over a four month period starting in February. The students take their mock exams in June 2016 so the impact of the interventions would be seen on their mock exam grades.

Alongside analysing their performance data, the resiliency test (CYRM) would be taken again to assess the students' scores and compare their scores pre intervention. I would also like to gain an insight into how the students have felt about the interventions and the whole process, this will be done through conducting extended interviews with the students after the process has been completed.

If you agree to the school's participation, I will seek further consent from parents/carers and the students themselves.

### **What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking part?**

The information given by students in the project will remain confidential and will only be seen by me and my supervisor. Neither school nor the students will be identifiable in any published report resulting from the project. Information about individuals from the CYRM tests or the extended interviews would not be shared in the school.

### **What will happen to the data?**

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this project or in any subsequent publications. The records of this project will be kept private. No identifiers linking the students or the school to the project will be included in the final thesis. Students will be assigned a letter and will be referred to by that letter in all records. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only I will have access to the records. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the project are written up, after five years.

### **What happens if I change my mind?**

You can change your mind at any time without any repercussions. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, I will discard the collected data

**Who has reviewed the study?**

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

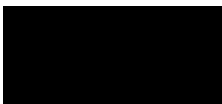
**What happens if something goes wrong?**

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact the project Supervisor: Dr Carol Fuller on [redacted] or [c.l.fuller@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.l.fuller@reading.ac.uk)

**Where can I get more information?**

If you would like more information we can discuss this further in school.

Yours sincerely



Charlotte Wilson

Governor Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me. All my questions have been answered.

Name of Governor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to the involvement of my school in the project as outlined in the Information Sheet

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 8.2 – Letter to Parents

January 2016

Dear Parents

I am undertaking the Ed Doc Course at Reading University and I am now about to start my Research Project. The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of the project and to give you information about how your child can be involved.

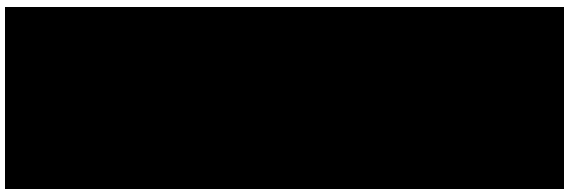
You may be aware in Year 10 every year the Senior Team look at the report data and from this data select a number of students to benefit from the experience of having a senior team mentor. The students meet with the mentors weekly to discuss learning, techniques to revise, manage time and focus themselves on learning to ensure each individual is well prepared for the GCSE exams and that they are well prepared for those exams.

This year I would like to invite my mentored students to be part of my research project. I have attached an information sheet which outlines the project in more detail.

Your child does not have to be part of the project to be mentored but I would hope that your child would participate in the research as not only will the interventions be beneficial to them but the research may also affect how we make changes to the curriculum in the future for the benefit of all.

If you would like to discuss this further then please do not hesitate to contact me in school.

Yours sincerely



Mrs C Wilson

Headteacher

## **Appendix 8.3 – Parent Information Sheet**

### Parent Information Sheet

I would like to invite your child to take part in my research project.

#### **What is the project?**

The project aims to look at how resiliency can be increased in students to enable them to achieve better outcomes in their GCSEs and beyond. The project hopes to show how interventions like mentoring can be used with students to improve their outcomes at GCSE and beyond.

#### **Why has my child been chosen?**

My work in school each year always involves mentoring a group of students to give them support to ensure they achieve their potential grades. This study hopes to develop this work further and look at how whole school curriculum changes could be made which improve students' resilience and in turn affect their outcomes. Your child has been chosen as their last Year 10 report shows they would benefit from some further support.

#### **Does my child have to take part?**

It is entirely up to you whether you give permission for your child to participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any repercussions for your child by contacting me at [Headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org](mailto:Headteacher@trinity.newburyacademytrust.org) or 01635510507 . If your child does not want to take part in the project they will still receive a mentor.

