

**A CASE STUDY HARNESSING CHILDREN'S INSIGHT AND SKILLS TO
DEVELOP A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO WELLBEING IN A PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

VOLUME 1

by

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ABSTRACT

Research suggests that children's wellbeing in the UK is decreasing. Schools have an essential role in supporting children's wellbeing, with whole-school approaches considered important in achieving this. However, given the subjectivity and complexity in wellbeing, it is essential to develop our understanding of what wellbeing comprises from the perspectives of children.

Adopting a participatory action research approach, this case study in one primary school, firstly aimed to explore (i) children's perceptions of wellbeing, and secondly (ii) their suggestions for how wellbeing could be maintained and improved in their school. Thirdly, (iii) it aimed to develop an action plan to enhance wellbeing in the school based on the children's views, and (iv) fourthly, elicited the children's post-hoc reflections on this process and the value of the outcomes achieved. An appreciative inquiry (AI) framework using focus groups with eight children was adopted to facilitate child participation. A steering group of three staff members supported the implementation of the children's action plan.

Analysis highlighted core themes in the children's construction of wellbeing, but also variation in their individual priorities. Through collaboration, the children devised an innovative action plan which was harnessed to contribute to whole-school changes to support pupil wellbeing.

This research contributes to the limited literature in child-led whole-school approaches to wellbeing and of research adopting AI with primary school-aged children. Wellbeing was

understood as a multi-dimensional, dynamic concept associated with core themes related to personal, social and environmental factors. Reflections on the study suggested that AI affords a powerful and effective framework to use with children and to support whole-school change.

Implications for educational psychology practice are outlined, emphasising the importance of eliciting and using children's voice, and of adopting AI principles.

Key terms: action research, appreciative inquiry, children's wellbeing, children's voice, whole-school approach

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my Mum, whose continued passion and commitment to making a difference to the lives of children and young people inspired my journey into educational psychology.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
AR	Action research
BERA	The British Educational Research Association
BPS	The British Psychological Society
CYP	Children and young people
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DfE	Department for Education
DoH	Department of Health
EP	Educational psychologist
FG	Focus group
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PAR	Participatory action research
PHE	Public Health England
PHSE	Personal, social, health and economic education
RQ	Research question
RSE	Relationships and sex education
SEMH	Social, emotional and mental health
SEN	Special education needs
TA	Teaching assistant
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UoB	University of Birmingham
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

This research was undertaken as a substantive part of an Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate professional training programme at the University of Birmingham (2019-2022). Notably, the coronavirus pandemic occurred during this time, which correlated with, and was judged to have contributed toward reports of decreasing wellbeing across the population (Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, 2022a; Owens et al., 2022). This added further impetus to research children's wellbeing, particularly of those who have likely been disproportionately disadvantaged by the pandemic (Children's Commissioner, 2020a; 2020b). This chapter outlines the personal, professional, societal and political contexts that have influenced the research aims and questions.

1.1 Current Context

In the UK, children's wellbeing continues to decline and alongside this, their happiness in school is also decreasing (The Children's Society, 2021). The UK recently was ranked 29th out of 38 rich countries for reported children's mental wellbeing, signalling a key need to address the conditions (i.e. policies and context) that support wellbeing (UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund], 2020). To do so UNICEF (2020), first suggest the need to consult with children, from parents to schools and policymakers, arguing that we need to better understand what wellbeing means to children and consider who makes decisions on the matter. However, within the literature, there appears to be limited research exploring children's perceptions of wellbeing, particularly for younger children (Kellock, 2020; Statham & Chase, 2010). Consequently, young children's views are absent from policies on wellbeing. Whilst there are signs of improvement, for example PHE (Public Health England) and DfE

(Department for Education, 2021) which recommend children are consulted in developing a whole-school approach, further research in this area is much needed.

1.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Wellbeing is a topical concept and is considered an area of great importance to people in the UK (Beaumont, 2011), albeit with no agreed definition (Dodge et al., 2012; Ryff, 1989).

Wellbeing is inextricably linked to people's mental health, as evidenced by the World Health Organisation's (WHO, 2013) definition of mental health as "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (p.6).

However, mental health is often viewed with negative connotations (Coleman, 2009), and traditionally has been viewed through dominant pathologic approaches associated with the medical model (Tew, 2002). These approaches focus on ridding illness and identifying risk factors (Bhattacharya et al., 2020). However, MacDonald and O'Hara's (1998)

conceptualisation of mental health encompasses both promoting and demoting factors of mental health, which can be seen to shift towards salutogenic approaches. Salutogenic approaches are underpinned by positive approaches, which focus on promoting factors that maintain good health factors through our own resources (Bhattacharya et al., 2020), similar to a capabilities approach which focuses on the capabilities and freedoms one has to reach their potential (Sen, 1999). Salutogenic views therefore can be viewed to align with the more positively framed term, wellbeing. In agreement with McLellan's (2019) suggestion "whilst of course it is important to understand mental ill-health, ... there is also a case for a separate examination of wellbeing" (p.38), I posit that wellbeing and mental health are distinct but overlapping concepts, and therefore, this paper focuses on wellbeing as a distinct construct

and adopts a positive psychology approach. Positive psychology has greatly contributed to the understanding of wellbeing and progressed from the previous dominant model of deficit and pathology associated with mental (ill-)health (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

1.3 Positive Psychology

Positive psychology aims to shift the preoccupation from fixing problems towards enhancing positivity in life (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), not by replacing but by complementing traditional psychological approaches (Carr, 2011). It uniquely focuses on human strengths rather than deficits (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This is key, as strengths such as gratitude, hope and love are seen to promote flourishing and wellbeing (Seligman, 2011).

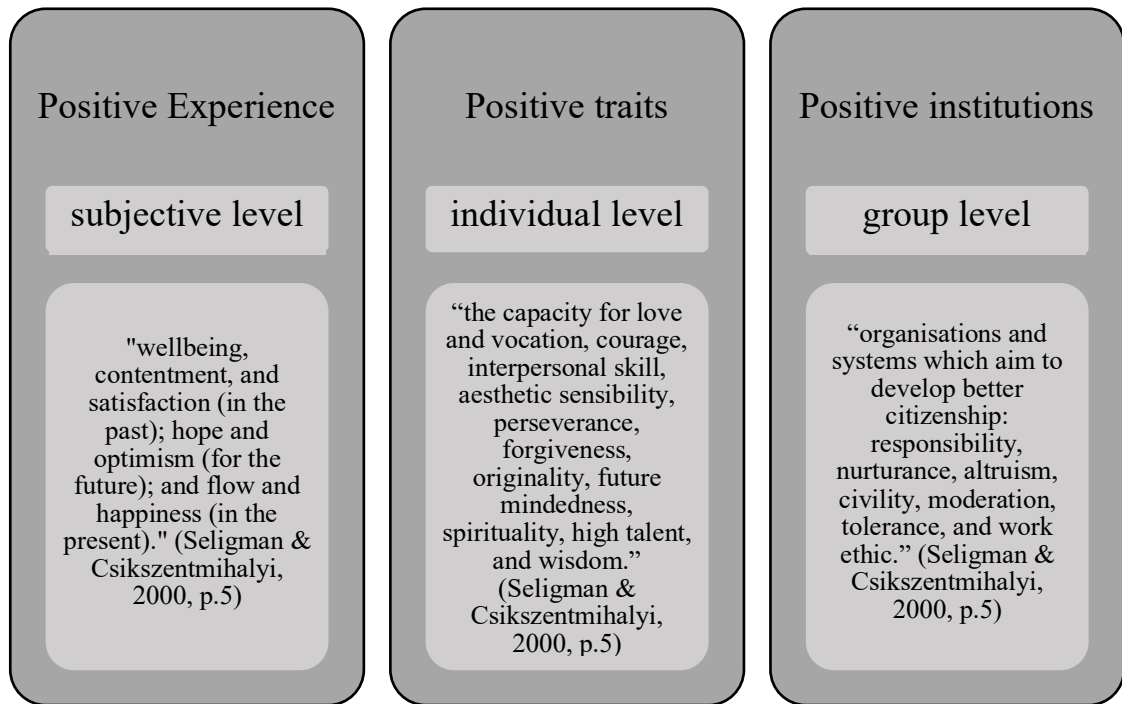
Seligman (2011) argues that wellbeing is the central topic of positive psychology. The goal of wellbeing is to increase flourishing, which encompasses positive emotions, engagement, meaning, self-esteem, reliance, vitality, self-determination, optimism and positive relationships (Huppert & So, 2011). Positive psychology is founded on three main elements to improve quality of life and thus to flourish; positive experience, positive personality, and positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) (see Figure 1). Positive institutions include families and communities, workplaces and businesses, and education settings, and can facilitate positive traits which subsequently facilitate positive experiences (Peterson, 2006).

Education settings have the potential to influence children's and staff members' traits and wellbeing, satisfaction, and happiness. Positive teachers and schools are vital in working

towards a happier world, through imparting values of optimism, hope, and trust, can positively influence children’s views of the world (Seligman & Adler, 2018).

Figure 1

The three pillars of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)



1.4 Positive Education

Positive education can be broadly described as a combination of positive psychology and teaching and learning practices (White, 2016) or as teaching skills for academic achievement, and wellbeing and happiness (Seligman et al., 2009). Its premise is that skills for happiness and wellbeing can be taught (Seligman et al., 2009). For example, initiatives to teach wellbeing can reduce depressive and anxious symptoms, hopelessness whilst also enhancing student engagement and achievement (Seligman et al., 2009).

The term positive education was first coined in Geelong Grammar School in Australia (Norrish, 2015). A whole-school approach to positive psychology was developed incorporating six core elements: positive relationships, positive emotions, positive health, positive engagement, positive accomplishment, and positive purpose (Norrish, 2015). A positive education curriculum was taught, with explicit positive education lessons and implicit teaching of wellbeing throughout the curriculum. The reported benefits were vast and promising, including improved staff morale and wellbeing, better relationships, and increased social and emotional wellbeing, and feelings of belonging and safety for their students (Norrish, 2015).

Positive education exists internationally, predominantly in Australia (see Riedel et al., 2020; Norrish, 2015), with only a few UK schools adopting this approach (see Roberts, 2020 for examples). Given the rising reports of decreasing levels of child wellbeing in the UK such an approach could have significant potential to enhance wellbeing by adopting a salutogenic and holistic approach. However, undertaking organisational change to adopt a positive education approach in schools is complex, due to constraints of policy and funding (White, 2016).

1.5 Wellbeing, school and educational psychology

Since 1995, in the UK children's mental health has been supported through a tiered model of mental health support (Williams & Richardson, 1995). Schools were seen as accessible support for children and thus form the first tier, and other professionals in tier 2, 3 and 4. Educational psychologists (EPs) provide a key role in contributing to the "wellbeing of all children and young people" (The Scottish Executive Education Department [SEED], 2002, p.30) and are positioned at the second tier (NHS, 2015). However, the extent to which schools

were able to provide mental health support was questioned as many teachers felt unequipped and unprepared (Rothì et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2016), and the model was criticised for fragmented care between services and a service model which children needed to fit into, rather than the more ideal opposite (Department of Health [DOH], & National Health Service [NHS], 2015). This model was replaced by other integrative service models (DoH & NHS, 2015), such as the THRIVE framework which focused on shared-decision making, and adopted a multi-agency and a preventive and promotive approach (Wolpert et al., 2019). Pathogenic views appear to remain prevalent in regard to mental health and wellbeing. Rising referral figures to CAMHS (Local Government Association, 2022), suggest a public perception that poor mental health and wellbeing needs to be diagnosed and ‘fixed’ by experts. Yet, over time, there has been a shift in policy towards salutogenic approaches to enhancing wellbeing and mental health in school (i.e. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence [NICE], 2008; 2009; PHE & DfE 2015; 2021).

Recent policy (PHE & DfE, 2021) can be seen to recommend holistic, whole-school approaches to wellbeing, incorporating universal strategies, such as a curriculum which includes teaching of wellbeing, safe environments, and targeted strategies towards those who require additional support, drawing similarities to positive education. However, policies to promote children’s wellbeing are rarely informed by children’s ascertainable wishes and views, nor are their voices present either in developing interventions, or in exploring understanding of wellbeing itself. Exploring children’s constructions of wellbeing aligns with respect for children’s rights, views childhood as a distinct phase, acknowledges the changing nature of wellbeing and recognises the importance of subjectivity in wellbeing alongside traditional objective measures (Ben-Arieh, 2005). Children’s voices are considered necessary

to guide policy, practice and in the development of suitable intervention (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012; NICE, 2008; PHE & DfE, 2021). Empowering children’s voices is arguably fundamental to EP practice (Ingram, 2013). In combination with their knowledge of child development, organisational psychology, and research skills, EPs are suggested to be well-positioned to work with children and schools to enhance and maintain children’s wellbeing via salutogenic and positive psychology approaches.

1.6 Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a philosophy, approach, and process of positive organisational change, achieved through engaging participants to appreciate and inquire (Cooperrider et al., 2008, see Figure 2). AI is outlined in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Figure 2

A diagrammatic representation of the basic principles of Appreciative Inquiry



Harmonised with positive psychology, AI focuses on positive experiences to identify and build upon an organisation’s existing positive core and strengths. It views organisations as positive institutions which have the potential to bring love, courage, and value to the world (Cooperrider & Godwin, 2012). AI has been used as a method for organisational change

within a range of institutions, including McDonalds, NASA, Save the Children, and the United Nations (Cooperrider et al., 2008) and increasingly, within education.

Educational research adopting AI tends to be with adults or older children. To date, only a small amount of research has focused on using AI with primary school-aged children in the UK (see Davies & Lewis, 2013; Doveston & Keenaghan 2006; Lewis, 2015; Pahil, 2018). These examples, although limited, illustrate that AI can be considered a suitable method to facilitate the essential participation of younger children.

AI offers a unique framework to explore and make change across schools. The strengths-based nature of AI and fundamental peer collaboration can develop confidence and a sense of success (Hammond, 1998). I judged AI a fitting method to explore wellbeing with children from a positive and empowering approach, whilst also enabling children to be involved in a change project.

1.7 Personal and professional influences

During my doctoral study, I have completed supervised professional practice placements in two local authority educational psychology services. This experience revealed the significant proportion of EP practice focusing on emotional difficulties such as concerns about anxiety, depression, low self-worth, and motivation. This was particularly pertinent in the second and third years of my training, during the Coronavirus pandemic. The national lockdowns associated with the Coronavirus pandemic significantly disrupted daily life, with children unable to visit their relatives or friends, and schools closed for many, resulting in a decline in children's wellbeing (Owens et al., 2019).

My previous professional experience in primary schools, overwhelmingly centred on academic development and achievement, leaving little opportunity to focus on personal development and wellbeing. Furthermore, my experience within education highlighted a deficit narrative where ‘problems’ were attributed to individual children, and support appeared to be reactive rather than preventative. Therefore, the introduction of positive psychology and whole-school promotion of wellbeing to challenge or at least balance this narrative was timely.

Additionally, genuine child participation appeared to be overlooked, misunderstood, or tokenistic, where children appear to have a voice but ultimately have neither choice nor opportunity to consider and express their opinions (Hart, 1992). This often revealed a difference between espoused views about child views and enactment, likely limited by time and appropriate methods to achieve this. Practice was at odds with the potential value that meaningful engagement with children could add to both the school and children, particularly regarding promoting their wellbeing.

My experience of working within adult mental health support highlighted the significant number of adults struggling to manage daily and multiple stressors and the need to teach these adults skills to support their resilience and capacity to support their own wellbeing. Promoting children’s wellbeing in schools may help children to develop essential skills to enable them to navigate life successfully, and subsequently contribute towards a reduction in the increasing number of mental health difficulties in adulthood in contemporary society.

1.8 Chapter conclusion

Wellbeing is an important but complex phenomenon. Children's wellbeing continues to decline (The Children's Society, 2021) and although policy commends holistic, salutogenic, approaches to support wellbeing in school, children's views are absent from the development of such policy. McLellan (2019) suggests that to develop suitable intervention to support children's wellbeing, a sufficient understanding of wellbeing is required. This too is currently lacking, particularly understanding from younger children's perspectives.

I have suggested that EPs are in a strong position to facilitate child participation as part of whole-school approaches to enhance children's wellbeing. Therefore, this participatory action research used an AI methodology to firstly explore children's understanding of wellbeing and their views on how to support and promote wellbeing in their school. Secondly, this research developed an action plan based on these views, collaboratively planned with child participants and staff members, to develop a whole-school approach to support children's wellbeing. The project concluded with eliciting the children's post-hoc reflections on this process and the value of the outcomes achieved.

The purpose of this research was therefore:

- 1) To explore children's understanding of wellbeing.
- 2) To explore children's views about how their wellbeing can be supported in their school.
- 3) To harness children's views to support the design and initial implementation of plans to develop provisions to enhance pupils' wellbeing across their school.

- 4) To elicit the children's post-hoc reflections on this process and the value of the outcomes achieved.

Chapters 2 and 3: Literature Review

The remit of this literature review is twofold: firstly, to explore and review a range of perspectives on the highly abstract concept of wellbeing. Whilst there appears to be a broad general consensus within clinical and adult understanding of wellbeing, there is much uncertainty around the specificity of wellbeing, and limited empirical evidence exploring children's understanding of wellbeing. Throughout this literature review and research, I harnessed reflexivity to separate my own understanding and beliefs of wellbeing to manage potential bias towards the children's understanding of wellbeing. Secondly this literature explores the position of wellbeing within education. More specifically, it aims to consider how far the promotion of children's wellbeing aligns with the purpose of education and how wellbeing can be supported in schools. The literature review is therefore comprised of two chapters. Chapter 2 explores definitions and the theoretical conceptualisation of wellbeing, children's wellbeing, and the importance of conducting research with children. Chapter 3 focuses on wellbeing within education, considering policy, practice, and the role of EPs.

Chapter 2: Children's Wellbeing

2.1 What is Wellbeing?

Today, wellbeing is a popular term, harnessed in academic and scientific discourse, workplaces, education and consumerism (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008). However, despite its widespread usage, wellbeing remains a contested term (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008; Statham & Chase, 2010). Although wellbeing is broadly recognised as a generally positive and multi-dimensional concept, an agreed definition is lacking (Dodge et al., 2012). Understanding of

wellbeing is arguably complicated by the diverse meanings and discourses placed upon it within different contexts and sectors (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008).

2.1.1 How is wellbeing defined?

Wellbeing is a highly subjective concept, which means many things to different people, and is frequently associated with happiness, quality of life, life satisfaction and mental health. It can be seen broadly to comprise “all aspects of human experience within a holistic perception of the individual at any given time” (Gillet-Swan, 2014, p.64). Whilst there is a wealth of literature on the meaning of wellbeing, there is little consensus regarding its definition (Dodge et al., 2012), which is further complicated by popularisation of the term (Kellock, 2020).

Firstly, ‘well’ is defined as good, proper, and satisfactory (Mariam-webster, n.d) and ‘being’ as “the state of existing” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Therefore, when combined, wellbeing can be understood as a good or satisfactory existence. Dictionary definitions provide similar explanations of wellbeing; “the state of being or doing well in life; happy, healthy, or prosperous condition” (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989) “the condition of being contented, healthy, or successful” (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). But is it this simple?

Definitions originating within health and clinical domains provide further detail:

“Wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well and comprises an individual’s experience of their life; and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values” (DoH, 2014, p.6).

“Wellbeing is more than the absence of illness and goes beyond life satisfaction. It is linked with an individual’s physical health, health behaviours and resilience” (PHE, 2013, p.5).

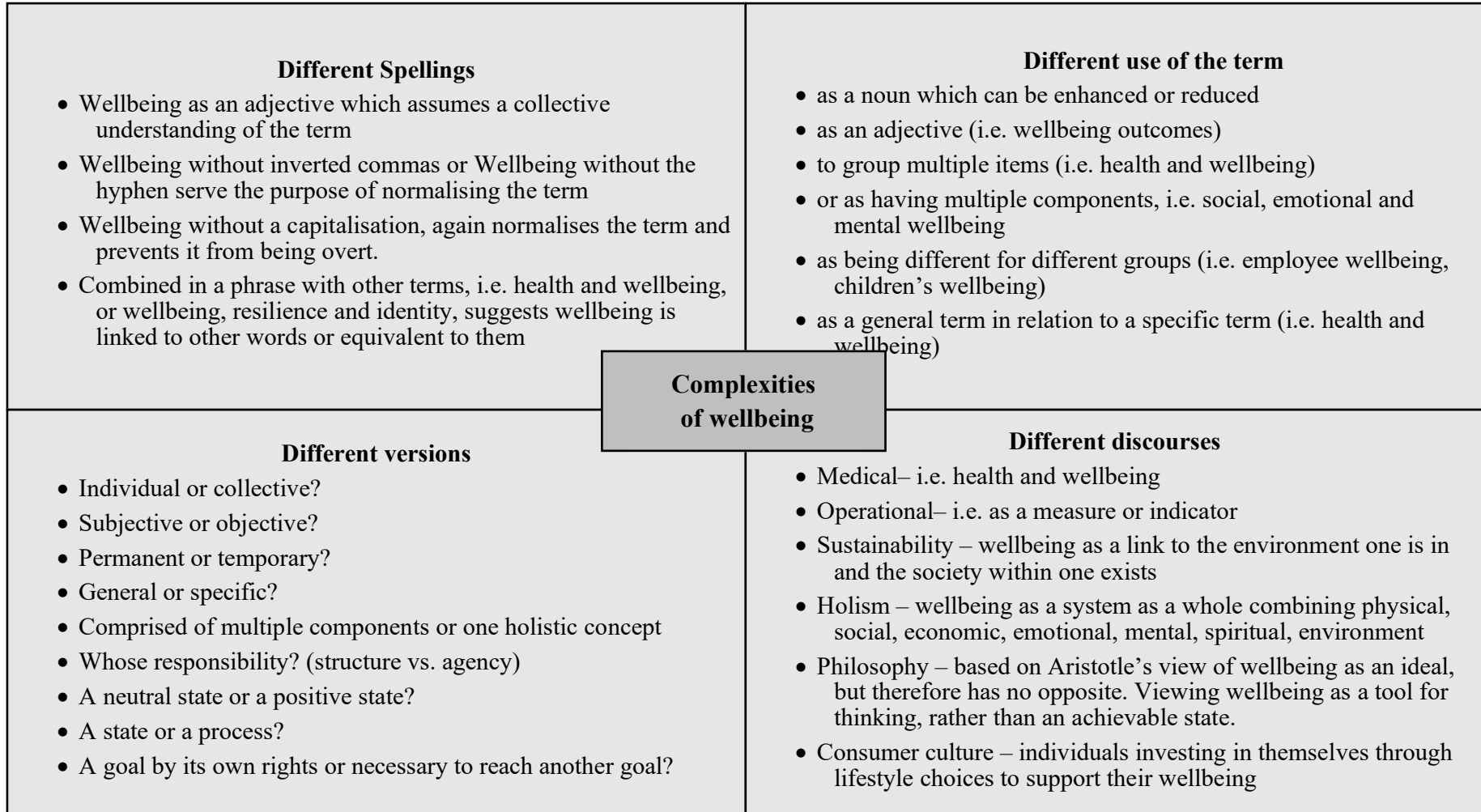
These definitions reference the multidimensionality of wellbeing, incorporating physical health, life satisfaction, and positive feelings, and highlight its dynamic nature, influenced by social and cultural context and ideals of wellbeing. In reference to its multi-dimensions, Seligman (2011) compares wellbeing to weather. Seligman suggests the weather is not a real thing, but consists of "several measurable elements, each a real thing, each contributing to wellbeing, but none defining wellbeing" (Seligman, 2011 p.15). He proposes that wellbeing is therefore operationalised by not one, but multiple different elements. Theoretical models provide further information on these elements. Expanding on the social and cultural influences on wellbeing, McCallum and Price (2016) suggest that “wellbeing is diverse and fluid respecting individual, family and community beliefs, values, experiences, culture, opportunities and contexts across time and change. It encompasses intertwined individual, collective and environmental elements which continually interact across the lifespan” (p.135). These evidence the broad conceptualisation of wellbeing as a positive way of living but lack specificity in regard to its definition. Some may argue that wellbeing is no different from mental health, quality of life or life satisfaction: such terms are often used interchangeably with wellbeing (Statham & Chase, 2010).

Research suggests that wellbeing is a complex and highly subjective concept. This is evidenced further in Figure 3 which presents further considerations when defining wellbeing; regarding spelling, use of the term, the discourses underpinning it and different versions of it.

Such inconsistencies suggest that wellbeing is a subjective and dynamic concept (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008). In order to acknowledge wellbeing as a normalised concept in today's society and as one concept rather than two, I have chosen to use the written form 'wellbeing' in this paper.

Figure 3

Complexities of wellbeing (Ereaut & Whiting, 2008)



2.1.2 Theories of Wellbeing

Multiple theoretical conceptualisations of wellbeing exist. Most commonly wellbeing can firstly be conceptualised as subjective or objective (Sumner, 1996). These are distinguishable through the notion of evaluation. Objective wellbeing is not dependent on our evaluations or individual values (Diener & Ryan, 2009; Sumner, 1996) and can be viewed as basic human needs and rights, such as food, health and safety (DoH, 2014). Objective wellbeing is commonly associated with Sen's welfare economics (Western & Tomaszewski, 2016). His subsequent capabilities model details the social, political, and economic opportunities which influence our personal capabilities (Sen, 1999). However, theories of wellbeing are dominated by subjective conceptualisations. These assert that wellbeing is reliant on our evaluations: our values, beliefs, preferences, wants, and needs (Sumner, 1996; Diener, 2009).

Subjective wellbeing can be categorised into hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing. An early model of subjective psychological wellbeing was Bradburn's (1969) hedonic model which consisted of two dimensions; positive and negative affect. Hedonic psychology therefore centres on opposite states; pleasure and pain, interest and boredom, joy and sorrow (Kahneman et al., 1999). Diener's (1984) tripartite model added a further cognitive layer to this subjective understanding, by incorporating personal evaluations of life satisfaction to the presence of positive affect, and absence of negative affect.

Eudaimonic wellbeing focuses "on living life in a full and deeply satisfying way" (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p.1). Emphasis is placed on self-realisation and functioning fully (Deci & Ryan, 2008), achieved through engagement in meaningful activities to reach one's full potential

(Steger et al., 2008). Ryff's (1995) model of wellbeing is founded on key influences from developmental psychology, clinical psychology and mental health literature. With foundations in eudaimonic perspectives of wellbeing. Ryff suggested six key dimensions: self-acceptance, purpose in life, environmental mastery, positive relationships, autonomy, and personal growth. Ryff (2014) later highlighted the role of resilience, which she defined as "the capacity to maintain or regain wellbeing in the face of adversity" (p.1).

Steger et al. (2008) distinguished between eudaimonic behaviours (i.e. those that meet psychological needs) and hedonic behaviours (i.e. those that satisfy pleasure). They suggest eudaimonic activities are associated with positive psychological functioning more so than hedonic activities (Steger et al., 2008). However, the two can be seen to overlap. Someone who experiences a eudaimonic life is likely to experience hedonic wellbeing, yet hedonic wellbeing is not always associated with eudaimonic experiences (Waterman et al., 2008). Models such as the PERMA model or Self-Determination theory (SDT) integrate both hedonic and eudaimonic positions. Deci and Ryan's (2001) model of self-determination theory; encompasses three psychological needs; competence, autonomy and relatedness, which when achieved generate motivation and wellbeing. SDT is based on the principle that people are driven towards growth and development (Deci & Ryan, 2001). More recently, Seligman's (2011) positive psychology PERMA model of wellbeing consists of five elements which create the acronym PERMA: positive emotion, engagement, meaning, positive relationships, and accomplishment. Seligman (2011) argued that achieving all five elements leads to flourishing, which he considers a means to measure wellbeing. However, the new dimensions of wellbeing suggested by the PERMA model have been questioned, suggesting it represents wellbeing differently from Diener's classic models (Goodman et al., 2017). Given

the mass research into subjective wellbeing (Diener et al., 2017), it could be argued these models actually complicate understanding of wellbeing rather than provide clarity.

Traditionally wellbeing was viewed as a private phenomenon, however, Keyes (1998) recognised the public nature of wellbeing. Keyes (1998) suggested that wellbeing is more than psychological but social. His model of social wellbeing consists of five dimensions, social integration, social contribution, social coherence, social actualisation, and social acceptance. He suggested that how we appraise and overcome these social challenges indicates functioning in life.

As wellbeing is viewed as a multidimensional concept, rather than drawing comparisons between these different types of wellbeing, it is suggested that hedonic and eudaimonic stances should be integrated as part of a holistic understanding of wellbeing (Deci & Ryan, 2001; Henderson & Knight, 2012). Keyes (2002; 2003) integrated hedonic, eudaimonic and social wellbeing in his operationalisation of mental health, or “a syndrome of symptoms of an individual's subjective wellbeing” (Keyes, 2002, p.208). Emotional wellbeing (i.e. hedonic) includes the presence of positive affect, absence of negative affect and life satisfaction. Psychological wellbeing (eudaimonic) incorporates the six dimensions from Ryff’s operationalisation, and social wellbeing, consists of his five social wellbeing dimensions. However, objective wellbeing is neglected in this integration of subjective wellbeing. Maslow’s (1954) theory of human motivation considers objective dimensions, such as physiological and safety needs, as core foundations to reaching self-actualisation. Self-actualisation is considered the highest level of psychological self-fulfilment. Achieving one’s potential draws many similarities with subjective wellbeing, therefore one can assume

objective elements are necessary in combination with subjective wellbeing. To provide a holistic overview of wellbeing, theoretical models are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1

Synthesis of theoretical conceptualisations of wellbeing (based on Deci & Ryan, 2000; Diener, 1984; Keyes, 1998; Maslow, 1954; Ryff, 1995; & Seligman, 2011)

Objective	Subjective		
	Hedonic	Eudaimonic	Social
Physiological needs Basic biological human needs for survival, i.e. food, warmth, sleep	Personal evaluations of life satisfaction Assessment of life as a whole	Self-acceptance Positive view of and accepts self	Social integration Being part of a community
Safety & security Stability, protection, structure, order	Presence of positive affect Existence of pleasure, joy, interest	Meaning & purpose in life Recognises that life has meaning, purpose, value, goals and direction in life	Social contribution Feeling valued by others and useful in society
	Absence of negative affect Absence of boredom, pain, sorrow	Environmental mastery & competence Feelings of self-efficacy and management of daily life	Social coherence Interested in society, recognising that is predictable and meaningful
		Positive relationships Belongingness and connection with others, trusting and reciprocal relationships	Social actualisation Belief in the collective potential of people and society for change
		Autonomy Independent and self-determined and resist social pressures	Social acceptance A positive and accepting attitude towards others
		Personal growth Continued development to realise own potential	
		Engagement Being absorbed in a task	
		Accomplishment Achieving life	

In summary, these theoretical conceptualisations highlight the key dimensions underpinning wellbeing representing emotional, psychological and social elements. This theoretical synthesis demonstrates broad consensus about what wellbeing comprises, whilst individual theories provide specific understandings of distinctions within this broad consensus. The generalisability of extant theories, is, however, questioned as these predominantly originate from Western cultures. This may result in inaccurate understanding of wellbeing and subsequently poorly-directed approaches to enhancing wellbeing.

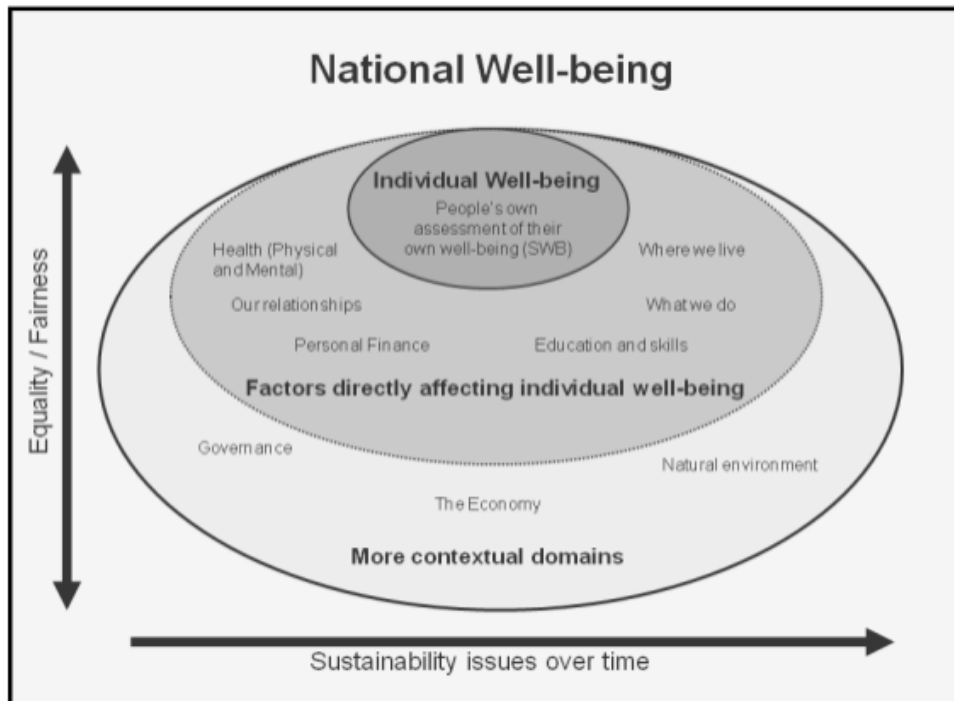
2.1.3 Contextual Influences on Wellbeing

Wellbeing cannot exist in isolation. The influence of the environment and systems within which we operate influence individual development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) and therefore these systems will invariably influence our perception and experience of wellbeing. In exploring national wellbeing, Beaumont (2011) outlines that individual wellbeing is best conceptualised in recognition of both direct factors and wider contextual factors (see Figure 4).

Culture has a significant influence on understanding and perceptions of wellbeing, and subsequently how wellbeing is promoted (Kitayama & Markus, 2000; Ryff et al., 2014). The distinction between the Eastern collectivist tendency and Western individualism impact how individuals within each culture may view themselves, and consequently their understanding of wellbeing (Kitayama & Markus, 2000; Ryff et al., 2014). As Ryff et al. (2014) state “There is thus no single type of wellbeing to be promoted across cultures – one size does not fit all” (p.16).

Figure 4

National wellbeing framework (from Beaumont, 2011, p.2)



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In order to accommodate such cultural differences, Dodge et al's (2012) universal model defines wellbeing as: "the balance point between an individual's resource pool and the challenges faced" (p.230). Both these resources and challenges include psychological, social and physical components (Dodge et al., 2012). Emphasising the multi-faceted nature of wellbeing, their simplistic definition allows for the subjectivity of wellbeing, which they argue can be applied across cultural, social groups and individuals. This model's strengths include its applicability across different age groups and challenges the perception of an optimal 'positive wellbeing' goal, through positioning wellbeing as an equilibrium. It recognises the fluid and dynamic nature of wellbeing and highlights the individual's role in wellbeing through developing resources to maintain equilibrium, reflecting a positive

psychology view (Dodge et al., 2012). Dodge et al's (2012) definition of wellbeing provides simplicity to the complex field of wellbeing but at the cost of providing only limited insight into the specific dimensions. However, this was not their purpose, as they argue that the literature on wellbeing has concentrated on its dimensions, rather than the definition (Dodge et al., 2012).

Traditional research into wellbeing arguably positions wellbeing as objective, real and thus quantifiable, typical of the positivist approach. Such research predominantly centres on a singular, objective understanding of wellbeing that allows historical and international comparisons. However, some authors situate wellbeing as a construct within a critical realist ontology (e.g. Ranatunga & Pagliano, 2017), acknowledging that mental phenomena are real but understood through our independent constructions (Maxwell, 2012). However, I consider wellbeing to be a concept that “does not exist independently of our knowledge of it” (Grix, 2010, p.84), adopting, rather, a relativist and interpretivist view. Given the highly subjective and personal nature, cultural, and historical relevance of wellbeing, I acknowledge the multiple realities and interpretations of wellbeing, meaning that wellbeing cannot be understood without considering individual subjective experiences.

My conceptual understanding of wellbeing is as a positive multi-dimensional concept, encompassing objective and subjective dimensions; both individual psychological (hedonic and eudaimonic) and social dimensions, and associated with a salutogenic approach. Referencing the contextual influences upon wellbeing, I consider wellbeing to be fluid over context, time and culture. Additionally, I acknowledge individual priorities in wellbeing and both individual and social capabilities in maintaining wellbeing.

2.1.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the complexities of wellbeing; its definition, theoretical conceptualisations and contextual influences. Wellbeing as a broad concept can be summarised as a multifaceted and variable term, encompassing a range of psychological, emotional, social and physiological dimensions. However, both specificity and consensus regarding a definition is lacking, arguably confirming that wellbeing is highly subjective and influenced by contextual factors.

Understanding of children's wellbeing is absent from theoretical conceptualisation of wellbeing, although broader definitions such as Dodge et al's (2012) can account for age differentials. Given that children's worlds will differ vastly from adults (Kellett, 2005), there is a need for research to explore children's understanding of wellbeing to understand what it means to them and the contextual factors which influence this. A deeper understanding could be harnessed to enhance policy and intervention required to support and maintain child wellbeing.

2.2 Children's Understanding of Wellbeing

2.2.1 Current Context of Child Wellbeing

In the UK, reports measuring children's wellbeing suggest it is decreasing, and demonstrate a continual decline over the past 10 years (Office National statistics [ONS], 2020; The Children's Society, 2021). Children report decreasing levels of subjective, self-rated happiness, wellbeing, and life satisfaction (The Children's Society, 2021). This pattern is evident also similar in decreasing levels of happiness in regard to life as a whole, friends,

appearance school and schoolwork. These concerns understandably will have been amplified by the recent covid-19 pandemic, which signalled a ‘crisis’ in young people’s wellbeing (Owens et al., 2022).

Unravelling the underlying reasons for declining child wellbeing levels in the UK is complicated. It is unclear whether decreasing levels of wellbeing are an accurate depiction that children are less happy and satisfied with their lives or rather associated with an increasing standard of living or increased awareness of wellbeing and of the need to achieve it. Furthermore, the picture may be complicated further by the common conflation of wellbeing and mental health, and its negative connotations (Coleman, 2009). Factors which negatively influence children’s wellbeing are likely to include stressful events, special educational needs (SEN), maternal depression, malnutrition, violence, and exploitation (Clarke et al., 2020; Gutman et al., 2010). Contemporary issues and pressures such as deprivation (Francis-Devine, 2022), increasing figures of abuse and neglect (NSPCC, 2022), educational standards and pressure (WHO, 2022), increased internet and social media, less face-to-face social interactions, less play and sports (Twenge et al., 2018) may further contribute to decreasing levels of wellbeing. However, protective factors may include child-parent relationships, family relationships, attainment, and friendships, school achievement, educational equality, a safe learning environment, and ICT literacy (Clarke et al., 2020; Gutman et al., 2010). Evidently contextual factors hold a significant role in wellbeing for children.

Declining levels of children’s wellbeing can have a wide and enduring impact. Positive wellbeing in children is associated with improved academic achievement, and engagement in

school (Gutman & Vorhaus, 2012). In later life, wellbeing can have benefits to physical health and longevity, family relationships, employment, and productivity (DoH, 2014; Layard, 2021; NICE, 2008). In comparison, the impact of poor wellbeing can have costly impact across society; homelessness, incarceration, and mental health difficulties (Kellock, 2020). It is therefore clear why wellbeing is a priority in current government policy (HM Government, 2022; HM Treasury, 2021).

Reports of declining levels of child wellbeing however tend to originate from traditional objective measures levels of children's wellbeing. Growing interest in these measures of children and young people's (CYP's) wellbeing is primarily underpinned by "accountability-based public policy" (Ben-Arieh, 2005, p.573). Whilst such measures have an important role, children's accounts of their own experience should be essential (Ben-Arieh, 2005). These indicators do not allow for the full subjectivity of wellbeing, rarely allowing respondents to reveal or elaborate on their values, attitudes, beliefs, and motives (Robson, 2011). Whilst they are child-focused, in that children are the focus and information is gathered on them (Fattore et al., 2009), this subsequently positions children as passive in their understanding of their wellbeing. Although, it is noted that some measures have consulted children's views during their development (i.e. ONS, 2020), and others in interpreting the results (The Children's Society, 2021). Furthermore, given the complexity of wellbeing as a concept, to make valid conclusions from such large-scale surveys, questions should be asked about the definition of wellbeing used in research, whether these measures accurately reflect this (McLellan, 2019), and specifically whether these are reflective of children's wellbeing.

2.2.2 Exploring Children's Views of Wellbeing

Children's world, their views, their beliefs, and their experiences are vastly different from adults. Children see the world and the things in it differently to adults (Kellett, 2005) and therefore will have a different conceptualisation of wellbeing. To understand child wellbeing, we need to understand it from the perspective of children. In doing so we are viewing childhood as a distinct phase, acting on children's rights, with children positioned as active rather than passive (Ben-Arieh, 2005). Furthermore, this also acknowledges the changing nature of wellbeing and recognises the need for subjective understanding of wellbeing alongside traditional objective measures (Ben-Arieh, 2005). Statham and Chase (2010) report a gradual move from reliance on traditional objective measures to research that involves children in exploring their understanding of wellbeing.

Recent research utilising focus groups by ONS (2020) found children's perceptions of wellbeing is associated with relationships, safe spaces and things to do, physical health and emotional wellbeing, schools, basic needs and optimism for the future. Similarly, a literature review of qualitative research exploring children's views of wellbeing identified three core factors of child wellbeing: relationships (family, friends, teachers, pets), the environment (home, bedroom, school, resources) and the self (physical health, achievement and enjoyment) (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012). From this aspect, it can be concluded that child wellbeing is multi-dimensional (Amerijckx & Humblet, 2013; Dex & Hollingworth 2012; Statham & Chase, 2010) and inclusive of both objective and subjective dimensions of wellbeing.

Within the literature, differences between the perceptions of wellbeing for adults and children are identified (Statham & Chase, 2010; UNICEF, 2020), and echoed by the above findings. Children tend to place greater emphasis on relationships, including family, friends (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2008; Fattore et al., 2009; McAuley, 2019; ONS, 2020) and more importance on pets (Sixsmith et al., 2007). Relationships are viewed as central, in that they provide a sense of security and a means to develop confidence and competence (Fattore et al., 2007; McAuley, 2019). Children emphasise the importance of safe, quiet relaxing spaces (ONS, 2020), arguably as they are not afforded the same level of access to these as adults. Moreover, concerns about the environment and views on autonomy are a priority for children (UNICEF, 2020). These differences signal concern in applying adult-centric understanding to children's wellbeing.

2.2.3 Limitations of our Understanding of Children's Wellbeing

Whilst there is research acknowledging the importance of children in wellbeing, there are many limitations to this research. The majority of research into children's wellbeing centres on older children, with a lack of participation from younger children (Statham & Chase, 2010). Within the examples above, children below the age of 8 are absent and are also commonly excluded from objective surveys (Statham & Chase, 2010). Differences have been recognised between younger and older children in their conceptualisation of wellbeing, for example, younger children identify pets, holidays and activities with families, outdoor play, whereas older children identify sexual and romantic relationships and greater emphasis on friends than family (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012). The gap between a 5-year-old and 15-year-old in regard to their cognitive, social, emotional development, independence, goals and lifestyles is vast. These differences in wellbeing across ages in children, if not acknowledged

could result in an inaccurate and invalid understanding of wellbeing, unreliable measures of wellbeing (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012).

However, there remains limited research into children's views of wellbeing in the UK, and even less evidence exploring exclusively younger children's views (Kellock, 2020).

Nightingale (2015) explored the views of 3- to 8-year-olds through painting and photographs.

Whilst similarities were identified in regard to the importance of relationships with family, friends and pets, differences were noted in respect to spending time with these people.

Moreover, similarly outdoor space was important, but younger children emphasised the importance of exploring and discovery in the outdoor environment and a fascination with nature. In recognition of developmental differences in regard to self-awareness and autonomy, Nightingale (2015) found developing a sense of self was important for younger children, comparable to a sense of purpose or achieving goals for older children and adults.

Nightingale's (2015) research is unique and demonstrates that younger children are capable of expressing their views on wellbeing, and therefore, research needs to develop suitable methods to facilitate this to expand knowledge of younger children's perceptions of wellbeing (Ben-Arieh, 2005).

An absence of evidence into young children could be due to limited ability to communicate or abstract awareness. However, using creative methods could rectify this. Methods such as painting, taking photographs, wellbeing maps and life storyboards have been utilised effectively in this manner to explore children's perceptions of wellbeing (Huynh & Stewart-Tufescu, 2019; Kellock, 2020; McAuley, 2019; Nightingale, 2015; Sixsmith et al., 2017).

Adopting such techniques and adapting the adult language used within the topic of wellbeing,

i.e. satisfaction (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012) into developmentally appropriate terms, could also provide means to engage younger children's views.

Culture and context are also known to impact on wellbeing. McAuley (2019) concluded differences in children's wellbeing priorities across friends, school, grandparents, material possessions and extra-curricular activities across ethnicities and levels of deprivation, were likely affected by a number of interacting socio-economic, religious and cultural factors. Therefore, to improve understanding of childhood wellbeing, research needs to involve the voices of CYP across different ages, cultures and gender (Statham & Chase, 2010). In understanding children's wellbeing, we must acknowledge that views will differ over age and developmental stage, gender and socio-economic situation (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012).

Research exploring children's views on wellbeing primarily centres on the factors contributing to wellbeing. Gillett-Swan (2014) suggests the complexity in defining wellbeing may originate from misunderstandings between what the term wellbeing represents and the factors that contribute to wellbeing. Dex and Hollingsworth (2012) further distinguish between the meaning of wellbeing and its components. I agree that a distinction can be drawn between the dimensions of wellbeing: the core components of wellbeing to be realised (as outlined in theoretical conceptualisations in Chapter 1) and the factors of wellbeing which contribute to or conditions that facilitate these dimensions. Theories of child development would suggest concrete factors contributing to wellbeing are more comprehensible than abstract dimensions (Piaget, 1954), which may account for such a difference, and provides further rationale for appropriate research methods to gather children's views.