#### **What will happen if my child takes part?**

Your child would be chosen based on their Year 10 data collected in January.

Your child will take a measure of resiliency test (The Child and Youth Resiliency Measure - CYRM) with Mrs Slater first. This will be a questionnaire with some simple questions and will take about 30 minutes to complete. After they have completed the questionnaire with Mrs Slater various things will happen.

The interventions will then be as follows:

Two weekly group mentor meetings with me to work on problem solving skills and understanding resilience and discussion around academic performance and how they are finding their learning and lessons.

Development of a Careers plan with the Careers Coordinator

Switching a PE lesson for a Yoga session delivered by a Yoga teacher (this could create the opportunity to develop self-soothing and mindfulness techniques as well as providing the students with an activity they enjoy.)

Your child would provide guided reading support for a child in Primary School (this would create a peer mentoring/volunteering opportunity)

The interventions would take place over a four month period starting in February. The students take their mock exams in June 2016 so the impact of the interventions would be seen on their mock exam grades.

Your child would then take a resiliency test (CYRM) again to assess their scores and compare their scores pre intervention. I would also like to gain an insight into how your child felt about the interventions and the whole process, this will be done through conducting extended interviews with your child after the process has been completed.

**What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking part?** The information your child gives will remain confidential and will only be seen by me and my supervisor. Neither you, your child nor the school will be identifiable in any published report resulting from the project. Taking part will in no way influence the grades your child receives at school.

The students know that it is typical in school to have a senior team mentor in Year 10/11. Students in the past have found it beneficial and their grades have improved as a result of having a mentor. This project develops the role of the mentor and interventions further.

**What will happen to the data?** Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this project or in any subsequent publications. The records of this project will be kept private. No identifiers linking the students or the school to the project will be included in the final thesis. Students will be assigned a letter and will be referred to by that letter in all records. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only I will have access to the records. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the project are written up, after five years.

**What happens if I/my child change our mind?** You/your child can change your minds at any time without any repercussions. If you change your minds after data collection has ended, I will discard the collected data.

**Who has reviewed the study?** This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

**What happens if something goes wrong?**

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact the project Supervisor: Dr Carol Fuller on [REDACTED] or [c.i.fuller@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.i.fuller@reading.ac.uk)

**Where can I get more information?**

If you would like more information please contact me in school.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Mrs C Wilson

Headteacher

Parent/Carer Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of my child and me. All my questions have been answered.

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to my child taking a measure of resiliency test (The Child and Youth Resiliency Measure - CYRM) prior to beginning the intervention.

I consent to my child participating in two weekly group mentor meetings work on problem solving skills and understanding resilience and discussion around academic performance and how they are finding their learning and lessons.

I consent to my child developing a Careers plan with the Careers Coordinator – Miss Crossley

I consent to my child switching a PE lesson for a Yoga session delivered by a Yoga teacher.

I consent to my child providing guided reading support for a child in Primary School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 8.4 – Student Information Sheet

### Student Information Sheet

I am undertaking the EdD in Education Course at Reading University and I am now about to start my Research Project. The purpose of this letter is to tell you about the project and to give you information about how you can get involved.

You know that every year the Senior Team look at the report data and from this data select a number of students to have a senior team mentor. When you have a mentor you meet with them every week to discuss learning, techniques to revise, manage time and focus yourself to ensure you are well prepared for the GCSE exams. This year I am going to use some of my mentoring work in my EdD project.

#### **What is the project?**

The project will focus on how your resilience can be increased which will help you to achieve better grades in your GCSEs and beyond. The project hopes to show how interventions like mentoring can be used with students to improve GCSE grades.

#### **Why have you been chosen?**

You have been chosen because your last Year 10 report shows that you would benefit from some further support with your learning and revision to make sure you close the gap on your potential grades.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

You can choose if you want to take part in this project. You can also stop being part of the project at any time. You should talk to me or Mrs Slater if this is the case. If you do not want to take part in the project you will still get a mentor.