2.2.4 Conclusion

The research highlighted in this section indicates that children's wellbeing is multi-dimensional and is inclusive of objective and subjective dimensions of wellbeing. Primarily children's understanding of wellbeing appears to be conceptualised with regard to factors, rather than dimensions of wellbeing. These factors centre on relationships, environment and the self, but priorities for wellbeing can vary across ethnicities and across levels of deprivation (McAuley, 2019). Furthermore, consistent differences have been found between children's and adults' understanding of wellbeing (Sixsmith et al., 2007; Statham & Chase, 2010; UNICEF, 2020) and also between younger and older children (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012). Yet, limited literature exploring younger children views on wellbeing exists in the UK. Differences across ages stress the significance of seeking children's voices to understand their wellbeing, and challenge traditional approaches in research which previously silenced children in preference for adult perceptions (Fattore et al., 2009). Without these views, interpretations of children's wellbeing are unlikely to be representative, and therefore intervention based on these may not yield maximum benefits to enhance children's wellbeing.

2.3 Research with Children

2.3.1 Children in Research

Whilst it is recognised that it is imperative to gather children's views of wellbeing, limited research in the UK focuses on younger or primary-aged children. Traditionally, children's perspectives generally have been constructed through adult interpretations (Coad & Evans, 2008). However, the involvement of children in research is becoming increasingly common, arguably in response to changes in the narrative of children as innocent, dependent and

incompetent and the introduction of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Bucknall, 2012; Coad & Evans, 2008; Kim et al., 2017). Article 12 of the UNCRC (UNICEF, 1989), explicitly recognises children’s voices as a right:

....parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child (UNICEF, 1989, p.5).

As a broad concept, pupil voice relates to pupils being able or encouraged to offer their opinions or perspectives (Whitty & Wisby, 2007). However, children’s participation is more than just expressing their views in data collection (Coad & Evans, 2008), but is rather an “ongoing process of children's expression and active involvement in decision-making at different levels in matters that concern them” (Lansdown et al., 2014, p.6). Hart’s (1992) influential ladder of participation demonstrates this spectrum of child participation, detailing eight steps ranging from non-participation to children-initiated participation.

- “1. Manipulation
2. Decoration
3. Tokenism
4. Assigned but informed
5. Consulted and Informed
6. Adult-Initiated, shared decision with children
7. Child-Initiated and directed
8. Child-Initiated, shared decision with adults” (Hart, 1992, p.8)

The higher levels are considered to be genuine participation (Hart, 1992) and respect both children as important contributors and article 12, which can result in high-quality projects and research outcomes (Lundy et al., 2011).

Perceptions of children's role in research is changing and their active participation in and across research is increasing (Bucknall, 2012; Kim et al., 2017). However, it is suggested that it can be uncommon for children to participate from the beginning to the end of research (Bucknall, 2012). In particular, children's role in data analysis are limited in the literature (Coad & Evans, 2008). Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (2015) outline six key challenges faced when researching with children: limited research skills; the need for training; difficulty balancing the position of insider/outsider; complexities around compensation; power imbalance and protecting children.

The notion of power imbalance is particularly pertinent. Despite attempts to rebalance power differentials, power imbalances in research with children remain as adults ultimately take responsibility (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015; Bucknall, 2012). Power imbalances are predominantly viewed as an undesirable concept in research, however, there are arguably times when adults need to use their power to manage issues of consent, confidentiality, disclosures, and safety (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015). Research which may involve sensitive or stressful content arguably requires adults to increase their responsibilities to protect children (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015). It seems appropriate for adults to recognise these challenges when researching with children and take steps to overcome these to ensure children can participate, but are also safe and protected.

2.3.2 Benefits of Children in Research

Child participation not only can benefit children but those around them, including teachers and schools. The ultimate advantage of involving children as researchers is their insider perspective, which enables understanding of their different meanings and the creation of relevant knowledge and arguably enhanced research outcomes (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015; Kellett, 2005).

The reported benefits to children from participating are vast and one could assume that greater benefits occur when engaged in higher levels of participation. Benefits are suggested to include improved personal development, a positive sense of self and agency, increased self-esteem and confidence, and social skills (Alderson, 2001; Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Kränzl-Nagl & Zartler, 2009). Further benefits include improved cognitive skills, reflection, curiosity, and creativity (Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Kränzl-Nagl & Zartler, 2009), suggesting that participation itself can directly impact on wellbeing.

Benefits from increased participation with children can be extended to teachers. This can foster relationships with students, and also act as a form of professional development (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). Schools also can benefit through enhanced educative practice (Lundy, 2007) and cultural ethos which firmly recognise the value of child participation (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). Finally, child involvement can challenge the ‘quick-fixes’ often adopted in school settings, by focusing on what is important to pupils (Flutter & Ruddock, 2004). Lundy (2007) claims that when implemented effectively, benefits can extend beyond the school system, and ultimately can lead to improved citizenship and society.

2.3.3 Appreciative Inquiry with Children

AI offers a unique approach to action research with children, although, the use of AI with particularly younger children is limited in the UK (i.e. Davies & Lewis, 2013; Doveston & Keenaghan, 2006; Lewis, 2015; Pahil, 2018). Moreover, even fewer examples of research use the full AI process with younger children, however, where it has been used with age group, AI has facilitated participation and achieved promising outcomes. Two examples of the AI process with young children are discussed below.

Lewis (2015) used AI with whole classes of primary school children (Year 4 and 6) and their teachers to explore their ideas for writing learning. Lewis (2015) noted this age group would be “more likely to manage the metacognitive, reflective and linguistic demands of AI” (p.144). AI enabled the children to generate innovative ideas, through an enjoyable experience of telling stories, interviewing each, making and creating and working collaboratively. Lewis (2015) concluded that AI has potential to shift views on pupils’ participation, and also, highlighted the need to plan effectively to ensure all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, are included in the AI process.

Davies and Lewis (2013) worked with Year 2 and 3 classes of children and their teaching staff to explore the children’s ideas of talking and listening activities in the classroom, and their suggestions for how this could be improved. The AI process facilitated interesting and creative ideas developed by the children and the initial implementation of these. The process was viewed positively by the staff and children. The children particularly enjoyed using arts and computers, working in teams as part of the research, and looked forward to seeing their ideas realised in their school. Planning was essential to ensure all pupils could engage in the

process and sufficient time to fulfil implementation of the AI cycle. Despite these challenges, the project was illustrated how through AI, younger children can create new ideas through working together.

These examples exemplify AI as an effective method to enable participation with children. This is demonstrated by children's ideas for change and the implementation of these as a result of this research and also their enjoyment associated with participating. The strength-based, positive, empowering values of AI (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) are illustrated in these examples of action research. However, these examples highlight the need for planning for effective AI, i.e. timeline, inclusive practices and clear explanations of tasks.

I, therefore, identify AI as a suitable approach to use to research with children's on understanding their views on wellbeing and to use these views to support whole-school change. AI is detailed further in Chapter 4.

2.3.4 Research with Children Exploring Wellbeing

The current limited UK research with young children exploring wellbeing may be influenced by a range of factors including those outlined by Bradbury-Jones and Taylor (2015) above, and the children's ages, knowledge, and skills (Kellett, 2005). Children may not understand or know of the term wellbeing, given the adult-terminology used (i.e. satisfaction, Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012). However, growing concerns about children's wellbeing highlight a need for exploration of wellbeing with children, as Alderson (2001) states "children are the primary source of knowledge about their own views and experiences" (p.151), and thus are

necessary in order to develop appropriate intervention and to guide policy and practice decisions (PHE & DfE, 2021).

Viewed as experts of their own experience, young people can provide essential insight into decisions and policy regarding their wellbeing (Mental Health Foundation, 2015). In order to obtain this expert knowledge, appropriate methods that facilitate child participation are required. Children who do not yet have the knowledge or skills to participate in research should be supported through training in critical and analytical skills (Kellett, 2005), or through using creative methods. It is pivotal to address such methodological concerns in wellbeing research, to truly understand their views and make way for real change to promote their wellbeing. Essentially, the potential from involving children in wellbeing research outweighs any possible hazards (Ben-Arieh, 2005).

2.4 Chapter Conclusion

Children's wellbeing in the UK continues to decline, and there is the limited evidence of children in research into understanding perceptions of wellbeing, with a historical dominance from adults understanding, or based on objective measures. This appears at odds with the complexity and personal nature of wellbeing. When children's views on wellbeing are considered, these tend to be from older children. This causes concern as research has demonstrated differences in wellbeing between adults and children, and between adolescents and younger children.

To appreciate wellbeing as a deeply personal construct, we must first seek to understand what wellbeing means to children. These views need to be incorporated into interventions and

policy, in order to support wellbeing and contribute towards addressing declining levels of children's wellbeing. Arguably, understanding wellbeing from children's perspective is required if we wish to develop happier, healthier, flourishing children, to form the basis for better health and wellbeing in adulthood (ONS, 2018). Therefore, to address the limited evidence exploring younger children's understanding of wellbeing, this research aims to utilise appropriate and engaging methods in order to recognise the subjectivity of wellbeing and involve children in change to maintain their wellbeing.

Chapter 3: Wellbeing in Education

Schools are significant places for children and young people, in which they spend a substantial amount of their childhood. Schools play an important role in children's wellbeing (Gutman & Feinstein, 2008; PHE & DfE, 2021) and provide opportunities for academic and cognitive development, social interaction and relationships, emotional skills, and physical and moral development (Fazel et al., 2014). Such skills can be integral to child wellbeing.

However, despite government recognition of the importance of supporting wellbeing in education, and significant investment in this area (DfE, 2022; Department of Health and Social Care, 2021), declining levels of children's happiness in school remain (The Children's Society, 2021). Children in the UK report higher levels of bullying in schools, greater fear of failure (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2018), and also indicate feeling overwhelmed and report too much homework and exams (ONS, 2020). These data highlight the importance of understanding and improving wellbeing in children also in regard to education.

3.1 What is the Purpose of Education?

The purpose of education has changed over time. From early education originating from religious teachings in the church to educating workers in the industrial revolution to education for all (Gillard, 2018), today, education can be considered to hold four main purposes: economic, cultural, personal, and social (Robinson & Aronica, 2016). These can be further grouped into terms frequently referred to in UK education policy: academic and citizenship. The former linked to economic purposes, and the latter with personal, cultural and social purposes.

Academic purposes focus on achieving a high quality and well-performing education system to support economic growth (Robinson & Aronica, 2016). Such an approach is associated with the landmark 1988 Education Reforms Act which saw the introduction of the national curriculum, examination and testing, OFTSED and school league tables (Fisher, 2008). However, the national curriculum at the time was considered ‘ill-conceived’ and critiqued for incoherence, inflexibility, subject-based, and a general incapability to meet the education needs of the 1990s (Barber, 1992). Alternative curriculum approaches were therefore developed. Entitlement curriculums such as Her Majesty’s Inspectorate’s Curriculum (Department of Education and Science, 1983) suggested that children were entitled to “a balanced allocation of time for all the eight areas of experience (the aesthetic and creative; the ethical; the linguistic; the mathematical; the physical; the scientific; the social and political; and the spiritual)" (p.26), and later the National Union of Teachers (1990) Strategy for the Curriculum advocated for learning skills in addition to confidence, motivation and ‘a love of learning’ (as cited in Barber, 1992). Such alternatives align with citizenship-based purposes of education which aim to teach children the skills and knowledge to enable them to be an active member of society (DfE, 2013).

Evidently, citizenship education draws many parallels with wellbeing. However, wellbeing as an educational outcome has been queried (Watson et al., 2012). Some consider wellbeing as a fundamental part of education, whereas others may suggest this is the role of the family. Although, wellbeing and education are entwined. Education in later life is associated with increased wellbeing (DoH, 2014) and wellbeing at school age is associated academic benefits and engagement for school children (Gutman & Vorhaus, 2012). Such benefits can continue into later life, through employment and productivity (DoH, 2014; Layard, 2021). Addressing

wellbeing in schools could provide benefits to children, schools and wider societal and economic benefits associated with poor wellbeing (DoH, 2014; Kellock, 2020). This provides a clear rationale for the inclusion of wellbeing in schools.

The UK's government (The Conservative Government, 2019-2022) current position seems to have dual focus on academics and citizenship. Education is viewed as the essential foundations of our culture with a clear role in preparing young people for adult life both in regard to securing employment but also in developing resilience and moral skills to manage adversities and thrive (Gibb, 2015).

Today, schools must provide a balanced curriculum which “(a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life” (DfE, 2014a, para 2.1). Mandatory teaching of physical health and mental wellbeing is provided through the recent relationship, sex education and health curriculum (DfE, 2019), and citizenship curriculum offers teaching on democracy, tolerance and being active in society (DFE, 2013). However, citizenship education is only mandatory for secondary pupils (DfE, 2014b), despite the necessity for primary school contexts to support skills for living (Kellock, 2020). Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) teaching can promote wellbeing and removing the stigma of mental health (PSHE Association, 2021), and whilst it is a compulsory subject (DfE, 2021), teaching of PSHE is often poor (Barnard et al., 2017) and holds less value than academic subjects (Formby & Wolstenholme, 2011). Furthermore, Wyn (2007) argues that this is typical for wellbeing curriculum, which do not possess equal value to academic curriculum within policy and frameworks.

Despite the inclusion of such topics within the national curriculum, the current UK education system is criticised for placing too great a focus on academic achievement and too little emphasis on pupil wellbeing (Cowburn, & Blow, 2017). This suggests that teaching skills for wellbeing through a curriculum approach alone is not enough, and a broader approach is necessary. Therefore, McCallum and Price (2016) recommend wellbeing outcomes need to have equal priority for children in practice and policy, and advocate for approaches that are “inclusive of education about wellbeing and education for wellbeing dimensions” (p.136).

3.2 The Role of Schools in Supporting Wellbeing

Over the past 30 years the government has provided guidance for schools emphasising their role in wellbeing and mental health. Schools are now accountable for children’s wellbeing. Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED, 2019) judgements include whether “the curriculum and the provider’s wider work support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy” (Personal development section).

Table 2 outlines key documentation detailing the recent history of wellbeing in government policy. Wellbeing in education is often associated with the Labour Government (1997-2010) (Watson et al., 2012). Before this, limited explicit references were made to wellbeing in education policy. Over time, the terms wellbeing and mental health have been used interchangeably and in conjunction across policy. Of concern, limited reference is made to children’s voice in the development of these policies, although some advocate for child voice

in the development of future intervention (NICE, 2008; PHE & DfE, 2015; 2021). Listening to children’s voices in regard to their wellbeing, doesn’t just centre on their understanding of wellbeing, but should also incorporate their voices into development of initiative or policy (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012; NICE, 2008).

Throughout the history of these policies there are a number of shifts, between predominantly pathogenic deficit approaches to identify and support mental health difficulties, to those more preventative, positive, salutogenic whole-school approaches. Targeted, universal and whole-school holistic approaches are advocated, with joined-up approaches with other professional services recommended principally at the targeted level.

In summary, wellbeing forms as a core part of education in the UK, with policies recommending a whole-school approach encompassing positive environments for wellbeing, universal teaching of wellbeing and targeted intervention for those who require it. The extent to which this is happening in practice remains unknown, and differences will exist between espoused and enacted approaches.

Table 2

Documentation related to wellbeing in recent government policy

Document	Key Points
Child and adolescent mental health services: together we stand (Williams & Richardson, 1995)	A four-tier approach to supporting children’s mental health was developed by the Health Advisory Service. Schools were seen as an accessible means of support for children. Schools, teachers and school nurses were positioned at the lowest tier, with the higher tiers involving specialist professional input.
Every Child Matters (ECM), Green Paper	The paper outlined five ECM outcomes that “really matter for children and young people’s well-being” (DfES, 2003, p.14);

(Department for Education and Skills [DfES], 2003)	being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, economic wellbeing. ECM is regarded, above others, as making the most significant motivator for the inclusion of wellbeing in UK schools (Watson et al., 2012).
Healthy minds: Promoting emotional health and well-being in school (OFTSED, 2005)	This report evaluated the role of schools in promoting pupil wellbeing and recommended whole-school approaches to promoting wellbeing, in addition to providing for individual needs.
Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (DfES, 2007)	Following ECM agenda, the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning framework adopted a whole-school approach to create conditions to promote social and emotional skills, “that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance, staff effectiveness and the emotional health and well-being of all who learn and work in schools” (DfES, 2007, p. 4), supplemented by direct teaching explicitly detailed in lesson and assembly plans.
The National Healthy Schools Programme (DCSF, 2007)	With clear links to the 5 ECM outcomes, this programme promoted a whole-school and whole-children approach to physical and emotional wellbeing based on four key themes (PHSE, healthy eating, physical health and emotional wellbeing). Meeting these areas resulted in National Healthy School status.
Social and emotional wellbeing in primary education (NICE, 2008), & Social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education (NICE, 2009)	These documents recommended a holistic approach; whole-school approach to create safe environment for wellbeing, a universal curriculum, and targeted support to those who need it, and emphasis the involvement for children and parents.
Targeted Mental Health in Schools Project (TaMHS) (DSCF, 2008)	TaMHS was set up to offer support to 5–13-year-olds to improve their mental wellbeing quickly. This was to be achieved through collaboration between schools, LAs, primary care and voluntary sector, all based on evidence informed practice. This project placed emphasis with professionals in supporting schools, and children’ directly.
Future in mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing (DoH & NHS, 2015)	This paper aimed to improve access to help and support for CYP and their parents, and to enhance CYP mental health services through replacing the tiered model of support with a joined-up approach between services. The paper advocated a whole-school approach, improved PHSE curriculum, and the designation of a new mental health lead and dedicated specialist contacts in professional services. Models such as the THRIVE framework (Wolpert et al., 2019) were developed as an alternative to the tier model.

<p>Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing: A whole-school and college approach (PHE & DfE, 2015; 2021)</p>	<p>This report suggested eight principles to enable a whole-school approach to promoting emotional health and wellbeing such as staff development, student voice school ethos and curriculum and provided practice examples and questions to facilitate reflection on the principles.</p>
<p>Transforming CYP’s Mental Health Provision: a green paper (DfE, 2017)</p>	<p>Following the ambitions in the Future in Mind report, this paper aimed to achieve early intervention and prevention of mental health difficulties, through increasing the role of education settings and enabling easier access to NHS services. The paper laid out plans for schools and colleges to identify a Designated Senior Lead for mental health to act as a link between schools and services, to offer advice and signposting support, funding of new mental health support teams and reduced waiting time trials. Although this was critiqued for a lack of prevention (BPS, 2018).</p>
<p>Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE, 2018)</p>	<p>This non-statutory advice intended to help schools “to support pupils whose mental health problems manifest themselves in behaviour” (DfE, 2018, p.3), and recognised the role schools play in supporting good mental health and wellbeing. Again, a whole-school approach was recommended to create a safe and calm environment, and visible themes of early intervention and collaboration with external agencies.</p>
<p>Wellbeing for education return (DfE, 2020)</p>	<p>In response to growing concerns of the impact of coronavirus pandemic on CYP’s mental health and wellbeing the Wellbeing for Education Return programme aimed to support schools in responding to the emotional effect on pupils and staff related the coronavirus pandemic. Training programmes delivered by experts to school and staff colleges hoped to support pupil wellbeing, resilience, and recovery, with a longer term aim to avoid further mental health problems.</p>

3.3 Whole-school Approaches to Wellbeing in the UK

Since the 1990s, the government has placed importance on evidence-based interventions (Taylor, 2005). Research into wellbeing is needed to provide an evidence-base for how this can be best supported in school, and subsequently influence policy. However, difficulties in assessing effectiveness of school wellbeing programmes; namely the lack of consistency on the focus of the intervention, and secondly the varying types of interventions (i.e. classroom-based or universal) complicate comparisons (Coleman, 2009). Examples of interventions to

promote wellbeing in schools will now be discussed, referencing the benefits of whole-school approaches and the pivotal role EPs can have in supporting schools to achieve this.

Wellbeing occurs not only in the classroom but across the whole-school (White, 2016). As noted above, within the UK, whole-school approaches to develop pupil wellbeing have long been recognised. Viewed to be significantly more effective than a single skills-based intervention or curriculum packages (Weare & Nind, 2011), such an approach offers a preventative, holistic model to support wellbeing rather than reactively targeting those with difficulties. Despite the benefits of whole-school approaches, such examples are limited in the literature and professional experience suggests that reactive, individual approaches and interventions remain common in school settings. Pre-developed individual interventions are likely easier to implement and measure effectiveness in school. PHE (2019) recommends ‘promising’ universal interventions to improve CYP mental health and wellbeing such as FRIENDS for life (Barrett, 2005), and Penn Resiliency Programme (Gillham et al., 2008), thus targeting all children in a given class or school. However, these approaches whilst universal in their target audience, they are predominantly focused on the individual level, rather than the whole-school level. Furthermore, whilst advised as way to improve wellbeing, in fact such interventions prevent specific emotional and/or ‘behavioural’ difficulties, rather than promotion of positive wellbeing in general (PHE, 2019). Furthermore, effectiveness of these programmes is mixed (Mackenzie & Williams, 2018) and their long-term effectiveness often not sustained or unclear (PHE, 2019). From their systematic review reviews of mental health and wellbeing interventions and programmes in schools, Weare and Nind (2011) conclude that it is not enough to teach children skills to support wellbeing, instead the most effective support adopts a whole-school approach, encompassing school ethos, teacher

education, involvement of parent, community, and external agencies. There is therefore arguable a significant need for holistic approaches to wellbeing.

McCallum and Price (2016) provide a holistic whole-school model of wellbeing in education to guide preventative and sustainable means to enhance children's wellbeing. The model places children at the centre and emphasises the role of teachers, schools and wider community upon wellbeing. It suggests six key positive strategies to nurture wellbeing in education: building and maintaining relationships, developing strengths, safe and effective communication, positive behaviour to fulfil a sense of belonging and connection, supporting emotional health and democratic leadership. (McCallum & Price, 2016). Furthermore, in recognition of the influence of wider systems of family and school on the children's wellbeing, PHE & DfE (2021, Figure 5) recommend eight key principles for a whole-school approach to promoting emotional health and wellbeing, incorporating a universal and targeted approach, through key principles of a curriculum to teach skills for wellbeing and an education environment to support wellbeing. Importantly, student voice is a key principle, deemed necessary in understanding and supporting children's wellbeing. The policy advocates a collective approach through which it is possible to enhance both life satisfaction and academic achievement (McCallum & Price, 2016).

Evidence of whole-school approaches which specifically support wellbeing is limited in UK literature (see Hall, 2010; Shepard, 2011). Yet, practice examples of whole-school approaches to supporting wellbeing in the UK include 5 Steps to mental health and wellbeing, Anna Freud Centre (2022) and the Sandwell Wellbeing Charter Mark (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, 2018). These programmes align with many of the eight key principles

advised by PHE & DfE (2021), for example incorporating the views of parents, pupils and staff, supporting staff wellbeing and promoting wellbeing through safe environments. Whilst there are available programmes to support whole-school approaches to wellbeing, examples of such approaches remain limited in literature. This is an area that needs developing in order to evaluate and contribute to the evidence-base of whole-school approaches.

Figure 5

Eight principles to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (from PHE & DfE, 2021, p.9)



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Organisational change is complex, and arguably even more in a school, complicated by limited management time, broad purposes and the presence of children (Handy & Aitkin,

1986). White (2016) outlines several barriers that prevent positive education and whole-school approaches to wellbeing, namely wellbeing is viewed as less important than academics, the dominance of scientism and empiricism thus overlooking philosophical approaches around the importance of wellbeing, and financial. One can postulate, that at a time of tightening budgets for schools, rising pressures to catch up for lost time related to the covid-19 pandemic, schools may opt for ‘quick-fix’ or cheaper approaches, over more effective but more costly whole-school approaches. Whole-school change requires substantial commitment and challenges may include resistance from staff, difficulties challenging ingrained values and ethos, and in gaining resources to implement change. This may indicate why whole school approaches appear to be a less popular approach to interventions. However, the role of an external facilitator in supporting change can be seen as beneficial in bringing new understanding and vision (Morgan, 2016), be it a consultant, academic researcher, or educational psychologist. The challenges outlined above, however, may be intensified for an external professional.

3.4 The Role of Educational Psychologists in Supporting Whole-School

Approaches to Wellbeing

Wellbeing, particularly social and emotional dimensions, are deemed an essential part of the educational psychologist’s (EP’s) role (Mackay, 2011). EPs not only have a responsibility to support those children with special educational needs but in contributing to the “wellbeing of all children and young people” (SEED, 2002, p.30). Their role is spread across three different levels: “the individual child or family, the school or education setting, and the local authority” (SEED, 2002, p.20), which arguably places the EP in a privileged position to facilitate organisational change to promote the wellbeing of all pupils.

EP work at the organisational level can be considered as a powerful form of change (Stoker, 1992). Further, it is suggested that this is the only approach to facilitate meaningful and lasting change (Stoker, 1992). EPs work at the organisational level can facilitate greater preventative work (Richards, 2017) and has the potential to benefits more CYP than through casework (Stoker, 1992). Furthermore Albee (1982) suggests moving away from working at the individual to more systemic approaches, can provide a greater equity of access.

Morgan (2016) argues the role of EPs “has long been recognised in contributing at the organisation level” (p.133). Although it can be argued that the frequency of this work is constrained by the EPs role predominantly at the individual assessment and consultation level (Farrell et al., 2006), influenced by traditional views of the profession (Stoker, 1992). EPs possess many skills and knowledge which can be directly applied to organisational change. For example, EPs have a systemic and psychological understandings to problems skills to untangle mediating factors, knowledge of evidence-based strategies for change, and experience of sharing psychological innovations (Cameron, 2006). Furthermore, EPs can be seen as knowledgeable in understanding organisation systems and influences (Farrell et al., 2006). As external facilitators, EPs can bring a fresh independent perspective to organisations current problems (Morgan, 2016). They are arguably well-placed to explore hidden curriculum values, and the differences between espoused values and the enacted curriculum with regards to the teaching of and provision for wellbeing. Although to avoid the role of the hero-innovator, EPs need to work with others to ensure their engagement and commitment (Georgiades & Phillimore, 1975) in creating organisational change.

Two examples of how EPs have demonstrated their skills in working at the organisational level by supporting whole-school and child-led initiatives to support and promote mental health and wellbeing will be discussed.

Firstly, Atkinson et al. (2019), worked collaboratively with 12-18 years old girls and a vice-principal to create a mental health initiative for the school. This initiative acknowledged that young people themselves are best placed to understand current pressures upon their own mental health and therefore was led by the students as ‘wellbeing ambassadors’. The project was driven by prevention rather reactive responses to mental health support and thus aimed “to promote mental health, reduce stigma and encourage help-seeking” (p. 6). The work was two-fold, firstly to identify stressors for each year group, and secondly to create guidance. The involvement of young people resulted in guidance which was presented in a creative and contemporary manner and avoided clinical terminology and stigma. Young people were considered to be well-positioned to involve other students' views in the project. Atkinson et al. (2019), noted, similarly to wellbeing, that adult models of mental health may not be relevant or appropriate for student populations. They also discovered that almost 60% of pupils reported learning from peers was more helpful than from teachers, providing strong vindication for the importance of CYP involvement in developing a whole-school approach to promoting mental health. This example illustrates EPs promotion of child voice and participation, and an effective practice of using these voices to make change at a whole-school level.

Secondly, Seaton (2021) used an AI approach with pupils and staff within a secondary school setting to define mental health and consider current and future mental health support in

school. Following group interviews structured by an AI approach with students and staff, a clear action plan was created by leadership. This was founded on the school's current strengths which included developing the curriculum, enhancing links with other agencies and gaining parental views on mental health and wellbeing, and further developing whole-school approaches to support pupils' resilience, peer support systems and other preventative supports. Regarding defining mental health, consistent themes were found for the pupil and staff participants, suggesting a similar understanding of mental health. However subtle differences between different age groups and between pupils and adults in regard to support. This may have not been identified should children not have participated. Although no evaluation of the project took place, Seaton (2021) noted that through participating, it was likely that the young people may have felt valued in making change.

The use of AI in Seaton's (2021) research proved a particularly powerful method in enabling participants to reflect on their own and other's experiences and facilitated cohesion between participants' understanding of mental health (Seaton, 2021). Furthermore, Seaton (2021) concluded that the framework facilitated discussion on the multifaceted concept of mental health and enabled participants to feel that their voice was valued. Ironically the AI approach achieved one of the subsequently identified ideas to support mental health in schools: open discussions around mental health. AI is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Both these research examples uphold a focus on salutogenic, prevention, promotion, positive psychology approaches, and the importance of child participation. Although focusing on mental health and wellbeing rather than explicitly wellbeing, they both emphasise promotion of good mental health; Atkinson et al. (2019) in their approach towards prevention rather than

cure, and Seaton (2021) by employing AI methods to build on strengths and reframe difficulties into areas for improvement. Thus helping to remove the dominant deficit narrative of mental health, towards a more positive psychology narrative. Both facilitated the role of the child's voice to understand their perceptions of mental health and explore their suggestions to improve this, and evidenced differing views to adults, and hence the importance of exploring wellbeing in children.

It should be noted that these examples were completed within secondary school settings rather than primary, as in this research. Older children will have further developed cognition and language skills which could enable research into such complex topics, in comparison to younger children. This, however, should not be a valid reason to exclude younger children from future research, but rather highlights the need to employ suitable methods to enable this, as previously outlined. Though adults cannot see from children's perspective (Kellett, 2005), through adopting participatory and inclusive techniques adults can provide skills to enable research with children to ensure children's contributions are valued in whole-school approaches. The inclusion of staff members, in a combined top-down and bottom-up approach when involving children as researchers, as demonstrated in both examples outlined above, proved beneficial in attempting to understand and make change to promote their mental health.

3.5 Chapter Conclusion

Schools are potentially ideal environments to support wellbeing. To do this, ranging policy and guidance have been introduced which recommend a range of universal and targeting approaches to support both mental health and wellbeing. Whilst there is some focus on

pathologic approaches to supporting mental health, salutogenic whole-school approaches are recommended. To achieve such holistic, whole-school approaches requires substantial investment and change, and can be supported by the role of external facilitators. EPs are well suited for such a position and are able to facilitate child participation in such initiatives.

Given the central issues of declining children's wellbeing and the limited understanding of this, particularly of younger children and the potential for schools to enhance children's wellbeing through adapting positive, prevention and whole-school approaches, this research aims to address this by:

- 1) exploring children's understanding of wellbeing.
- 2) exploring children's views about how their wellbeing can be supported in their school.
- 3) harnessing children's views to support the design and initial implementation of plans to develop provisions to enhance pupils' wellbeing across their school.
- 4) eliciting the children's post-hoc reflections on this process and the value of the outcomes achieved.

AI is noted as an effective, positive, approach to afford children such agency in wellbeing promotion in schools and viewed as a successful method to explore the complex concepts such as wellbeing (Seaton, 2021), which may contribute to further theoretical understanding of children's wellbeing. To achieve the above aims, this current study will use AI to facilitate child participation to develop a whole-school approach to wellbeing in a primary school setting.

3.6 Research Questions

The following research questions (RQs) were developed as a result of the literature review detailed in chapter one.

RQ1. How do children understand wellbeing?

RQ2. What factors do the children identify as supporting their own and other children's wellbeing in their primary school?

RQ3. What do the children think a school in which all children enjoy good wellbeing would be like?

RQ4. What do the children suggest to ensure wellbeing is maintained and improved in their school?

RQ5. How far do the post-hoc reflections endorse the integrity and instrumental value of the participatory action research process harnessing appreciative inquiry?

RQ6. What do the data indicate about children's understanding of wellbeing?

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter explains the design and methods used to explore the research aims.

Trustworthiness of the research is considered alongside compensatory measures taken to enhance this. Ethical considerations and measures undertaken to address these are discussed.

4.1.2 Research Orientation

Research paradigms are a system of basic beliefs which influence a researcher's view of the world, and how they interpret and act within it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Kivunja & Kivunji, 2017). Research paradigms guide research inquiry and comprise ontological, epistemological and methodological beliefs (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Ontology is “the theory of the nature of reality” (Delanty & Strydom, 2003, p.6), and epistemology the theory and study of knowledge (Grix, 2010). Ontology questions what we study, and epistemology asks how we know things (della Porta & Keating, 2008). These paradigms can be viewed on a continuum between two principal contrasting paradigms: positivism and interpretivism (Cohen et al., 2007; Grix, 2010). Within literature a number of terms are used interchangeably for these paradigms, positivism: objectivist, scientific, and interpretivism: constructionist, naturalist (Cohen et al., 2007; Grix, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Oakley, 2000; Thomas, 2013).

This research is associated with the interpretivist paradigm which aims “to understand the subjective world of human experiences” (Cohen et al., 2007, p.20). Interpretivism advocates that “the world does not exist independently of our knowledge of it” (Grix, 2010, p.84) and emphasises the meanings and constructions individuals give to their social world (Grix, 2010). Adopting an ontological position of relativism, this research recognises that there are multiple constructions of reality, which are adaptable and dependent on the individual or

group holding the construction and that “‘findings’ are literally created as the investigation proceeds” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.111). This research adopted an interpretivist epistemological position to understand children’s perceptions of wellbeing and their ideas of how to support this, rather than searching for causal explanations. This position accepts that the reality and truth of wellbeing are subjective, comprising children’s constructions and interpretations, which are shaped by their understanding, experiences, and societal and cultural influences. As interpretivist research, this study adopted qualitative methods, using focus groups, to facilitate development of an in-depth understanding to enable exploration of children’s meaning and perspectives on wellbeing (Kivunja & Kivunj, 2017; Robson, 2011).

However, I recognise that researchers and therefore their research will rarely fit neatly into a specific orientation (Hood, 2006). This research design was further influenced by social constructionism, which posits that “meaning does not exist in its own right, it is constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation” (Robson, 2011, p.24). Thus social constructionism focuses on “the collective generation of meaning as shaped by conventions of language and other social processes” (Schwandt, 1994 p.240), commonly associated with AI methodology (Cooperrider et al., 2008), and with action research (Gergen & Gergen, 2008). As action research can be seen to shift from interpretation to construction (Yardley, 2000), influences from social construction can accommodate action research not being “as individualistic as the interpretivist paradigm” (Tekin & Kotaman, 2013, p.89).

4.1.2 Researcher Positionality

In subjective research, the researcher is positioned as an ‘insider’ immersed in the situation, who develops close and collaborative relationships with the participants to understand their

perspectives (della Porter & Keating, 2008; Oakley, 2000). The researcher in their active, not passive, role will influence the research and therefore cannot be fully objective (Thomas, 2016). As a fully neutral position was not possible in this research, Thomas (2016) suggests that researchers undertaking case study research should recognise and disclose their positionality. I acknowledge that my professional background in teaching and education, and the knowledge gained from the literature review influenced my understanding and construction of children's wellbeing. To aid reflexivity, it was important to reflect on my interpretation and construction of wellbeing. Further, my experience has influenced my view of children as capable to communicate their views and be active in decision-making, opposite to the historical narrative of children in need of guidance and protection from adults (Kehily, 2009).

4.2 Research Design

A qualitative design was utilised to explore children's understanding of wellbeing and their ideas of how support this in school. A participatory action research approach harnessing AI was adopted within a case study design. Focus groups were used and structured by the AI process (see Figure 6).

4.2.1 Appreciative Inquiry

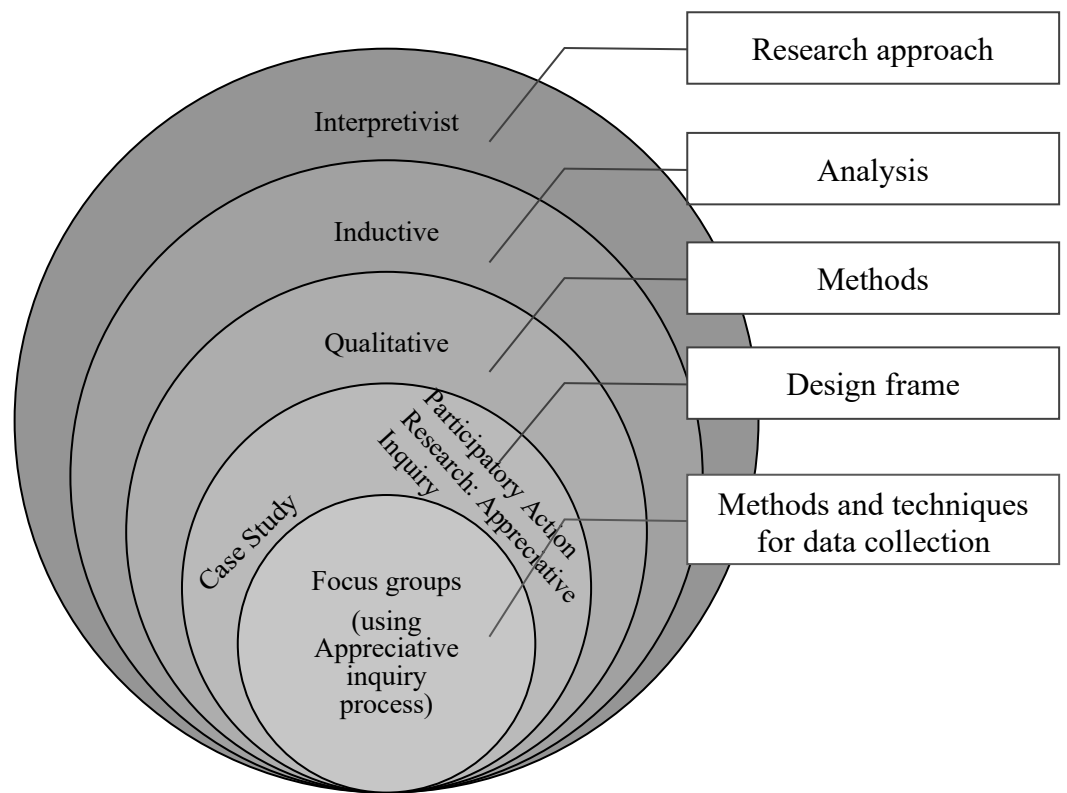
4.2.1.1 Origins of AI

Traditional approaches to organisational change can be traced to Kurt Lewin, who coined the term action research (AR). AR aims to learn about organisations and facilitate change (Robson, 2011; Thomas, 2013). Lewin (1946) defined this process as a circle of steps:

“planning, action and fact-finding about the result of the action” (p.38). This approach remains popular, particularly in educational settings (Robson, 2011).

Figure 6

Depiction of the approach to research based on the Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2019) and Thomas’s (2013) process of research design



Cooperrider et al. (2008) however, offer several critiques of traditional action research. Firstly, Cooperrider et al. (2008) warn of “the deficiency perspective” (p.374) taken in problem-solving in conventional AR. This approach to organisational change, they suggest supposes that something is broken and requires fixing, adding this perspective constrains “imagination, passion and positive contribution” (p.382). Secondly, Cooperrider et al. (2008) critique AR for failing “as an instrument for advancing social knowledge of consequence and

has not, therefore achieved its potential as a vehicle for human development and social-organisational transformation” (p.353).

Cooperrider and Srivasta (1987) developed AI, in an attempt to address these criticisms. They position AI as a “conceptual refiguration of action-research... [*to facilitate*] an enriched multidimensional view of action-research which seeks to be both theoretically and generative and progressive in a broad human sense” (Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.381) and is “uniquely suited for social innovation instead of problem-solving” (p.382).

4.3.1.2 What is Appreciative Inquiry?

AI is a strength-based philosophy or approach, and a method or process of positive organisational change achieved through engaging participants to appreciate and inquire (Cooperrider & Srivasta, 1987; Cooperrider et al., 2008).

4.2.1.3 Appreciative Inquiry as a Philosophy or Approach

Harmonised with positive psychology, AI focuses on positive experiences to identify and build upon an organisation’s existing positive core and strengths to transform organisational change (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Cooperrider and Godwin (2012) recognise organisations as positive institutions: “the vehicles for bringing more humanity, courage, wisdom, love and value into the world” (p.3-4). Rather than viewing organisations as the solution, not the problem, AI’s affirmative outlook is directly opposite to deficit-based problem-solving approaches typically associated with action research, emphasising AI’s unique approach to organisational change (Cooperrider et al., 2008, see Table 3).

Table 3

Comparison of approaches to organisational change; traditional problem solving and appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010)

	Deficit-based problem solving	Appreciative inquiry
Focus	Problems - Organisations are viewed as a problem needing to be solved	Strengths - Organisations are viewed as solutions.
Stages in change	Identification and diagnosis of problem	Appreciation of the best of the organisation
	Exploring causes	Envisioning the possible future
	Developing possible solutions	Discussing how the future should be
	Action plan based on the best solution to solve the problem	Innovation to realise positive future
Potential from change	Implementation and evaluation of the action plan	Enduring positive change

AI is based upon eight key principles (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), outlined in Figure 7. These principles suggest “that human organizing and change is a positive, socially interactive process of discovering and crafting life-affirming, guiding images of the future” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010, p.49), and underpin AI’s central tenet that positivity achieves positive action (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

Figure 7

The eight principles of Appreciative Inquiry (adapted from Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010)

1. The constructionist principle	•Language, communication and conversation construct knowledge and meaning.
2. The principle of simultaneity	•Inquiry and change occur simultaneously. Inquiry itself is intervention which inspires change.
3. The poetic principle	•Organisations are considered 'open books'. Any area of human experience can be studied in an organisation, but organisations have the choice of what they wish to study.
4. The anticipatory principle	•Images of the anticipated future drive the present behaviour of an organisation and those people within it.
5. The positive principle	•Change is reliant on positivity: positive affect, positive social bonding and positive attitudes. Positive questions can result in positive change, through inspiring positive action and envisioning positive futures.
6. The wholeness principle	•Working as a 'whole' enables collective capacity, promotes creativity and ultimately "brings out the best in people and organizations" (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010, p.52).
7. The enactment principle	•Positive changes occur by living as if the preferred future were present. Essentially being "the change we want to see" (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010, p.52).
8. The free-choice principle	•Organisations and the people within benefit from the opportunity to chose what and how they contribute towards organisational change.

Simultaneously AI aligns with the social constructionist position, which has influence within this research (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). AI acknowledges that social actions can be interpreted in multiple ways influenced by history, conventions and beliefs, and that social knowledge is developed and maintained through human interactions, emphasising the importance of language and its value as a vehicle for change (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

4.2.1.4 Appreciative Inquiry as a Method or Process

The theoretical principles of AI are built into the 4D cyclical model or process (see Figure 8). This process involves individuals across all levels of an organisation, which creates context and space for collaboration, and fosters engagement in a project (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). It is suggested that working through these four stages, an organisation can achieve positive change (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

To ensure that planning and preparation is not overlooked in the AI process, Watkins et al. (2011) added a fifth stage, 'Define', to the model to create a 5D model (see Figure 9). This focuses on negotiating outcomes and procedures, and identifying key roles in the project, which ultimately define and structure the inquiry (Watkins et al., 2011). This 5D model was used to structure data collection in this research.

Figure 8

4D model of Appreciative Inquiry (adapted from Cooperrider et al., 2008)

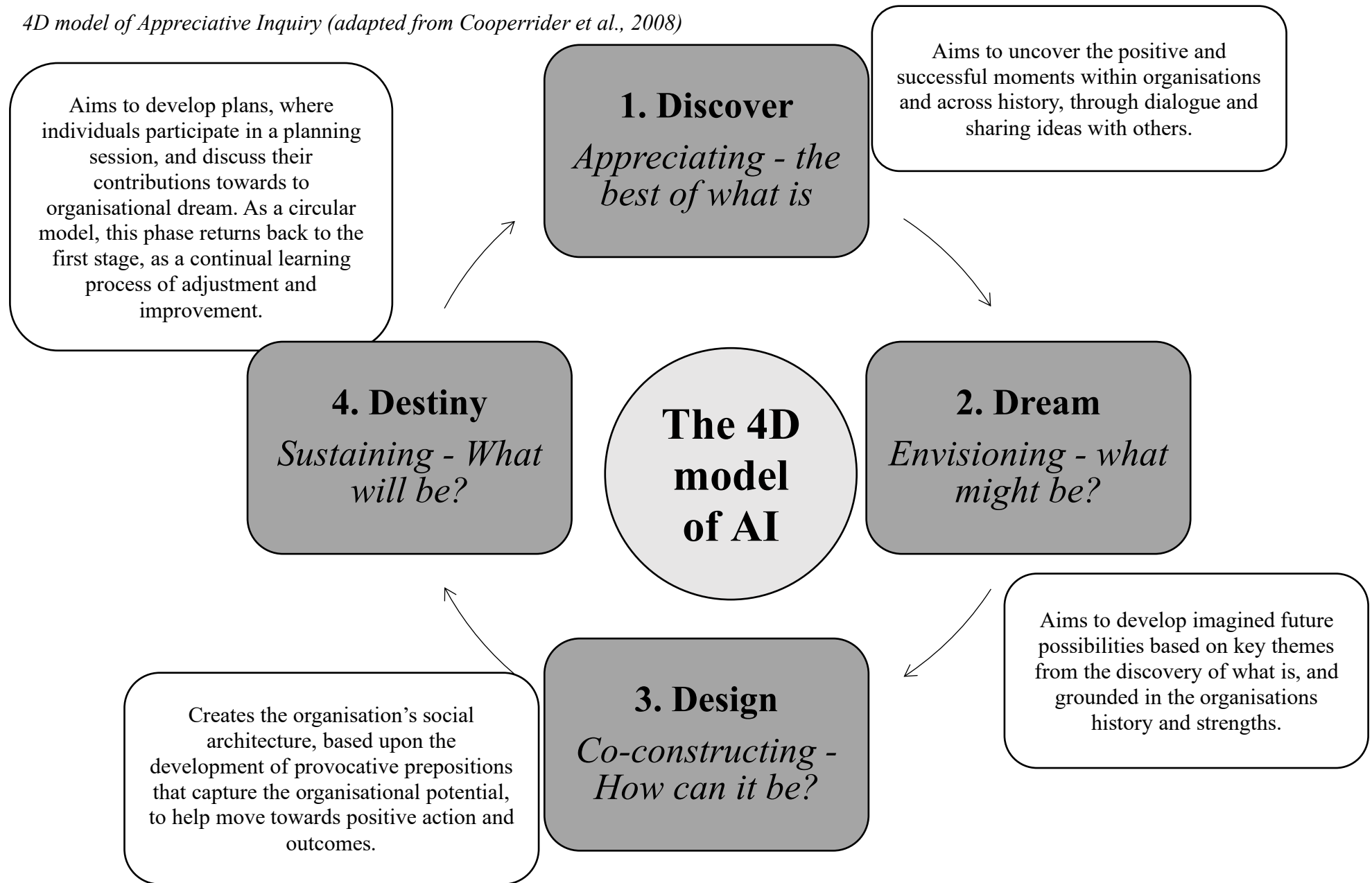
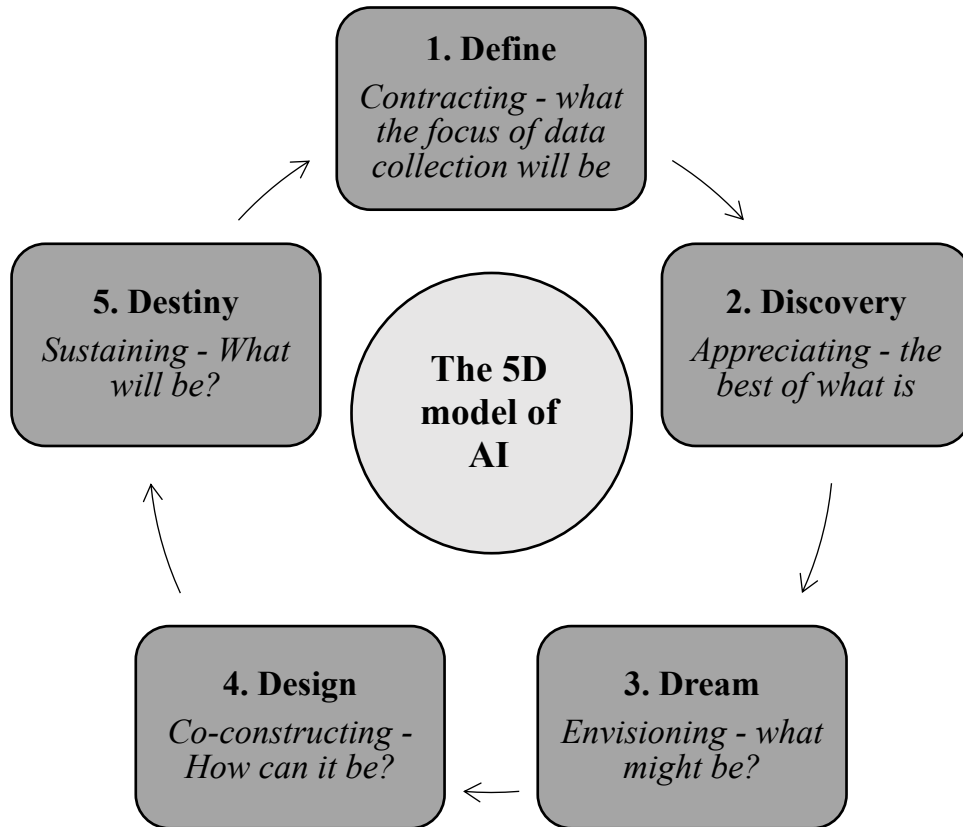


Figure 9

5D model of Appreciative Inquiry (based on Cooperrider et al., 2008; Watkins et al., 2011)



4.2.1.5 Appreciative Inquiry: Strengths and Limitations

AI can be praised for its transformative nature, which has enabled organisational change across a range of organisations (Cooperrider et al., 2008) including schools and with children (i.e. Doveston & Keenaghan, 2006; Lewis, 2015; Pahil, 2018). Further benefits include the ability to develop connections between and empower participants (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), particularly young people (San Martin & Calabrese, 2011). However, it is important to consider the limitations associated with AI, and how these were overcome in the current research (see Table 4).