#### **What will happen if I take part?**

You will take a Measure of Resiliency Test (The Child and Youth Resiliency Measure – CYRM) with Mrs Slater first. This will be a questionnaire with some simple questions and will take about 30 minutes to complete. After you have completed the questionnaire with Mrs Slater various things will happen:

You will take part in two weekly group mentor meetings with me to work on problem solving skills and understanding resilience and discuss academic performance and how you are finding your learning and lessons.

You will have a Careers Meeting with the Careers Coordinator Miss Crossley.

One of your PE lessons will be a Yoga session to develop opportunities for mindfulness.

You will provide reading support for a child in Primary School.

These things would take place over a four month period starting in February. You would take the resiliency test (CYRM) again with Mrs Slater to assess your scores and compare your first test scores. I would also like to interview you to discuss how you have felt about the whole project and the things you have done and whether it has made a difference to you.



### **What are the advantages and disadvantages of taking part?**

You will be able to get support with your learning and revision techniques and find ways to help yourself with your learning. It is hoped that the things you do will help improve your GCSE grades at the end of Year 11. It is also hoped what I discover can help other students too.

### **What will happen to the data?**

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this project or in any thing I write. The records of this project will be kept private. Nothing will link you or our school to the project. In my work I will not use your name, I will use a letter. The data I collect will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only I will have access to the data. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the project are written up, after five years.

### **What happens if I change my mind?**

You can change your mind at any time if you don't want to be part of the study, this will not affect you badly in anyway. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, I will discard the collected data.

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

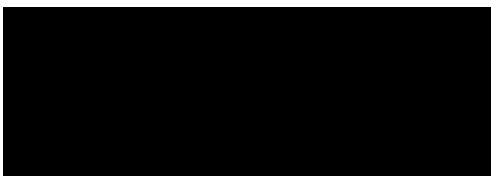
### **What happens if something goes wrong?**

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact the project Supervisor: Dr Carol Fuller on [REDACTED] or [c.l.fuller@reading.ac.uk](mailto:c.l.fuller@reading.ac.uk)

### **Where can I get more information?**

If you would like more information please come and discuss things with me.

Yours sincerely



Mrs C Wilson

Headteacher

Student Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me. All my questions have been answered.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick as appropriate:

I consent to taking a measure of resiliency test (The Child and Youth Resiliency Measure - CYRM) prior to beginning the intervention.

I consent to participating in two weekly group mentor meetings work on problem solving skills and understanding resilience and discussion around academic performance and how they are finding their learning and lessons.

I consent to developing a Careers plan with the Careers Coordinator – Miss Crossley

I consent to switching a PE lesson for a Yoga session.

I consent to providing guided reading support for a child in Primary School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

University of Reading

Institute of Education

**MA Dissertation Ethical Approval Form B (version May 2015)**

**NB. This form may also be used for undergraduate work and MA/PGCE/PGCert/PGCap assignments where ethical approval is needed**

Name of student: Charlotte Wilson.....

Name of course: .....Ed Doc in Education.....

Name of supervisor: Dr Carol Fuller.....

Title of project:... **Improving Student Resilience: An intervention study to increase student resilience to positively impact academic outcomes.**

**Please complete the form below including relevant sections overleaf (this checklist should be completed during a meeting with your supervisor.**