Table 4*Limitations of AI and the steps taken to address them*

Limitations of AI	Steps taken to address this
AI can be critiqued for the sole focus on positives and thus overlooking contributions from negative experiences (Bushe, 2012).	The positive focus of AI is central in inspiring change (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Whilst acknowledging the focus on positives events and strengths, children’s suggestions or stories based on potentially negative events were not discarded but listened to and used as this highlights the absence of something positive of ideal (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Focus was also paid to the relevant strengths within these stories.
Teachers from East Bridge Primary School noted that the concept of dreams may result in unachievable ideas and actions developed in the research, and subsequent disappointment for the child participants.	The child participants were aware of the outcome of the research to develop a plan for their school. This was repeated throughout the research to ensure the plans were grounded in reality.
AI as an approach lacks continuous reflection and critique (Grant & Humphries, 2006).	I engaged in reflection on the AI process and kept a research journal to record reflections, in addition to engaging with debriefing at the end of the research activities with my supervisor and research assistant. Upon reflection, an additional post-hoc reflection phase (phase 2) was added to the research to gain the child participants views of the research retrospectively.
AI requires skilled facilitators (Bushe, 2007).	Prior to commencing the research, I undertook significant study into AI to develop my understanding. My professional background in primary school teaching and education developed a bank of strategies and skills that I could use to support and encourage the communication and collaboration of all participants.
Language is essential in the AI process (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). The AI process arguably includes some complex terminology. AI may therefore favour participants who have greater competence in language and social confidence to speak.	Key terms were explained in child friendly terms, and opportunities to ask questions and seek further clarification were offered. For example, much deliberation was spent considering an appropriate alternative term for provocative prepositions, given its complexity. Alternative options included: design statements, opportunity statements, possibility statements and design principles (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Preskill & Catsambas, 2006). However, it was felt more important to ensure the children understood the purpose of provocative prepositions rather than focusing on it as a term. Therefore, provocative prepositions were explained in simple language and an example modelled.

	<p>The inclusion criteria for child participants required age-appropriate language and communication skills, and sufficient social and interactional skills to work collaboratively with other peers. Collaboration between the children was used to support confidence in speaking, and I encouraged all children to speak out, noting when attempts to speak had been overridden by others, and offering the opportunity to speak.</p>
<p>The AI model can be too rigid, particularly when working with children (Eow et al., 2010).</p>	<p>Bushe (2012) refers to AI as a point of view rather than a strict method, and Hammond (1998) recognises that AI is not a recipe to follow. Therefore, I was flexible and responsive to the child participants needs in the research rather than strictly adhering to the model of AI. Additional adaptations were made to the model to ensure it was children friendly.</p>
<p>There may be unequal distribution of power between those taking part in the AI process (Aldred, 2009).</p>	<p>Steps to address power imbalance are addressed in Table 6 and further in Table 14.</p>
<p>The choice of topic could be considered as disengaging for the participants (Doggett & Lewis, 2015).</p>	<p>I chose a pre-selected topic, rather than ‘homegrown topics’ derived from the school or children (Cooperrider et al., 2008). However, a pre-selected approach can also be successful (Cooperrider et al., 2008). As part of the recruitment process, it was explicit in the inclusion criteria that the school needed to be willing to implement a whole-school approach to wellbeing, therefore it was assumed this topic was of interest to the school. In addition, the children were reminded of the outcomes of the research and their important role in achieving this, to support their motivation in the topic.</p>
<p>The AI process in practice can be affected by time constraints (Doggett & Lewis, 2015).</p>	<p>Given that real world research is likely restricted by time constraints, I was flexible in my approach to research and adapted activities and time lengths were necessary (Robson, 2011). Rather than a ‘cookbook approach’, the AI process should be guided by the key principles to structure organisational change (Hammond, 1998). These guiding principles were kept at the forefront of my mind whilst completing the research. I was also mindful to balance time to ensure the AI process was most effective and that children weren’t missing excessive time from their classroom and learning. An agreed timetable was planned which allowed flexibility of time to accommodate the demands of the different stages.</p> <p>The research also took place in the first term of the academic year to allow for the implementation of changes which were noted as a critique in Davies & Lewis’s (2013) research.</p>

4.2.1.6 Appreciative Inquiry as Participatory Action Research

Although AI distinguishes itself from traditional forms of AR in regard to its philosophical underpinning, assumptions and process (Egan & Lancaster, 2005), both approaches share many similarities. Fundamentally, both are underpinned by aims of organisational change, and need for collaboration between the researcher and participants (Robson, 2011, Cooperrider et al., 2008). Egan and Lancaster (2005) outline further similarities between AI and AR, suggesting they both:

- “1. engage real social systems
2. are conducted in real time, not retrospectively or in advance of data gathering
3. are change oriented processes interested in making improvements beyond the current organisational state
4. are interactive and require involvement by organisational stakeholders
5. tend to be cyclical and iterative processes
6. may use a variety of data collection approaches
7. are action- and reflection-oriented
8. are valued oriented
9. were founded by individuals interested in theory building
10. are applicable to a variety of human systems from individuals to organisations and even larger frameworks“ (Egan & Lancaster, 2005, p30-31)

Over time, AR has adapted towards more emancipatory and participatory approaches (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008) which can be seen to draw further similarities to AI.

Associated with social movements, participatory action research (PAR) is unique in its shared, collaborative approach to research projects, which involve community members in

understanding, analysing and action of social problems relevant to their community (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008). PAR operates through a fluid cyclical process of planning, acting and observing, and reflecting, in response to the social world within which it is undertaken (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008).

Kemmis and Wilkinson (1998) summarise PAR as:

- a social process – recognising the influence of socialisation upon individuals
- participatory – emphasising people in a group exploring their own knowledge and interpretation
- practical and collaborative – people work together to understand their social practices and such social interactions
- emancipatory - helps to free people from constraints placed by social structures
- critical – enables those restricted by social structures to challenge unjust or unsatisfying narratives of their world and experience
- reflexive – helps people to transform through cycles of self-reflection
- a process that aims to transform theory and practice – recognises the importance and interconnectivity of both practice and theory, helping to make change at the local and wider level.

Many of these core principles of such PAR seem in line with core principles of AI, namely creating change of meaning and purpose to those within that community or organisation, collaborative and participatory principles, and supporting both practice and theory.

Acknowledging this, and the successes of AI as an effective PAR method in schools (e.g. Lewis, 2015; Pahil, 2018), I consider AI to be a form of PAR which emphasises collaboration

and principles of positive psychology to achieve organisational change. AI therefore was chosen as a suitable approach and method for this participatory action research with children.

4.2.2 Participatory Action Research With Children

PAR has a multiplicity of meanings and is often interchangeably used with similar terms; action research, and participatory research (MacDonald, 2012). A wide range of approaches and practices exist to achieve participation for children in research, including children planning the research, participating in an advisory group or as co-researchers throughout the whole research process. Such a range complicates the precise understanding of participatory research methods (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015). Acknowledging these concerns, it is important to highlight the level of participation and collaboration in this research. Broadly, this research can be regarded as genuinely participatory and classified as consulted and informed (Hart, 1992). This research acknowledges children as experts of their own experience, and places children as consultants of the research, their opinion valid, and taken seriously. Specifically, the children were viewed in line with Coad and Evans's (2008) second role in analysis (see Table 5).

The children participants held a key role and were involved in the data collection, analysis and in developing a plan of action in collaboration with a steering group of staff from their school. However, the research was designed and run by me. I acknowledge that greater participation was possible, but overcoming barriers associated with this such as understanding issues such as confidentiality and consent, and the need for training in research design and analysis (Fox et al., 2007), was not possible in the time frame. The children are therefore positioned as participants, rather than co-researchers.

Table 5

Approaches to Children's Roles in Data Analysis (Coad & Evans, 2008)

Coad and Evans (2008) Approaches to Children's Roles in Data Analysis
1. "Adult research team plan, collect and undertake data analysis as a group without children's intervention in the process" (p.43)
2. "Adult research team plan and analyse the data but involve children in the data collection process through the use of more participatory methods. Children may help to verify adult researchers' understandings of data" (p.44)
3. "Adult research team train a group of children to act as a reference or advisory group to consult with and guide the research process and help to interpret the findings" (p.44)
4. "Adult researchers train a group of children as peer- or co-researchers to work alongside adult researchers at every stage of the research project. They are actively involved in the data analysis stage through strategies such as coding, verification and interpretation" (p.45)
5. "Child and young person-led research team plan, collect and undertake data analysis as a group with adults facilitating the process" (p.46)

4.2.2.2 Considerations when Researching with Children

Arksey and Knight (1999) recognise that research with different populations, such as children, requires different approaches. They summarise key differences between adults and children that may influence research interviews: cognitive and language development; ability to attend; power status, and life experiences. Therefore, several factors should be taken into consideration when researching with children, namely building and maintaining trust, use of appropriate communication and the use of strategies to facilitate conversation, and the research setting and context (Arksey & Knight 1999; Eder & Fingersen, 2003). Table 6 outlines steps taken to accommodate children as part of the research.

Table 6*Considerations when researching with children and steps taken to address these*

Considerations when researching with children	Steps taken to address this
Building and maintaining trust	I aimed to put children at ease by, initially completing an icebreaker activity based on favourite things which children would be able to answer. Ground rules for the research were developed collaboratively. Children were reminded during each research activity, that their views were central to the research, that the research is not a test and so there are no right or wrong answers, that they do not need to answer any questions they do not wish to and are free to leave at any time of the research. At all times, I was mindful of the children's emotional responses and presentation, adapting accordingly, i.e. if distracted, the research activity was paused, and an active game was played. Children were thanked and praised for their contributions to help them to feel good and confident about their work (Fielding & Bragg, 2003).
Appropriate and facilitating communication	I used simple and plain language, modelling and clarified understanding of complex concepts. Communication and questions were pitched an appropriate level for the children's age, and children were given time to think and respond by welcoming silences. Verbal prompts and support from the research team was also given to the participants to support their focus and understanding. To further support understanding recording sheets with prompts and visual cues were used. The research incorporated a range of strategies deemed helpful in generating conversations; drawing, writing, pictures and crafts (Arksey & Knight 1999).
Power imbalance due to age differentials	In acknowledgement of the power imbalance associated with age and attempting to avoid adult superiority, I adopted the position of an adult who does not have knowledge of being a child in today's society, who wants to work with the children to gain their knowledge and insight in their unique experience (Mayall, 2000). Through adopting a bottom-up approach to gain children views, I minimised distortion of the children's views and avoiding placing adult-centric views onto understanding children's wellbeing (Fattore et al., 2009). The research used focus groups to minimise the power differential between adult researcher and children, as being with peers can help children feel relaxed (Eder & Fingersen, 2003).
Research setting and context	A room in the children's school was used for the research. This can be considered a natural context which can help the children to feel comfortable in the research (Eder & Fingersen, 2003).

4.2.3 Case Study

The research used a case study design. As an empirical method, case studies investigate “a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in depth and within its real-world context” (Yin, 2018, p.15). Case studies are considered the prevailing design for undertaking action research (Gray, 2004), owing to their suitability to accommodate the flexible nature of action research (Robson, 2011). In this study, the case was East Bridge Primary School.

Thomas (2016) highlights two essential features of case studies; a subject: person or place and an object: analytic frame. In this research, the child participants were the subjects, and the object was their understanding of wellbeing and the use of this to develop a plan.

Thomas (2016) identifies a number of classifications when implementing a case study design to ensure a robust design. These classifications are based on the subject, purpose, approach and process of the case study. Table 7 highlights the case study classifications of this research and provides rationale for these classifications.

4.2.3.1 Case study: Strengths and Limitations

A case study design offers a rich, in-depth understanding of complex, social situations and concepts (Adelman et al., 1984; Thomas, 2016). Yin (2018) suggests that case studies recognise the multiple realities and meanings different individuals hold and are able to explain ‘how’ or ‘why.’ This is vital in understanding a phenomenon as complex as wellbeing. Such unique insights may be unobtainable within large-scale data (Cohen et al., 2007; Nisbett & Watt, 1984). The flexibility of case studies accommodate the changing nature of schools (Cohen et al., 2007; Nisbett & Watt, 1984; Simons, 2009;). Case study can be used

as a “step-to-action” (Adelman et al., 1984, p.101) where insights gained from participants can be directly put into use, such as in the action plan in this research.

Although, case studies have many benefits relevant to this research, critique centres on subjectivity and limited generalisability. Limitations of the case study and steps taken to address these in this research are outlined in Table 8.

Table 7

Rationale for the classifications of this case study (based on Thomas, 2016)

Classification		Rationale
Subject	Local knowledge case	The research was based on my personal experience of children’s wellbeing which I aimed to further develop understanding of. The research was also undertaken in the local authority which I was on placement as a trainee educational psychologist.
Purpose	Instrumental Explanatory Exploratory Evaluative	The research is considered instrumental as it had a purpose. The research explored children’s wellbeing and explains this understanding within the context of the research. Phase 2 evaluated the use of AI/PAR by gaining the children's reflections.
	Transformative (Lewis, 2015)	The research was also arguably transformative as it aimed to use AI as a means to support and improve children’s wellbeing in school. A transformative process is fundamental to AI (Cooperrider et al., 2008).
Approach	Interpretative	The research was an interpretative inquiry. It gains an in-depth understanding through interpreting the data collected in the case environment.
	Building a theory	The research developed a framework based on the ideas exploring children's views of wellbeing.
Process	Single	The research used a single case design; focus groups of children within a single case, the school.
	Snapshot Retrospective	Phase 1 used a snapshot design as the research took place during one period of time, spanning two weeks. Phase 2 gathered retrospective views from the child participants on the process of AI/PAR.

Table 8

Limitations of case studies and steps taken to address them (based on Nisbett & Watt, 1984; Shaughnessy et al., 2012; Simons 2009; Yin, 2018)

Limitations of case studies	Steps taken to address this
Case studies are subject to the bias of the researcher.	Simons (2009) recognises that researchers in case studies are an inevitable part of the design. However, to address concerns of subjectivity, research must be confirmable, that is, findings can be confirmed by others (Guba, 1981). Steps to ensure confirmability are detailed in Table 9.
The findings from case studies cannot be generalised beyond the case study context.	Generalisation was not the aim of this research due to its local positioning. Despite concerns of generalisability, case studies provide contributions “to the cumulative development of knowledge” (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.241), through which can be used to develop theory to understand cases of similar contexts, through theoretical or analytical generalisations (Robson, 2011; Yin, 2018). Additionally, case studies can provide phronesis; practical knowledge and wisdom gained from the research (Thomas, 2016). Therefore, case studies can ultimately inform practice (Simons, 2009), which was a key aim of this research.
Case studies have been criticised for possessing no scientific value (Campbell & Stanley, 1963).	This research aimed to provide helpful insights to other educational psychologists and similar professions, from the practical knowledge (phronesis) gained from this case study (Thomas, 2016). Additionally, using AI added a transformative purpose to this research in facilitating organisation change.
Case studies can be overly time-consuming and amass excessive amounts of data to process.	Clear research questions were set to contain the research. Additionally, the research planned to cause in as minimal disruption to the children’s education as possible, therefore a timetable for data collection was planned and adhered to (see Table 15). In regard to analysis, a structured approach was used to reduce and analyse the data as outlined in Table 17.
Case studies can lack rigour.	Thomas (2016) suggests that strategies such triangulation and positionality enhance rigour in case studies. Triangulation was used through multiple perspectives within the focus groups and through the use of multiple methods and thus sources of evidence (Yin, 2018). My positionality as researcher was made explicit and reflected upon throughout the research. Steps taken to address rigour are outlined in Table 9.

4.2.4 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness considers whether the findings of research are “worth taking account of” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.290). Recognising the distinction between naturalist (constructionist or interpretivist) and conventional (positivist) paradigms, Lincoln and Guba (1985; Guba & Lincoln, 1994) suggest the criteria to assess conventional, positivist research is incompatible with qualitative research. They argue that to assess the quality and thus trustworthiness in naturalist, qualitative research, research should be evaluated against five criteria: credibility, dependability conformability transferability, authenticity. Steps taken to ensure trustworthiness in this study are outlined in Table 9.

Table 9

Criteria to evaluate trustworthiness of my research (based on Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985)

Criteria and description	Steps taken in this research
<p><i>Credibility</i> Criteria to determine whether the findings accurately represent the realities of those participating in the research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step were taken to ensure children felt safe to communicate their views: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial meeting to introduce research ○ Icebreaker activity ○ Research undertaken in a natural setting, their school • Throughout the research, I used member-checking to check with participants if preliminary interpretations were correct. I: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summarised during activities ○ Asked questions to clarify understanding ○ Summarised of findings from previous activities • Following each research day, I engaged in peer debriefing, to discuss the day’s session and make any necessary adaptations. • Triangulation of different activities was used to explore children’s constructions of wellbeing.
<p><i>Transferability</i> Criteria to determine whether findings can be applied into other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with confidentiality principles, rich descriptions of the school and local context are included. Brief details of the researcher and participants are also included.

<p>contexts. To achieve this the researcher needs to provide a rich, thick description of the context to enable others to make judgements of similarity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although, the aim of the research was not to make generalisations, the research findings may be transferred to similar contexts, and also may provide practical knowledge to educational professionals. • Case studies can be used to develop theoretical or analytical generalisations, in applying a theoretical view of the case (Robson, 2011; Yin, 2018).
<p><i>Dependability</i> Criteria to determine whether the findings are dependable, stable, accurate and consistent.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The combination of methods used in this research was a novel method, therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions regarding dependability. It is hoped that these methods will be replicated and adapted in future research within Educational Psychology research. • To reduce researcher bias, the vignettes used in data collection were based on literature rather than my own views and assumptions. • A research journal was used throughout the research process. Recording reflexivity in journals can enhance credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In regard to dependability, decisions regarding the process and findings were recorded in the journal and discussed in supervision.
<p><i>Confirmability</i> Criteria to assess whether the data is confirmable to the participants views and not researcher bias.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My position as a researcher as situated within the research and as having a central role in interpretation of the situated knowledge (Thomas, 2013) is acknowledged. A neutral approach was adopted during the research (i.e. asking open questions, clarifying responses, summarising and confirming key themes with the child participants). • My explicit positionality was reflected upon throughout the research. To support confirmability, I reflected on any potential researcher bias using a research journal and in supervision.
<p><i>Authenticity</i> Criteria to consider whether the research is representation of all stakeholder views, whether the researcher is aware of the possible implications of the researcher and whether the research has the potential to make change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research was based on children’s views only, but the child participants varied on age, gender, ethnicity. • The researcher utilised techniques to create a safe environment as discussed above to elicit authentic responses from the children. • Positive feedback was gained from one parent, and from the school’s senior leadership team. • I was clear that the research would end with an action plan to support children’s wellbeing. This was made explicit during recruitment and in gaining informed consent and repeated throughout the research. Steps have been taken to implement parts of this action plan.