	YES	NO
<b>Have you prepared an Information Sheet for all participants (e.g. headteachers, teachers, parents/carers (of children under the age of 16), and children that:</b>		
a) explains the purpose(s) of the project	✓	
b) explains how they have been selected as potential participants	✓	
c) gives a full, fair and clear account of what will be asked of them and how the information that they provide will be used	✓	
d) makes clear that participation in the project is voluntary	✓	

e) explains the arrangements to allow participants to withdraw at any stage if they wish	✓	
f) explains the arrangements to ensure the confidentiality of any material collected during the project, including secure arrangements for its storage, retention and disposal	✓	
g) explains the arrangements for publishing the research results and, if confidentiality might be affected, for obtaining written consent for this	✓	
h) explains the arrangements for providing participants with the research results if they wish to have them	✓	
i) gives the name and designation of the member of staff with responsibility for the project together with contact details, including email . If any of the project investigators are students at the IoE, then this information must be included and their name provided	✓	
k) explains, where applicable, the arrangements for expenses and other payments to be made to the participants	✓	
j) includes a standard statement indicating the process of ethical review at the University undergone by the project, as follows:  'This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct'.	✓	
k) includes a standard statement regarding insurance:  "The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request".	✓	
<b>Please answer the following questions</b>		
1) Will you provide participants involved in your research with all the information necessary to ensure that they are fully informed and not in any way deceived or misled as to the purpose(s) and nature of the research? (Please use the subheadings used in the example information sheets on Blackboard to ensure this).	✓	
2) Will you provide a consent form for all participants (if they are able to provide written consent), in addition to (1)?	✓	
3) Is there any risk that participants may experience physical or psychological distress in taking part in your research?		✓
4) Have you taken the online training modules in data protection and information security (which can be found here: <a href="http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx">http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx</a> )?	✓	
5) Have you read the Health and Safety booklet (available on Blackboard) and completed a Risk Assessment Form to be included with this ethics application?	✓	

6) Does your research comply with the University's Code of Good Practice in Research?			
	YES	NO	N.A.
7) If your research is taking place in a school, have you prepared an information sheet and consent form to obtain the permission in writing of the head teacher or other relevant supervisory professional?	✓		
8) Has the data collector obtained satisfactory DBS clearance?			✓
9) If your research involves working with children under the age of 16 (or those whose special educational needs mean they are unable to give informed consent), have you prepared an information sheet and consent form for parents/carers to seek permission in writing, or to give parents/carers the opportunity to decline consent?			✓
10) If your research involves processing sensitive personal data <sup>1</sup> , or if it involves audio/video recordings, have you obtained the explicit consent of participants/parents?			✓
11) If you are using a data processor to subcontract any part of your research, have you got a written contract with that contractor which (a) specifies that the contractor is required to act only on your instructions, and (b) provides for appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect the data?			✓
12a) Does your research involve data collection outside the UK?		✓	
12b) If the answer to question 12a is "yes", does your research comply with the legal and ethical requirements for doing research in that country?			✓
13a) Does your research involve collecting data in a language other than English?		✓	
13b) If the answer to question 12a is "yes", please confirm that information sheets, consent forms, and research instruments, where appropriate, have been directly translated from the English versions submitted with this application.			✓
14a. Does the proposed research involve children under the age of 5?		✓	
14b. If the answer to question 14a is "yes": My Head of School (or authorised Head of Department) has given details of the proposed research to the University's insurance officer, and the research will not proceed until I have confirmation that insurance cover is in place.			✓
<b>If you have answered YES to Question 3, please complete Section B below</b>			

<sup>1</sup> Sensitive personal data consists of information relating to the racial or ethnic origin of a data subject, their political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual life, physical or mental health or condition, or criminal offences or record.

Please complete **either** Section A **or** Section B and provide the details required in support of your application. Sign the form (Section C) then submit it with all relevant attachments (e.g. information sheets, consent forms, tests, questionnaires, interview schedules) to the Ethics Administrator. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.