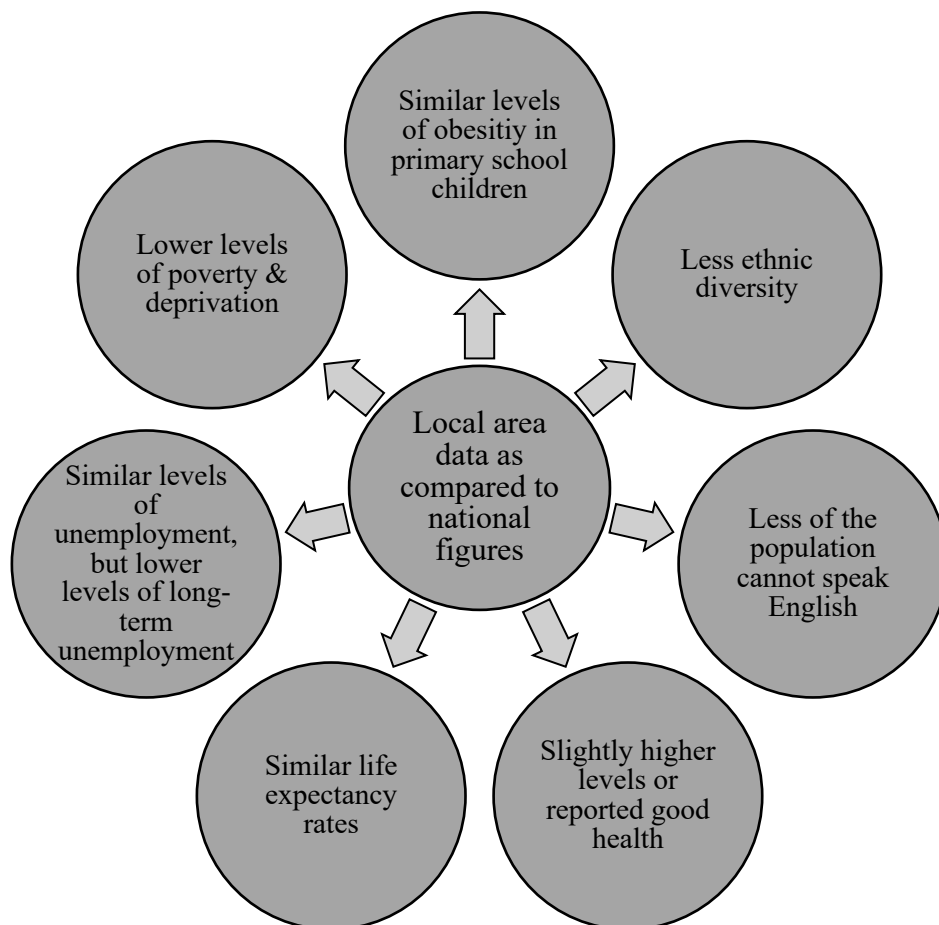
4.3 Methods

4.3.1 Research Context

The research took place in East Bridge Primary school in Aldershire, the local authority where I was on placement as a trainee educational psychologist. Contextual information for the local area and East Bridge Primary school context are detailed below (see Figure 10 and Figure 11) to give a richer description to this case study (Willig, 2008).

Figure 10

Local area data as compared to national average figures (Aldershire Council, 2022; Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2022b; Office of National Statistics, 2013)

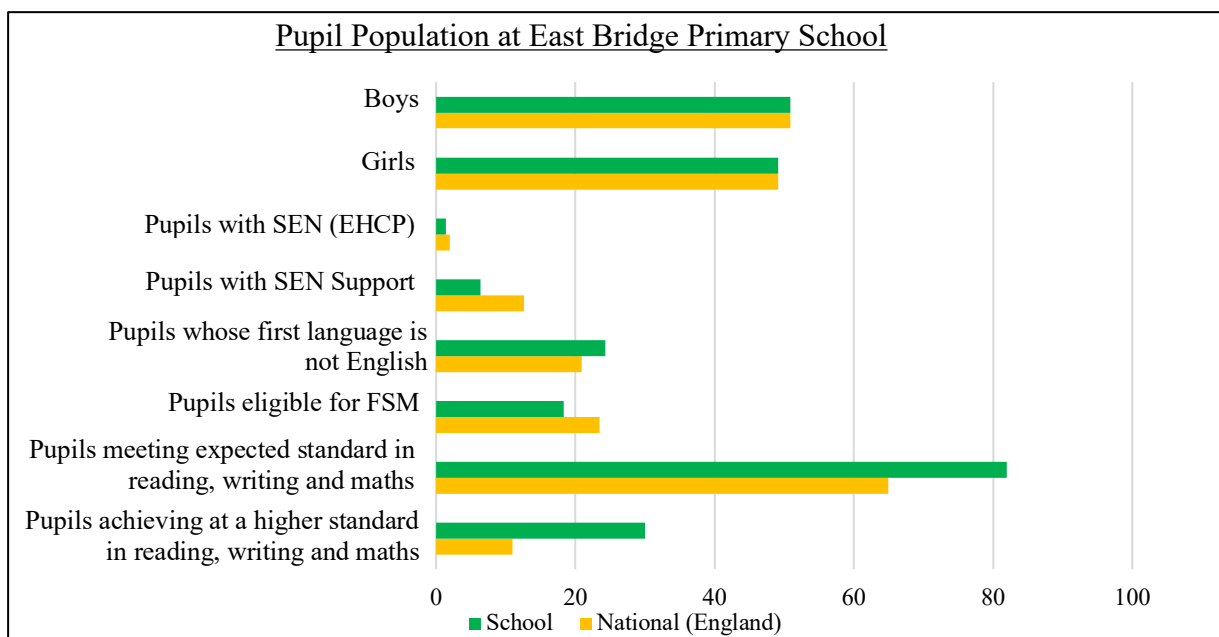


4.3.1.1 East Bridge Primary School

East Bridge Primary school is a single-form, mainstream, faith voluntary-aided primary school with approximately 210 pupils (see Figure 11 for outline of pupil population). The most recent OFSTED inspection rated East Bridge Primary school as good, referencing its above-average attendance rates and above-average standards for reading, writing and mathematics (OFSTED, 2016), commonly associated with voluntary-aided schools (Gutman & Feinstein, 2008). This inspection also highlighted the school's inclusive nature where children are prioritised. The school is reported to offer a curriculum rich in trips, drama, music and creative arts, and significant contributions to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (OFSTED, 2016). It is reported that children who attend voluntary-aided schools, such as East Bridge Primary, experience a safer school experience, with less victimisation and greater occurrence of speaking with school staff, thought to relate to their school ethos underpinned by their faith (Gutman & Feinstein 2008). Additionally, higher levels of wellbeing are associated with voluntary-aided schools (Gutman & Feinstein 2008).

Figure 11

Pupil Population at East Bridge Primary School



4.3.2 Recruitment

4.3.2.1 Focus School

A purposive sampling approach was used to identify a school to participate in the research (see Figure 12). Once ethical approval was gained an initial letter inviting interest to the research was sent to headteachers of all mainstream primary schools within the East area of Aldershire county (see Appendix 1). Contact was made with the headteacher of East Bridge Primary school upon receipt of interest to explain the research in further detail and confirm the school's suitability against the inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Table 10). Following this, informed consent was gained from the headteacher (see Appendix 2 and 3 for information sheet and consent form).

Table 10

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for a school to host the research

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
✓ a mainstream maintained primary school setting	× other non-mainstream primary schools, secondary schools or colleges	Research into wellbeing predominantly focuses on older children, therefore it was felt a primary school would be a valuable setting. Mainstream settings were chosen due to the language and social skills required to participate in the research.
✓ teach Year groups 1 to 6	× primary schools which only teach either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2	To enable to the views of children from Year 1-6 to participate in the research.
✓ graded 'good' or 'outstanding' overall in the most recent OFSTED inspection	× graded 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' in the most recent OFSTED inspection	To ensure the school would not be limited by OFSTED commitments, to enable the findings from the research to be prioritised.
✓ be willing to implement a whole-school approach to wellbeing	× not willing or able to implement a whole-school approach to wellbeing	To ensure the research had purpose and value and could enable organisational change.
✓ be willing to respond to children's suggestions	× not willing or able to respond to children's suggestions	To ensure the children's ideas were valued in line with the principles of this research.

Figure 12

Details of the recruitment process

July 2021			
Searching for a suitable school	→	Identifying a suitable school	→
Initial letter inviting interest to the research emailed out to all headteachers in primary schools in local area (see Appendix 1).		No initial response from the initial interest letters was received. I made direct contact with the headteacher of East Bridge Primary school after interest was highlighted by their link Educational Psychologist. This contact confirmed their suitability and informed consent was obtained (see Appendices 2 and 3).	
			Planning research dates and arrangements
			Telephone contact with headteacher to finalise arrangements (research dates and practicalities i.e. room, timetabling, resources). An information sheet was sent to teachers via the headteacher prior to introductory meeting at the school to provide a brief overview of the research (see Appendix 4).
September 2021			
Introducing research to the school staff	→	Introducing research to parents and gaining informed consent	→
An introductory session was held in the school with school staff to explain the rationale of the research, provide a plan of the research and detail expectations of participants. Questions and concerns were welcomed. Teachers were asked to identify two pupils from their class who met the inclusion criteria and those interested in joining the steering group to contact headteacher (see Appendix 5 for PowerPoint slides used in the session).		The school admin team sent out information sheets and consent forms to the parents of the teacher-identified children (see Appendices 6 and 7). Two introductory sessions were held virtually using Microsoft Teams for parents to explain the rationale of the research, provide a plan of the research and detail expectations of participants (see Appendix 8 for PowerPoint slides used in the session). Difficulties in recruiting the desired sample size, resulted in extending the deadline for consent.	
			Introducing research to identified child participants and gaining informed consent
			Upon receiving consent from parents, the children were invited to a meeting with myself to explain the research, what was expected of them and offered an opportunity to ask questions. Information sheets were read and explained to the children and informed and freely given consent was gained during this meeting (see Appendices 9 and 10, see Appendix 11 for PowerPoint slides used in the session).
			Obtaining steering group participants informed consent
			The researcher met with the headteacher and identified three staff members who were interested in taking part in the research. It should be noted that the headteacher had previously suggested these staff members as suitable participants given their interest in wellbeing. The headteacher gave these staff members an information sheet (see Appendix 12) and consent form (see Appendix 13).

4.3.2.2 Participants: Children

The study aimed to recruit 12 pupils from East Bridge Primary school. Teachers were asked to identify two prospective participants (preferably male and female), although this was not essential) from their class (Years 1 to 6) based on the following criteria (see Table 11).

Table 11

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for child participants

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
✓ broadly age-appropriate language and communication skills	× below age-expected language and communication levels	To support participation in the activities which are primarily discussion based.
✓ have attended the school for at least 1 year	× have attended the school for less than 1 year	To ensure participants had sufficient experiences and knowledge of their school to support their contributions to the research activities.
✓ sufficient social and interactional skills to work collaboratively with other peers	× difficulties working collaboratively with other peers	To support participation in the activities which are primarily group-based.

Given the participants were under the age of 16, it was necessary to gain informed consent from the child themselves and their parents/carer (BPS, 2021a). The school managed recruitment in liaison with myself, and shared information sheets and consent with the parents of teacher-identified child participants (see Appendices 9 and 10).

Challenges occurred in recruiting younger participants. Parents of identified participants from Year 1 and 2 chose not to give consent, owing to concerns of their child being too young to participate, or missing school time, particularly given the time children had spent away from schools relating to covid-19 pandemic. No parental consent was gained for any Year 1 children, and parental consent was gained for one Year 2 child. However, this child chose not

to participate. Recruitment of alternative Year 1 and 2 participants was unsuccessful despite several attempts. Therefore, it was decided to complete the research with eight children from Year 3-6 pupils (see Table 12). However, following this, informed consent was gained for 1G, a Year 1 child. It was felt it would not be suitable for 1G to join the older peer focus group given the age differentials and associated potential for power imbalance of older peers, and risk of intimidation or dismissal associated (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). Therefore, I completed the stages 1-5a of research with 1G on a 1:1 basis. It was not feasible to complete all research stages with 1G due to group participation required for the latter stage.

Table 12

Overview of child participants

Initial	Age	School year	Gender	Ethnicity	SEN status
3G	7	3	Female	White British	None
3B	7	3	Male	White British	None
4B	8	4	Male	White British	Prefer not to say
4G	Not stated	4	Female	Black African	None
5G	9	5	Female	White British	None
5B	9	5	Male	White British	None
6B	11	6	Male	White Irish	None
6G	10	6	Female	Black African	None

Contextual data was gathered on participants gender, ethnicity, and disability/SEN status (based upon the DfE classification of demographic information) to allow for consideration of whether these factors influenced perceptions of wellbeing.

4.3.2.3 Participants: Steering Group

The study aimed to recruit 2-5 school staff or governing body members to form a steering group to assist in finalising the action plan developed by the children and supported the

implementation of the action plan. Following expression of interest, 3 staff members were selected to participate in the staff steering group, through negotiation between myself and the headteacher (see Table 13).

Table 13

Overview of staff steering group participants

Initial	S1	S2	S3
Role	Teacher PHSE/RSE lead Art and Design lead	Teaching Assistant SEMH focus THRIVE practitioner ¹	Teaching Assistant SEMH focus

4.4 Ethical Considerations

Bernard (2011) stated that no science is ‘value-free’ and adds that all potential research topics are accompanied by risks to the researcher and participants. Ethical considerations therefore form a pivotal part of social science research.

Ethical approval was granted for this research by the University of Birmingham (UoB) Humanities and Social Sciences ethics committee on 18th June 2021. Additional ethical approval was sought for phase 2 of the research on 26th January 2022. A similar approach was followed in order to gain consent for this additional phase of research. Information and consent forms for this additional phase can be found on Appendices 14-18. BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2018), BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2021b) and the UoB Code of Practice for Research (2020) were adhered to throughout the research. Key ethical considerations taken in this study centred on consent and the right to withdraw, confidentiality, data storage, benefits, and risk. Table 14 details how ethical issues were addressed.

¹ The THRIVE programme aims to support children’s social and emotional development (THRIVE, 2022).

Table 14

Ethical considerations and actions taken to address these

<u>Ethical Consideration</u>	<u>Actions taken</u>
<p>Valid and informed consent (BPS, 2021a, point 4; BERA, 2018, points 8-26)</p>	<p>Documented, informed consent was gained firstly from the headteacher, secondly parents, then children, and lastly staff from the steering group participants. The measures and procedures to obtain consent are outlined in Figure 12. Introduction to the research sessions were held at the school for teaching staff and children, and virtually for parents (see Appendices 5, 8 and 11). Information sheets and consent forms were given to the headteacher, parents, children, and staff outlining key information regarding the aims of the project, data collection methods, confidentiality, right to withdraw, risks, and contact details of the researcher and supervisor (see Appendices 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 and 10). As some of the concepts may be difficult for children to comprehend, I met with all the children to gain informed consent and verbally explain the research and offer opportunities for questions. As children are less likely to refuse to consent due to power and status imbalance (Arksey & Knight 1999), I was mindful of non-verbal signs from the children that indicated an unwillingness to consent. I also reminded children of their choice to give or withhold consent, to reduce the potential for coercion and felt pressure to take part.</p> <p>To remind children of the consent they had given, at the beginning of each stage of the research, key information was revisited alongside an outline of the current research methods, and reconfirmation of consent gained.</p>
<p>Deception (BPS, 2021a, point 7; BERA, 2018, point 27)</p>	<p>I was fully transparent and honest throughout the research, and no deception was used. The nature and aims of the research were fully explained to the headteacher, parents and children, and steering group participants (both in the introduction to research sessions and information sheets). Opportunities to ask questions to enable participants to feel fully informed were provided in the introduction to research sessions and by providing my contact details on all information and consent sheets.</p>
<p>Right to withdraw (BPS, 2021a, point 4; BERA, 2018, points 31-32)</p>	<p>The right to withdraw, which applied to both children and steering group staff participants, was explicitly stated in all information sheets and in the introduction to research sessions. Participants were also reminded of this at the beginning of each research session, to help reduce the potential for participants to feel pressure to take part. Participants were able to withdraw from the research at any time, without consequence or need for explanation, however participants were made aware that it would not be possible to erase their data once the research had commenced due to the focus group method utilised.</p>

<p>Confidentiality (BPS, 2021a, point 5; BERA, 2018, points 31-32)</p>	<p>All participant data was treated confidentiality. Pseudonyms were used to replace identifiable information such as participant names, local authority and school. However, full anonymity could not be provided to the participants, as the study involved face-to-face research methods.</p>
<p>Disclosure (BERA, 2018, points 52-53)</p>	<p>The headteacher, parents, children and school staff were made aware that confidentiality would be waived should a participant make a safeguarding disclosure. In this instance the school and local authority safeguarding protocols would be followed.</p>
<p>Data storage (BERA, 2018, points 40-51)</p>	<p>All data was stored securely in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Data Protection Act (DPA, 2018) legislation and the UoB Code of Practice for Research (2020) and Research Data Management Policy (2018). The data was stored securely in the UoB BEAR secure research data store. The data will be stored for 10 years in accordance with the UoB Research Data Management Policy (2018). This was fully explained to the headteacher, parents, children and steering group staff participants in the information sheets.</p>
<p>Risk to child participants (BPS, 2021a, point 3, 10; BERA, 2018, points 34-39)</p>	<p>Research with children is considered to carry greater risk, as children are considered a vulnerable group (BPS, 2021a). However, no substantive risk to participants was anticipated during or following the research. Although negligible, there was potential for participants to experience possible power imbalance, as children are considered significantly less powerful than adults (Eder & Fingersen, 2003), and/or possible psychological harm (in relation the nature of the topic, wellbeing, and/or in the form of anxiety or humiliation from working within a group). To reduce the potential for such risk, a number of measures were put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All research activities took place in the focus school. This natural setting can help children to feel more comfortable (Krueger & Casey, 2001). • The research was completed with a consistent focus group participants to help child participants to feel at ease/safe. • My previous experience as a teacher has developed my skills and strategies to monitor participants emotional needs and react accordingly, i.e. offering time out or withdrawal from the research. • I built rapport with the participants through an ice-breaker activity and was kind, friendly, humorous and respectful at all times. • Group rules were collectively set by the child participants in the research and reiterated at the beginning of each research session. • I encouraged all participants to voice their opinions and was respectful when participants did not wish to do so. • East Bridge Primary school and Aldershire local authority safeguarding protocols were adhered to at all times.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To reduce the potential risk of power imbalance, I reminded participants that there were no right or wrong answers and that the research was interested in their views, acknowledging them as the experts in their opinions and experience. • Debriefing was used after each stage of the research, to give participants the opportunity to ask questions or address any concerns, and for me to ‘check in’ with the participants to ensure they do not feel distressed. The debrief ended with an opportunity to offer a positive reflection about another participant’s contribution to the research to alleviate power imbalances between participants i.e. related to social status or age.
Risk to staff participants <i>(BPS, 2021a point 3; BERA, 2018, points 34-39)</i>	No substantive risk was identified for the staff steering group participants. As detailed above confidentiality and debriefing procedures were adhered to.
Risk to the researcher <i>(BPS, 2021a, point 3; BERA, 2018, points 34-39)</i>	As the research was completed in East Bridge Primary school, with the presence and support of Sue, my university supervisor acting as research assistant, risks to the researcher were minimal. Although no emotional risk was anticipated, to minimise this risk, I engaged in reflection, and regular supervision to discuss any concerns about my personal wellbeing.
Feedback to participants and stakeholders <i>(BPS, 2021a, point 10)</i>	Once the research was completed, the participants were thanked for their contributions. Individual cards were written to the children recognising their contributions and achievements as part of the research (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). Summary reports outlining the key findings from the research were sent to the children, parents and staff (see Appendices 19-23).

4.5 Data Collection: Methods

Focus groups were used in this research structured by the 5D AI process. The research contained two phases, structured by the stages of AI (see Table 16 for an overview of the research phases and stages). Within each stage of research, a range of research activities and discussion points were completed.

4.5.1 Focus Groups

Focus groups, “a group interview on a specific topic” (Robson, 2011, p.294), were used as they are considered a beneficial method for gathering qualitative data on attitudes, values and beliefs, and also as a means to empower participants (Cohen et al., 2007). They are deemed valuable when researching with children, as this format enables group interactions rather than direct responses to the adult researcher and may also be less intimidating (Cohen et al., 2007). However, discussions on sensitive (or personal) matters may not be appropriate in focus groups (Willig, 2008), although, Eder and Fingersen (2003) suggest that group interviews may be more appropriate for sensitive matters as the group may be more comfortable.

Group sizes of 6-8 are recommended size for focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2001). The first two stages of the research used two smaller focus groups: FG3/4, 4 Year 3-4 children; FG5/6, 4 Year 5-6 children, due to difficulties in participant recruitment. From stage 3, the children were given the option to work as a larger group (8 children) and chose to stay in this format for the rest of the research.

A skilled facilitator is deemed essential for successful focus groups (Cohen et al., 2007). My previous experience as a teacher equipped me with skills deemed helpful in facilitating the

focus groups. To reduce difficulties of group dynamics, or dominance of some and reluctance of others to contribute (Cohen et al., 2007), “subtle group control” (Krueger & Casey, 2001, p.13) was used. Participants were all given the opportunity to contribute, contributions from were thanked, and I directly invited quieter participants to contribute with no pressure if they chose not too (Kreuger & Casey, 2001). An interactional approach was used in the focus groups (i.e. I reiterated the research was based on the children’s ideas and welcomed respectful challenges as part of collaboratively set ground rules). This aimed to create an atmosphere where children felt comfortable to disagree, clarify and make modifications.

A focus group guide was created to structure the focus groups (see Appendices 24 and 25) and was used flexibly in response to the participants. The guides included questions that were conversational and easily to understand (Krueger & Casey, 2001). Questions were predominantly open-ended to allow participants greater freedom in their responses, enable unexpected responses, facilitate cooperation and rapport, and allow for clarification (Cohen et al., 2007; Robson, 2011). Throughout the research, guiding questions were used flexibly in response to the children’s contributions. Children’s responses were clarified, and key themes were recorded on the mind map.

Member-checking was implemented throughout the focus groups to minimise the potential of my subjective interpretation. Throughout, individual contributions were reflected back to the children to clarify and confirm their meaning. Key themes were summarised and revisited throughout different stages of the research, giving the children an opportunity to modify and for me to clarify understanding.

All focus groups were audio-recorded using a Dictaphone, considered less obtrusive than video-recording and therefore less likely to influence the participants responses (Cohen et al., 2007). Children were reminded of the audio-recording at the beginning of each session. I clearly indicated when the Dictaphone was recording and placed it in a visible location, removing it when no longer recording. Recordings were used to aid the analysis through clarifying points and extracting direct quotes, and to enhance descriptive validity (Maxwell, 1992). Key notes were also recorded on A1 flipchart paper as mind maps to support group analysis, and to act as a reminder of previous work. Mind maps were recorded anonymously to support views to be judged collectively rather than in relation to the contributing participants status or role within group (Ackermann et al., 1992). The only exception to this was when the children ranked themes on the maps.

4.6.2 Research Journal

Reflexivity is questioning our own attitudes, beliefs, values, knowledge, thoughts, and assumptions and how these influence in our interactions with others and the environment around us (Bolton, 2018). Qualitative research is subject to many influences, and therefore reflexive practice is imperative in identifying and understanding these influences and recognising their effect upon interpretations (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). Reflexivity in research is also vital to acknowledge power balances, ideological and cultural influences, the situated context of the research and how these shape children's voice, and further then how these are interpreted and represented (Spyrou, 2011).

In order to facilitate reflexivity, a research journal was completed after each stage to record reflections on assumptions, research practices, analyst insights, and challenges (Braun &

Clarke, 2022), and memos on data, methods and possible alternative research plans (Altrichter & Holly, 2005).

4.5.3 Role of Researcher

The research was completed by myself (R1) and Sue (R2), my university supervisor who acted as an additional simultaneous research facilitator. My role was to organise the research and facilitate the focus groups and research activities. Sue's role was to further support focus group mediation and engage in peer debriefing and reflection at the end of each research activity.

4.6 Data Collection: Procedure

4.6.1 Pilot Study

The Define stage (Stage 1) of the research was piloted with a colleague's children (aged 4, Reception and aged 7, Year 3). The children's feedback and my own reflections were harnessed to refine the content and procedures of data collection (Yin, 2018). This resulted in a reduction in the number of vignette stories to allow more in-depth detailed discussions. Owing to time constraints, other stages of the research were not piloted. However, I felt competent to manage and adapt the activities if necessary, during the research given my previous practice in primary school education.

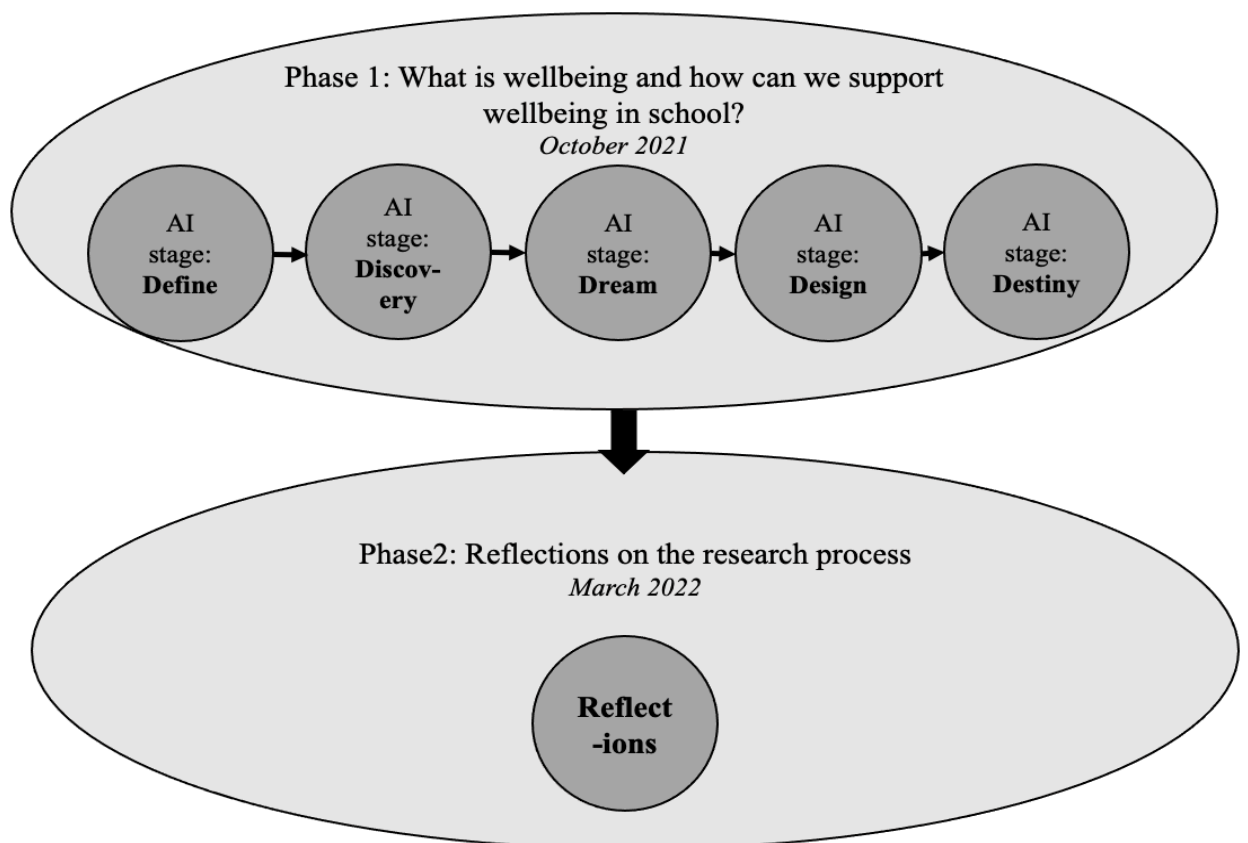
4.6.2 Research Procedure

All stages of the research were conducted in East Bridge primary school. The research contained two phases, and phase 1 was structured by the stages of AI (see Figure 13 for an overview of the research phases and stages).

- Phase 1 – What is wellbeing and how can we support wellbeing in school?
- Phase 2 – Reflections on the research project

Figure 13

Overview of the research phases and stages



Originally the research planned to contain a single phase (phase 1). However in line with flexible research design (Robson, 2011), an additional phase of the research was added following the completion of phase 1. This was in order to explore the children’s reflections on the research and be true to the participatory nature of the research (phase 2).

Phase 1 was completed in October 2021, over a period of 5 days over 2 weeks. Due to absence, several participants missed different stages of the research. Best attempts were made to inform these participants what they had missed at the start of the following session. Phase 2 of the research was completed in March 2022, over one afternoon (see Table 15 for the schedule of the research data collection).

Table 15

Research schedule

Phase	Date	Time	AI Stage	Focus Group	Participants
Phase 1	Monday 4 th October	AM	1. Define	FG3/4	3B, 3G, 4B, 4G
		PM	1. Define	FG5/6	5B, 6B, 6G
	Tuesday 5 th October	AM	2. Discovery	FG5/6	5B, 5G, 6B, 6G
		PM	2. Discovery	FG3/4	3B, 3G, 4B, 4G
	Wednesday 6 th October	AM	3. Dream	FG3/4 and FG5/6	3B, 4B, 4G, 5B, 5G, 6B, 6G
		PM	4. Discovery		
	Thursday 7 th October	AM	5a. Destiny	FG3/4 and FG5/6	3B, 3G, 4B, 4G, 5B, 5G, 6B, 6G
		PM	1. Define 2. Discovery 3. Dream 4. Design 5. Destiny	n/a	1G
Wednesday 13 th October	AM	5b. Destiny	FG3/4 and FG5/6 Staff	3B, 3G, 4B, 4G, 5B, 5G, 6B, 6G S1, S2, S3	
Phase 2	Friday 18 th March	PM	6. Reflections	FG3/4 and FG5/6	3B, 4B, 4G, 5B, 5G, 6B, 6G

4.6.3 Appreciative Inquiry: Method/Process

AI is considered as an approach and process, which is constantly recreated by those who use it (Hammond, 1998). There is no manual for AI (Hammond, 1998), therefore this research adapted the AI process to be suitable to use with children in schools but maintaining the underlying principles of AI.

The 5D model of AI was employed to structure data collection in the focus groups (Watkins et al., 2011, see Figure 9) including the Define stage which was deemed essential in understanding children's perceptions of wellbeing, and to progress with the subsequent stages of the research.

The focus group sessions maintained a similar format:

- a. Introduction - group rules, issues of consent and withdrawal, previous research activities, and outlining the activity for the session.
- b. Research activity
- c. Summary and ending – collaborative group analysis of the information gathered
- d. Debrief – 'check in' and positive reflections

Key research activities are detailed in Table 16 in relation to the stages of AI and research question they respond to. Stages 1-5a also aimed to answer RQ6. What do the data indicate about children's understanding of wellbeing? A research resource handbook can be found in Appendix 26, which provides further guidance on the activities and the resources used. Focus group guides were used to guide the research can be found at Appendices 24 and 25.

4.7 Data Analysis

Numerous methods exist for analysing data (Thomas, 2016), therefore, researchers must use the most appropriate qualitative data analysis for their data set (Cohen et al., 2017). A two-level approach was used in data analysis, similar to approaches taken by Harris (2013) and Morris (2017). Firstly, live situated analysis occurred within the focus groups with the

children, with the purpose of developing an action plan formulated on the children's understanding of wellbeing. Secondly, following data collection, I completed further analysis for the purpose of doctoral thesis write up and to answer the research questions.

Contextual influences are central in the interpretivist approach to research (Gray, 2004; della Porta & Keating, 2008) and to the holistic nature of case studies (Thomas, 2016). Further, Spyrou (2011) advocates that research with children "needs to take into account the actual research contexts in which children's voices are produced and the power imbalances that shape them" (p.152). Therefore, the analysis recognised contextual factors of the research, i.e. group dynamics (Robson, 2011), and ecosystemic influences (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) including the school, community and family.

Table 16

Key research activities

Stage of research	Research activities	Research Question	Explanation and additional considerations
1. Define: What does wellbeing mean to you?	1a) Group discussion	RQ1. How do children understand wellbeing?	Children were asked about their understanding of wellbeing and were provided with a definition to support the discussion; <i>“feeling good, being happy, and able to live your life to the full”</i> (Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2005, p.18). This definition was selected as it has been previously utilised in research with children (i.e. Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2005; Sixsmith et al., 2007). Although, MacDonald and O’Hara (1998) draw caution to the provision of arbitrary definitions of concepts such as mental health and wellbeing for being reductionist and subjective, the provision of a child-friendly definition was deemed necessary to support the children’s understanding of wellbeing. The definition was chosen due to its simplicity, and inclusion of both hedonic and eudaimonic elements of wellbeing. Although this definition could be considered egocentric as it does not capture wider elements of wellbeing such as social or cultural influences.
	1b) Drawing the adapted ideal-self (person with good and not so good wellbeing)		An adapted version of the Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) technique ‘Drawing the Ideal Self’ (Moran, 2001; 2020) was used to explore children’s perceptions of wellbeing. The original ideal-self and non-ideal-self were replaced with an individual with good and not so good wellbeing. Caution is drawn to the level of intervention from the researcher in these techniques (Burr et al., 2014), therefore I did not intervene when children were completing their individual character drawings and instead asked questions during the group share. Background of and the rationale for this activity can be found in Appendix 27.

	1c) Sorting vignettes		<p>Children were asked to sort five vignettes on a scale from good wellbeing to not good wellbeing as a group. The vignettes were developed based on the current literature on children's understanding of wellbeing as discussed in literature review and were presented as short texts with supporting visual cues, in order to be easily understood and support engagement (Barter & Renold, 1999; 2000; Lee & Goh, 2020). The vignettes included several brief sentences with superfluous details omitted to ensure the right amount of detail to enable children to make their own interpretations (Barter & Renold, 1999; 2000; West, 1982). As vignettes can be criticised for their artificial nature (Barter & Renold, 2000), I developed realistic stories in collaboration with a primary school teacher colleague to ensure these vignettes would be suitable and believable to the children's participants. (Finch, 1987). These vignettes were also explored in a pilot study and accepted as valid stories.</p> <p>Background of and rationale for this activity can be found in Appendix 27.</p>
2. Discovery: What is wellbeing at your school like?	2a) paired interviews 2b) group discussion	RQ2. What factors do the children identify as supporting their own and other children's wellbeing in their primary school?	The children were asked to interview each other about a time in school when they felt they had good wellbeing, to explore the factors that have supported their wellbeing in school in the past. They were then asked to report their stories to the group.
3. Dream: What could wellbeing at your school be like?	3a) creating the dream 3b) group discussion	RQ3. What do the children think a school in which all children enjoy good	The children, in small groups, were asked to design and create a dream school using arts and crafts materials, to imagine the possibility of what their school could be like if it were the best at supporting wellbeing.

<p>4. Design: How can wellbeing at your school be supported?</p>	<p>4a) developing provocative propositions 4b) group discussion</p>	<p>wellbeing would be like?</p>	<p>This stage originally was planned to ask children to design their dream school in reality, however, this was not necessary as the dream schools created in stage 3 were embedded in reality and the children had already provided clear designs of how their ideas would look. This stage therefore only focused on developing provocative prepositions: statements that illustrate the vision for the organisation's destiny (Cooperrider et al., 2008). The children were asked to write provocative propositions to capture how they visualise the schools potential to supporting wellbeing.</p>
<p>5a. Destiny: What will we do at your school to make sure everyone has good wellbeing?</p>	<p>5a) developing the first steps of their action plans based on their designs to support wellbeing in their school; and <i>5a.i) small group planning</i> <i>5a.ii) group discussion and action planning</i></p>	<p>RQ4. What do the children suggest to ensure wellbeing is maintained and improved in their school?</p>	<p>Children were asked to create an action plan in small groups to detailing steps they suggest to ensure their school to be the best at supporting wellbeing. From these discussions a list of actions was developed. The children were asked to vote for their top 3 ideas which formed the top 5 actions to form their action plan. The children decided to present this to the staff using a script, which was planned collaboratively. Children were given a copy of the script and time was provided to rehearse their presentation.</p>
<p>5b. Destiny: implementation: What will we do at your school to make sure everyone has good wellbeing?</p>	<p>5b) share their plans the staff steering group and collaboratively agree first steps of action</p>		<p>This stage involved both the children and steering group staff participants. Typically, the final stage in AI (Destiny) is a planning and commitment session, where individuals agree their contributions towards organisational change (Cooperrider et al., 2008). However, due to the limited power children possess and the need for senior management agreement to facilitate organisational change, the children were asked at this stage to share their ideas with the steering group. Afterwards, they worked together to collaboratively agree steps to be implemented.</p>

6. Reflections:	6a) Writing words to describe the research 6b) Group discussion 6c) Rating the research	RQ5. How far do the post-hoc reflections endorse the integrity & instrumental value of the participatory action research process harnessing appreciative inquiry?	The children were asked for their feedback on the research project, through describing the task, and discussion on what they liked, disliked and benefits of the project, and finally rating the task.
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4.7.1 Phase 1

4.7.1.1 Data Analysis: First Level

The first level of data analysis was contemporaneous, live and situated as part of the collaborative research process with the CYP, as core to the AI process (Reed, 2007). Joint data processing and analysis was built in the focus groups through group discussions, identifying and clarifying key themes with children. For each stage of the research, key themes were recorded and represented visually through mind maps. Mind maps can support participants to increase their understanding of others' viewpoints and work towards a mutual perception of the topic in question (Ackermann et al., 1992). These mind maps were revisited at the next research stage to remind the children and offered an opportunity for member-checking.

The purpose of this situated analysis was to form an action plan (as in stage 5) founded upon the children's understanding of and experience of wellbeing in school. This was achieved by identifying key themes and making connections of significance for each and across each stage of the research.

4.7.1.2 Data Analysis: Second level (Phase 1)

The second level of analysis followed the completion of phase 1 of the research. The second stage facilitated a deeper exploration of the data to answer RQ6. What do the data indicate about children's understanding of wellbeing? This also further enabled reflexive practice, in particular the identification of missed themes from the first level live analysis and also facilitated the extraction of direct quotes.

This approach adopted a double hermeneutic aspect, which highlights the double interpretation in social science, whereby participants give their interpretation of the phenomena, which the researcher then interprets based on their own understanding and language (Giddens, 1984). In line with reflexive research, this approach provides a framework to accept “the messiness, ambiguity, polyvocality, non-factuality and multi-layered nature of meaning in ‘stories’ that research [*with children*] produces” (Spyrou, 2011, p.162).

This second analysis specifically focused on the data gathered from stages 1 to 5a (Define, Discovery, Dream, Design, Destiny). Stage 5b (Destiny b) was not included due to its significant overlap with the previous stages.

General principles and processes of qualitative analysis were followed in this stage of analysis (see Table 17), informed by key texts which specify stepped approaches to qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Creswell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles et al., 2014). This process was iterative and interactive, returning to raw data, codes and categories until themes were refined and finalised.

In addition to the research journal, further jottings and analytic memos were used to record my reflections when revisiting the data in this second level of analysis (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2013). These centred on the below points (see Table 18) which were used alongside the research journal to support reflexivity in analysis.

Table 17

Steps in data analysis process

Steps taken in second level of analysis
<p>1. Transcription</p> <p>All focus group recordings were transcribed verbatim. Transcribing is an effective way of getting to know your data (Robson, 2011). Transcriptions can support trustworthiness through enhanced rigour (Krueger & Casey, 2001). This also allowed for children’s exact words and language to be presented in the analysis (Eder & Fingersen, 2003; Spyrou, 2011).</p>
<p>2. Data familiarisation</p> <p>Reading through all the data enables the reader to gain a general sense of whole data set and a deeper understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke 2022; Creswell, 2009). I listened to the audio recordings, read and re-read the transcripts and fieldwork documents (i.e. individual recording sheets, focus group mind maps of themes, research journal).</p>
<p>3. Data reduction</p> <p>3a. First cycle coding</p> <p>The data was analysed using a balanced inductive-deductive approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deductive - using bottom-up codes from the themes derived from the live analysis with the children (first level analysis). Colour coding (Creswell, 2009) was used to highlight deductive themes, and code labels created to provide greater detail than those developed with children.• Inductive - to identify any missed emerging codes and themes. Inductive codes were colour coded and new code labels created. <p>The first cycle codes (inductive and deductive) from the whole data set were collated and presented in a grid.</p> <p>3b. Second cycle coding</p> <p>First cycle codes were collated and grouped into categories. Some codes also became categories in their own right. This stage was repeated to develop sub-themes and themes from grouping categories.</p>
<p>4. Data display</p> <p>Displaying data in an appropriate form can support organisation and present the data in a way that is easily access (Miles & Hubermann, 1994). The themes, sub-themes and categories were presented visually in tabular format.</p>
<p>5. Interpretation</p> <p>This final step explored the meaning of data through interpretation.</p>

Table 18

Jottings and analytic memos (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2013)

Jottings	Analytic Memos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Inferences on the meaning of what a key participant was “really” saying during an exchange that seemed somehow important • Personal reactions to some participants’ remarks or actions • What the relationship with participants feels like • Doubts about the quality of some of the data • Second thoughts about some of the interview questions and observation protocols • A mental note to pursue an issue further in the next contact • Cross-reference to material in another part of the data set • Elaboration or clarification of a prior incident or event that now seems of possible significance” (Miles et al., 2014, p.94) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How you personally relate to the participants and/or the phenomenon • Your study’s research questions • Your code choices and their operational definitions • Emergent patterns, categories, themes, concepts, and assertions • The possible networks (links, connections, overlaps, flows) among the codes, patterns, categories, themes, concepts, and assertions • An emergent or related existent theory • Any problems with the study • Any personal or ethical dilemmas with the study • Future directions for the study” (Saldaña, 2013, p.49)

4.7.1.3 Limitations of the Second Level Analytic Approach

It could be argued that independent qualitative analysis by the researcher opposes the underpinning principles of collaboration and co-construction in AI (Reed, 2007). However, the children’s story and developed action plan has not been amended. This second level compliments the first stage of analysis, using the children’s views on wellbeing to interpret this further in relation to the literature. However, I acknowledge that my own values, beliefs, and my awareness of wellbeing derived from personal experience and the literature may have

further influenced identification of inductive themes. The addition of reflexivity and member-checking was used to counterbalance this.

4.7.2 Phase 2

The analysis of phase 2 of the research used the same two stepped approach used in phase 1 (as outlined in Table 17).

Chapters 5, 6 and 7: Findings, Analysis and Discussion

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 explore the research findings and discuss these in relation to the research aims.

- 1) to explore children's understanding of wellbeing.
- 2) to explore children's views about how their wellbeing can be supported in their school.
- 3) to harness children's views to support the design and initial implementation of plans to develop provisions to enhance pupils' wellbeing across their school.
- 4) to elicit the children's post-hoc reflections on this process and the value of the outcomes achieved.

Following Rein and Schon's view (1977, as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994), this chapter begins by telling the story of the specific research context, detailing what happened, followed by 'constructing a map' to explore the elements of the story and build a theory detailing how these elements are interconnected, to produce a richer story. This chapter is therefore structured in two parts related to the two levels of analysis. First, a descriptive account of the findings from the first level of live situated analysis is outlined structured by the stages of AI. Secondly, the second level of analysis explores what these findings mean in regard to children's understanding of wellbeing. Analysis of the supplementary data derived from an individual interview with 1G can be found in Appendix 28. 1G's data and views were not included in this main data analysis as they were gathered separately from the focus group; however, notable similarities and differences are outlined in Appendix 28. Thirdly, reflections on the research project from the children and myself are explored in relation to the instrumental value and integrity of the research project.

Chapter 5. First Level Live Analysis: Descriptive Account of the

Research

Context is of equal importance across case studies, AI and research with children (Yin, 2018; Spyrou 2011; Reed, 2007). This research is situated in the specific context of East Bridge Primary school, and therefore is representative of this group of children's views at the time of data collection. Furthermore, Reed (2007) states the process of AI should be described in order to contextualise the findings and discussion, therefore this section provides a brief descriptive account of the findings structured by each stage of AI.

This section is based on the themes gathered by the children during the research process. Researcher reflections taken at the time are also included and supporting quotes have been extracted from the transcription to highlight children's views accurately. Missed themes identified in the second level of analysis are not included in this first level analysis as to do so would not be an accurate representation of the children's agreed themes, research story and subsequent plan developed in the research.

Appendix 29 shows the progression of themes identified by the children leading to their proposed action plan. Key themes identified by the children from each AI stage are presented in Appendices 30-35.

5.1 Define

RQ1. How do children understand wellbeing?

The Define stage explored how children understood wellbeing: the focus of the data collection. This stage was completed with two separate focus groups: FG3/4 and FG5/6, using a range of activities and discussions.

Initial exploration of the term of wellbeing indicated that the children found it difficult to articulate their understanding of the concept: their contributions tended to be framed in uncertain, exploratory terms, rather than being articulated with confidence as existing knowledge (see Ch 6.1.4). Children in both groups were unclear initially on what wellbeing meant and not all children had heard of the term beforehand. This may be typical of children's development in regard to understanding of abstract concepts (Piaget, 1954). At this early stage, it was unclear whether the children's apparent difficulty related to vocabulary (i.e. the word 'wellbeing' was unfamiliar) or that the concept itself was alien (i.e. they did not have any awareness of wellbeing). Given the ambiguity surrounding the meaning of wellbeing, I had judged it potentially helpful to share with both groups a simple and child-friendly sample definition, which had been utilised as a prompt in previous research with children ("feeling good, being happy, and able to live your life to the full" (Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2005, p.18)). This served as a cue to prompt the children's further reflection on their own experiences and understanding. However, as an adult-centric prompt, sharing such a definition could have risked reductionism and compromised their own subjectivity (MacDonald & O'Hara, 1998). This may have biased the children's responses, as much discussion centred around happiness, (although this is conceived as a core component of wellbeing within literature (i.e. hedonic wellbeing)). However, the children were advised that the donated sample definition was not definitive or 'right', but simply what some other people considered wellbeing to be. Additional supportive strategies and methods, such as the vignettes were presented to further

facilitate the children's understanding of wellbeing. These methods proved helpful, suggesting that the children's initial ambiguity reflected a semantic limitation, rather than a lack of understanding of the focus construct.

The children's conceptualisation of wellbeing predominantly focused on the dimensions and factors which enable wellbeing, rather than developing a definition of the term (see Ch 6.3). This was not an explicit decision made by the researcher, but rather a result of the bottom-up approach afforded to the children in the research and their responses. This approach was also arguably helpful in identifying factors to use within the subsequent action plan. Similar conceptualisations of wellbeing are typical in the limited amount of research exploring children's perceptions of wellbeing (i.e. Fattore et al., 2007; Gillett-Swan, 2014; Sixsmith et al., 2007).

Following the group discussions and completion of the research activities (i.e. adapted ideal-self and vignettes), the children identified a broad range of themes that they considered to contribute to their general wellbeing (see Appendix 30). Friends, managing difficulties, having fun, and physical health were commonly discussed across both groups. The post-covid context within which the research occurred may have contributed to the prominence of the physical health theme. Furthermore, significant reference was made to the importance of helping others.

Owing to the vast and wide-ranging themes suggested, children voted for their top 5 themes of wellbeing (see Table 19). Both groups identified *significant others* (i.e. friends, family and supportive adults) as their top priority for wellbeing, indicating their reliance on support.