<p><b>A:</b> My research goes beyond the ‘accepted custom and practice of teaching’ but I consider that this project has <b>no</b> significant ethical implications. (Please tick the box.)</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.</p> <p>There will be 12 Year 10 (14-15 years old) female students involved in this project. The 12 students will be split into two groups of 6 with comparable characteristics. The first group of students will be the group who experiences the interventions first, the second group will act as a control group to compare the impact of intervention versus no intervention. This second group would then experience the interventions afterwards in the summer term once the first group have experienced the interventions.</p>	
<p>Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words noting:</p> <p>The purpose of this project is to investigate how interventions can improve student resilience in order for them to achieve better academic outcomes with a view to effecting whole school curriculum design. Thus reducing the need for intervention as the skills needed for increasing resiliency are built into the everyday experiences of the students. The interventions have been designed as elements that could be replicated easily with larger groups of students, indeed whole year groups if the curriculum was redesigned and time was given to a targeted programme of interventions. My interest in interventions that can make a real difference to outcomes for students is a key driver of this work.</p> <p><b>Methods:-</b> A group of 12 Year 10 students, chosen as they are at a point when interventions can make a large difference to their outcomes, will take a measure of resiliency test (Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)), this will be carried out by the Family School Support Worker so that my role as their headteacher does not influence their answers, prior to beginning the interventions. The interventions would take place over a four month period.</p> <p>After the interventions I will analyse performance data and students will sit the CYRMswa again and I will gain an insight into how the students felt about the interventions through extended interviews.</p> <p>Students will be chosen from GCSE performance data; students who are below their target grades and score low effort levels will be chosen. The 12 students will be girls as currently I</p>	

<p>mentor female students. This process has been happening in the school now for the past 5 years and students would expect to have me as a mentor, this is not an unusual process. However, as this group of students would be part of the project I would make sure they and their parents are clear that being part of the project is a voluntary process and that if they did not wish to take part then they would still have me as a mentor but would be part of a different group.</p>	
<p><b>B:</b> I consider that this project <b>may</b> have ethical implications that should be brought before the Institute's Ethics Committee.</p>	
<p>Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.</p>	
<p>Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. title of project</li> <li>2. purpose of project and its academic rationale</li> <li>3. brief description of methods and measurements</li> <li>4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria</li> <li>5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)</li> <li>6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them.</li> <li>7. estimated start date and duration of project</li> </ol>	

**C: SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:**

**Note:** a signature is required. Typed names are not acceptable

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm that ethical good practice will be followed within the project.

Signed:  ..... Print Name.....Charlotte Wilson.....  
 Date...24/01/16.

**STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL** (to be completed by supervisor – please tick or mark n/a as appropriate)

I confirm that:

	this project conforms with the University of Reading ethics procedures, as outlined in the document “Ethics Guidance_October_2012.doc (on ethics page on Blackboard).
	this project conforms with the University of Reading’s Quality Assurance in Research protocol (relevant document also available in the ethics page on Blackboard).
	if this project involves children under the age of 5, I am aware that the application must be considered by the Institute Research Ethics Committee and requires the completion of the Ethics Committee Statement below.
	I agree to complete another review process should the research methods employed change during the lifetime of the project
	I have read and completed the above checklist during a meeting with the student.
	both I and the student have carefully proofread all documents, and ensured that outward facing documents in particular are well written and free of typographical errors.

This project has been considered using agreed Institute of Education procedures and is now approved.

Signed:  ..... Print Name Andy Kempe Date 15.2.16

(MA dissertation supervisor or UG/PGCE/PGCert/PGCap tutor)\*

**When completed, an electronic version of this form and all supporting documents including information sheets, consent forms, research instruments (questionnaires, tests, draft interview schedules, etc.) must be forwarded to Tracey Pinchbeck**



**([t.l.pinchbeck@reading.ac.uk](mailto:t.l.pinchbeck@reading.ac.uk)) by the supervising tutor. Hard copies should also be included in the student's dissertation/assignment.**

**FURTHER STATEMENT REQUIRED ONLY FOR PROJECTS INVOLVING CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF FIVE YEARS**

This project has been considered by the Institute of Education Ethics Committee

Signed: ..... Print Name..... Date.....

(IoE Research Ethics Committee representative)\*

- A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.