Although children also highlighted themes linked with independence such as *Making choices for yourself, Saying things for yourself*. It was noted that FG5/6 were more similar in their prioritised themes, compared to FG3/4 who had broader views. Furthermore, in line with expected child development, FG5/6 were more articulate in their rationale for themes, i.e. real friends and respect when discussing friendships. At times the participants in the younger group were not able to explain why.

Although there were many similar themes discussed in both groups, there were key differences between the two groups. FG3/4 had a focus on looking after the environment, whereas this was absent in FG5/6. 6G suggested the theme of *Grateful for things you have / people do for you* and 5G of *Knowing we are all equal*. These themes show a greater level of emotional awareness that I had not anticipated and were warmly received by the research team. This warm response and praise may have contributed to these being voted such a high priority for wellbeing through social desirability in which the children perhaps wanted to impress the researchers and their peers.

The dynamic nature of wellbeing is also highlighted in this stage of research, with 5G suggesting that wellbeing is a changing concept.

This stage illustrated the breadth of concepts associated with children's understanding and construction of wellbeing, and also the significant variance in individual preferences. Commonalities centred on friends, family, and adults, sharing with others, physical health and managing difficulties. Associated with the positive nature of AI, this stage primarily focused on positive contributions to wellbeing, with negative contributions originating from the not so

good wellbeing character derived in the adapted ideal-self task and the vignette sort activities.

These tasks therefore addressed concerns that AI solely focused on positivity (Bushe, 2012).

Table 19

Children's ranked top 5 themes of wellbeing

Note. 6G did not rank her top 5 using the suggested point allocation, and instead used more votes to indicate her preferences.

FG3/4 Themes ranked in order of importance		
Rank	Theme	Number of votes
1=	friends	5
1=	food / drink	5
1=	job / money	5
1=	learning new things	5
1=	looking after animals	5
2=	being healthy / looking after yourself	4
2=	family	4
2=	helping others	4
3	own space / time alone	3
4	say things for yourself	2
5=	being successful	1
5=	sharing	1
5=	things we need	1
6=	looking after the environment	0
6=	managing difficulties	0
6=	be kind to others	0
6=	making choices for self	0
6=	doing fun things	0

FG5/6 Themes ranked in order of importance		
Rank	Theme	Number of votes
1	loving family	15
2	adults who trust / help us	11
3	grateful for what you have	10
4	personal health	9
5	trying hard	5
6	real friends	4
7	time alone	3
7=	knowing we are all equal	3
8	being happy (enjoyment, hobbies, look forward to)	2
9=	enough money	0
9=	not being the best	0
9=	being kind to others	0
9=	being confident (to share views)	0
9=	deal with anger / difficult things	0
9=	going to new places / doing new things	0

5.2 Discovery

RQ2. What factors do the children identify as supporting their own and other children's wellbeing in their primary school?

The Discovery stage explored a time when the children felt that they had good wellbeing in school. This provided rich insight into children's understanding of wellbeing in school, as this stage was founded on an actual lived experience examples. It is noted that 6G chose an experience from a previous school which may not be truly representative of her current school experience at East Bridge Primary.

Many themes derived from the previous Define stage were identified in the children's stories of having good wellbeing in school; *friendships*, *helping others*, and *feeling good*.

Recognition was a novel theme and is perhaps indicative of the contextual influences of school on wellbeing. Individual preferences were significant, i.e. 4G's interest with *working hard*, and 6B's *time alone*. Themes such as *physical health*, *family*, *looking after the environment* and *managing difficulties* became less prevalent or obsolete in relating to their wellbeing in school. The children understood wellbeing in relation to the school context.

5.3 Dream and Design

RQ3. What do the children think a school in which all children enjoy good wellbeing would be like?

Data gathered from both the Dream and Design stage are used to answer this research question, as these stages aimed to inspire possible ideas to support children's wellbeing in school (Cooperrider et al., 2008).

The Dream stage in AI aims to develop imagined futures, based on previous experiences of success or strength identified in the Discovery stage (Cooperrider et al., 2008). In this stage, most children worked in small age-similar groups to create their dream schools in which all

children enjoy good wellbeing, with the exception of 6B who preferred to work alone. Their dream schools are shown below (see Figure 14, Figure 15 & Figure 16). Interestingly, many elements of the children's dream schools were within the realms of reality, with the exception of 'Funland'. On reflection, I may have over-emphasised that the dreams would be used to develop a plan and therefore needed to be realistic.

The Dream stage of research resulted in a narrower remit of themes on how schools should support wellbeing. Common themes across the Dream stage included *health and exercise*, *friendships*, *having fun* and *managing stress and being calm*. Suggestions were made for places to go when feeling stressed (i.e. calm room or quiet space), yet there was no discussion on strategies to use when in such spaces to reduce stress levels in these discussions. Although, such strategies had been mentioned in the Define and Discovery stages. *Friendships* were viewed as important for supporting wellbeing at school, signified by 6B's dream school motto, "We believe no child should be left out", and several spaces included in the dream schools to play with friends. While still prevalent, less focus was given to *helping others* and priority was given *playing with others*. This stage highlighted individual perceptions and preferences regarding wellbeing.

To develop a preferred future for East Bridge School, dream schools should be based on the themes collated in the Discovery stage and thus founded in the current school context.

However, the key themes in this stage differed from the themes gathered in the Discovery stage. For example the focus on *supportive adults* and *recognition* in the Discovery theme were not present in the Dream themes. It is possible this absence of Discovery themes may have been affected by the children's excitement of the arts and craft materials, which could

have distracted their focus to how these could be used rather than the research question.

However, this craft activity was motivating and engaging to ensure the research was a fun experience. Furthermore, although *supportive adults* were evident in the dream schools (i.e. nice teacher in the calm room, first aid room), the children did not reference to *supportive adults* as a theme in this stage. This is similar for the dog in 5B, 5G and 6G's dream school, which formed substantive discussions but was not raised in the themes. The gathering of themes may have been affected by fatigue following the exciting activity.

In the Design stage, the children's provocative propositions further exemplified their children's suggestions on what their dream school would look like as if it were actually happening (see Figure 17). Key themes collated from these themes share many similarities from those elicited in the dream stage (see Appendix 34).

In summary, the data gathered from these two stages suggest important themes for ensuring children enjoy good wellbeing at school. These included: *being healthy*, in regard to both *exercise and diet, having fun, friendships, playing with others, time alone*, and ideas to *relax or calm when stressed*. Less frequently mentioned themes were *learning new skills, looking after the environment*, and *caring for others* associated with the first aid room. From this, the children suggested the following ideas to create a school which is good at supporting children's wellbeing:

- Places and resources to manage stress, relax and be calm
- Places for enjoyment and to have fun
- Places to learn (i.e. quiet spaces)
- Places and equipment for exercise

- Healthy food
- Adults who are kind and supportive
- A range of learning activities

These ideas formed the basis of the action plan developed in the next stage Destiny.

5.4 Destiny

RQ4. What do the children suggest to ensure wellbeing is maintained and improved in their school?

The Destiny stage is split into two sections. First, (a) the development of the children's action plan. Second, (b) presentation of the action plan to the steering group and collaborative planning of next steps.

5.4.1 Destiny

In the first part of the Destiny stage, the children created a list of possible ideas to ensure wellbeing is maintained and improved in their school (see Appendix 35). This was based primarily on the themes identified in the Dream and Design stages, however, themes gathered in previous sessions were revisited to ensure all essential themes and ideas were incorporated.

The list contained many ideas consistent with the key themes identified across other research stages, i.e. *having fun, helping others, supportive adults*. There was debate between the children around the inclusion of individual preferences which resulted in the theme *siblings* being included, but the removal of themes such as *being grateful* and *family*.

Figure 14

Dream school 1: 3B, 4G, 4B

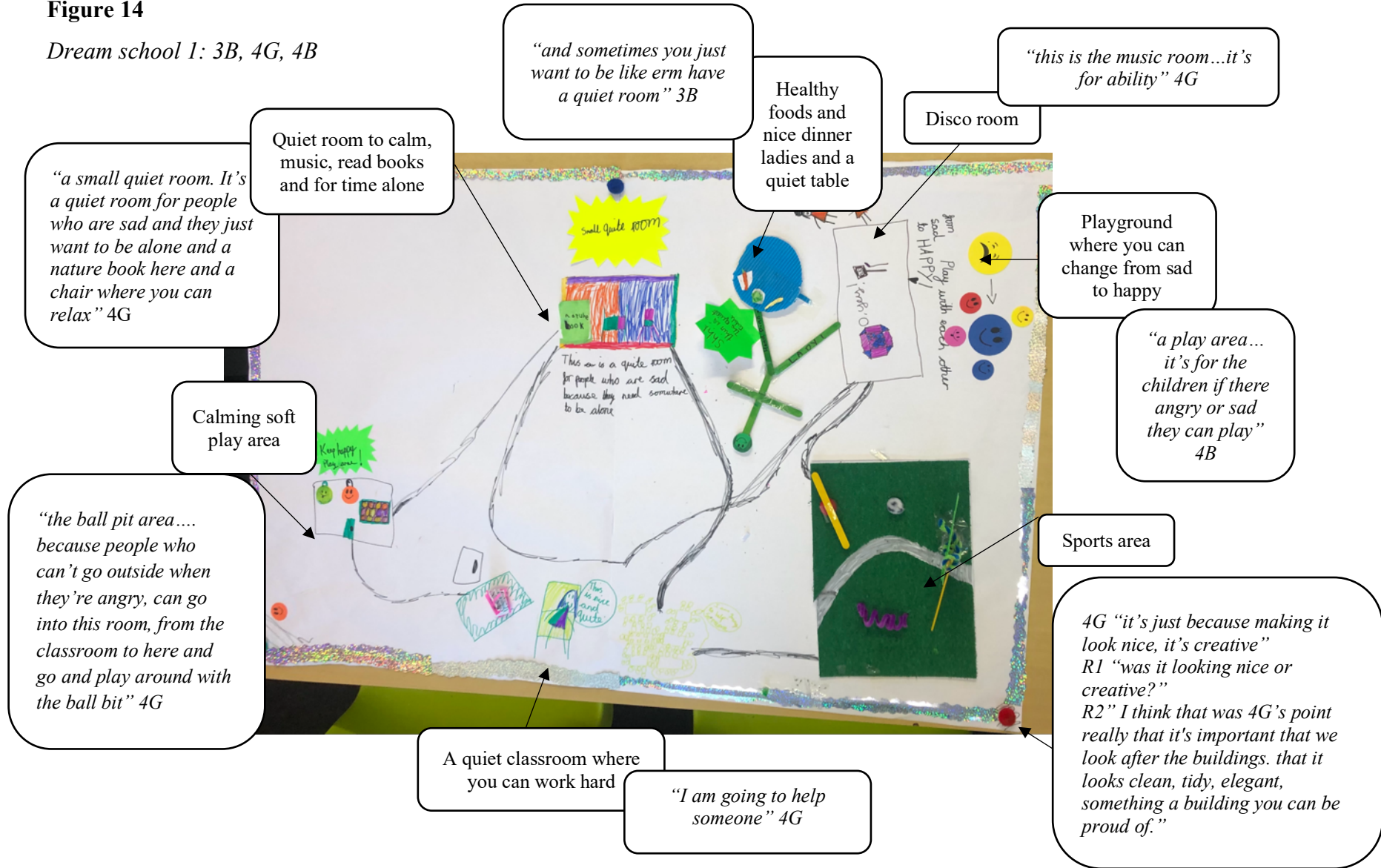


Figure 15

Dream school 2: 5B, 5G, 6G



Figure 16

Dream school 3: 6B

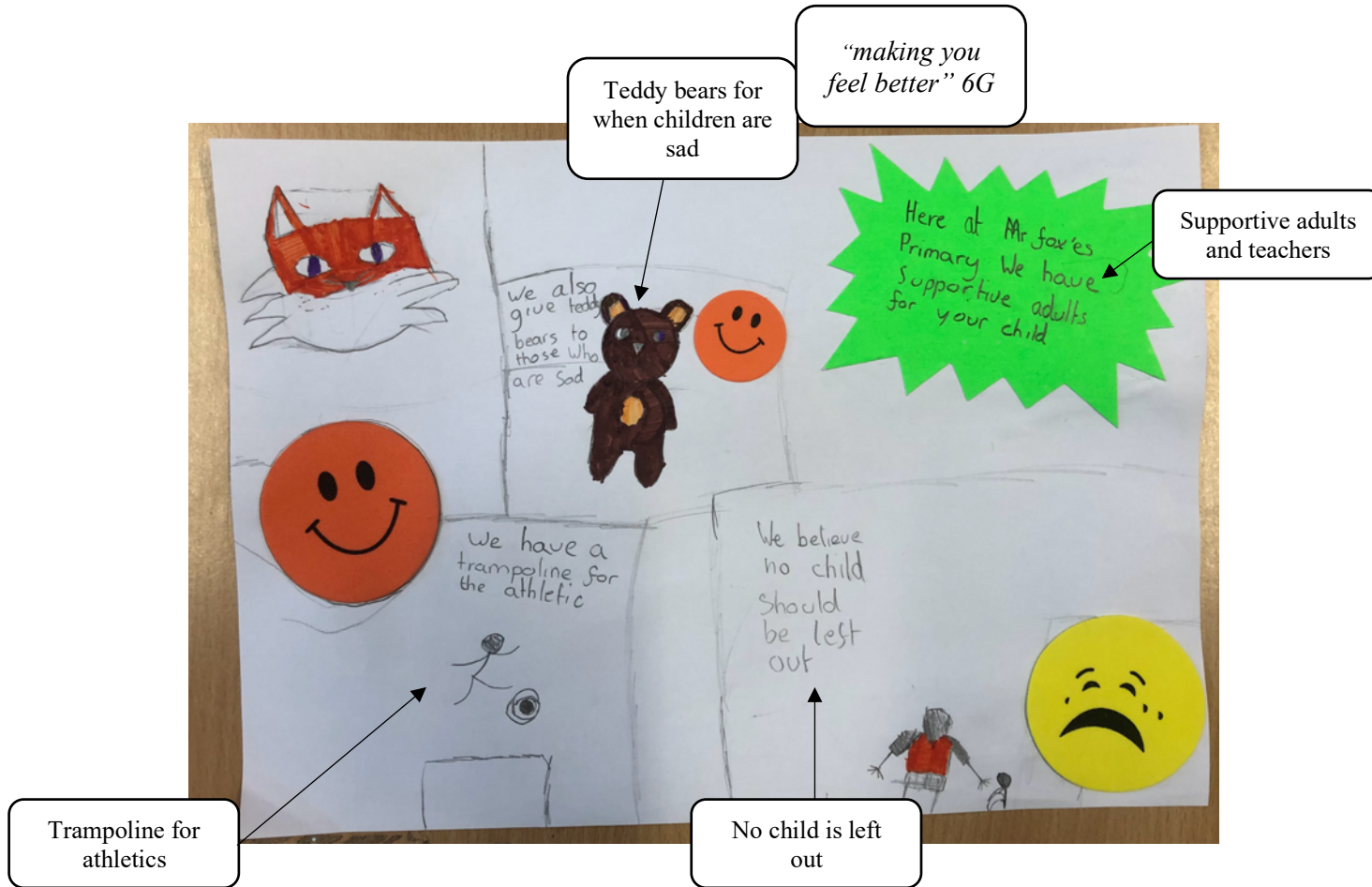


Figure 17

Provocative propositions developed by the children in the Design stage

3B – We have lots of sports and fun stuff to do. We have healthy food. We never leave anyone out so that makes everyone happy. And everyone loves it.

4B – This school is amazing. There is a play area indoors, a play area outside, there is a disco place, a school, a quiet room, a table with healthy vegetables and a dinner lady.

4G – In my school we have kind and supportive teachers and helpful dinner ladies. In my school we have lots of subjects like science, art and lots more. Our teachers help us with lots of things, with our work, teaching us with lots of things so we can get a job in the future. In my school we have people who help us when we are hurt. We have lots of fun things to do in my school. In my school we find everything fun but hard because we need to learn new things in my school. This school is a kind and helpful place for us. We need time alone, also WE LOVE THIS SCHOOL!

5B – In my school, we have lots of fun activities like a calm place with a dog, books, pillows, teddies and a supported teacher that helps you calm down. And a play arena outside with monkey bars, slides, swings, a table and a football court, a basket hoop. The last thing is a first aid area where you can have privacy and not embarrass yourself.

5G – In my school in the calm room we have a cute dog to help children who are tense, angry or upset. Also in the calm room we have cushions and soft things with calm music. In my school I have extra art and music lessons I really enjoy myself. I have thousands of friends and supportive teachers. Though I have lots of friends those who don't we have a friendship bench for the lonely.

6B – Our school is supportive because we have supportive adults, teddy bears and believe no child should be left out.

6G – In the school [name], we have the best teachers who care for you and make sure that you are okay. First we have amazing equipment for PE like rounders and other stuff. Amazing lessons for amazing education for kids. Really nice students. We don't shout at students no matter what.

Upon reflection, I noted that my enthusiasm towards children’s suggestions may have influenced their inclusion in the plan. However, agreement was sought from all children on the inclusion of ideas with individual ratings were used to ensure all children made their preferences clear. I ensured that member checking and choice were offered to the children, consistently across the research.

Due to the vast number of suggestions, the children voted for their top 3 ideas (see Table 20). The top 5 ideas (alone time, healthy food, helping others, fun stuff, friendship bench) were then used to develop an action plan with the children detailing how these could be maintained and achieved in school (see Figure 18).

Table 20

Children’s rankings of action points

Rank	Action / idea	Number of votes
1	Alone time (9) / calm room (3)	12
2	Healthy food	6
3	Helping others (5) / Help the teachers (1)	6
4	Fun stuff (i.e. different sports, equipment available at lunchtime, and different lessons on fun stuff)	5
5	Friendship bench	5
6	Quiet time in class / at lunch	4
7	Calm room	3
8	Supportive adults	2
9=	Toilets	1
9=	Working hard	1
10=	Siblings	0
10=	Looking after the environment (i.e. recycling)	0
10=	More recognition	0
10=	Being resourceful / using initiative	0
10=	Being / feeling successful	0
10=	Looking after yourself independently	0
10=	Truthful	0

Figure 18

Children's Action Plan

Action Plan
Children's suggestions
Top 5 points to support children's wellbeing at East Bridge Primary School

1. Alone time

- ★ A calm room or space with pillows, blankets, music and something you can care for. It is important to decide if you would like to be alone or not.

2. Helping teachers and others

- ★ Helping classmates with their work and doing things for teachers both when asked and by offering.
- ★ A daily feelings-check in for class members.

3. Healthy food

- ★ Reminders to children to eat healthy through newsletters, teachers or school TV adverts.
- ★ Competitions, dares or checks to encourage children to increase their fruit and vegetable intake.

4. Friendship bench

- ★ A friendship bench on both the playground and field for children to seek friendship if they would like to. The bench should look nice (i.e. flowers) and have a sign to inform children what it is. The bench should have monitors who support those who use the bench and feedback to teachers about those using the bench.

5. Fun stuff

- ★ A variety of sports and equipment available during playtimes and lunchtimes, and a range of different activities also.
- ★ A range of different lessons in class, e.g. Art and ICT.

This action plan was well received by the steering group:

SI "And you have worked so hard, really hard, you've thought of some wonderful ideas. And the lovely thing is, as I was listening, I was thinking we could do some of these things straight away...They're not things that are going to take a lot of money, a lot of effort, a lot

of time. They are things we could just introduce almost straight away and so proud of you, what wonderful work.”

After sharing the action plan, discussions took place between with the steering group and children to explore the children’s ideas and agree next steps. The friendship bench and healthy food ideas were well received and discussed at length. The calm room idea, although recognised as important, was not discussed in as much detail due to the significant and costly barriers to implementing this.

Additional discussion centred on ideas such as teacher recognition and mindfulness drawing in class, but these were deemed a lower priority by the children and steering group staff and therefore not included as agreed actions. The agreed actions resulting from this stage are outlined in Table 21.

5.4.2 What Happened Next?

During the process of organising administrative tasks (i.e. sending summary feedback report) and negotiating the additional part of the researcher, the headteacher and a steering group staff member approached me with enthusiasm to indicate that several actions from the plan had been implemented (see Table 21). This illustrated the school’s commitment to supporting children’s wellbeing and the organisational development realised as a result of this research. However, the children highlighted some concerns of the implementation of their action plan and their desire to have further involvement in this, discussed further in Chapter 7.

Table 21

Children's Action Plan and Next Steps

<u>Action Plan</u>			
Top 5 points to support children's wellbeing at East Bridge Primary School			
Children's suggestions		Agreed next steps	Implemented next steps
1. Alone time	A calm room or space with pillows, blankets, music and something you can care for. It is important to decide if you would like to be alone or not.	Staff to consider options for a dedicated space / calm room	'The Den' has been built and is in preparation to be a calm space.
2. Helping teachers and others	Helping classmates with their work and doing things for teachers both when asked and by offering. A daily feelings-check in for class members	School council to further explore the introduction of talk boxes / mood monsters	Worry boxes implemented in classrooms
3. Healthy food	Reminders to children to eat healthy through newsletters, teachers or school TV adverts Competitions, dares or checks to encourage children to increase their fruit and vegetable intake	Tuck shop	n/a
4. Friendship bench	A friendship bench on both the playground and field for children to seek friendship if they would like to. The bench should look nice (i.e. flowers) and have a sign to inform children what it is. The bench should have monitors who support those who use the bench and feedback to teachers about those using the bench.	Friendship bench with a sign, monitors and assemblies to inform children how to use it	Friendship bench installed facilitated by peer monitors
5. Fun stuff	A variety of sports and equipment available during playtimes and lunchtimes, and a range of different activities also. A range of different lessons in class, e.g. Art and ICT	Lunchtimes – greater sports outside, i.e. table tennis, more equipment, and a colouring table Mindful art and mindful music in class	Greater amount and variety of activities at lunchtimes
Additional	n/a	Quiet calming music in class and lunchtimes	Quiet music in lunchroom

5.5 Chapter Conclusion

This PAR process harnessing AI enabled the children to work from a place of ambiguity on wellbeing to developing a plan to maintain and improve wellbeing in East Bridge Primary school. The plan founded on children's themes of wellbeing centred on positive aspects of wellbeing in line with AI principles and positive psychology. Many themes remained consistent across the different stages of research (see Appendix 29 for detailed overview), namely:

- Friendship
- Helping others
- Having fun
- Being healthy
- Emotional regulation and calming spaces
- Learning new skills
- Working hard

However individual response patterns throughout the research, indicated that wellbeing held diverse connotations for different children suggesting when it comes to wellbeing a “one size does not fit all” (Ryff et al., 2014, p.16). These data would appear to suggest that children's construction of wellbeing was related to key concepts, predominantly, friendships, having fun, helping others, being healthy and learning new things.

Chapter 6: Second Level Analysis

This chapter aims to answer *RQ 6: What do the data indicate about children's understanding of wellbeing?* First, the themes relating to children's understanding of wellbeing identified in the second level of analysis are outlined. Secondly, differences between the two levels of analysis are considered, followed by consideration of the differences between children and adult conceptualisations of wellbeing. Finally, these themes are explored in context to the literature and the role of schools in supporting children's wellbeing discussed.

Appendix 36 details the analytic process for this stage. Exemplar quotes can be found in Appendix 37, and exemplar transcripts in Appendices 38 and 39.

6.1 Children's understanding of wellbeing

Through the provision of activities and discussions pitched at an appropriate developmental level, the children were able to understand, construct and express their perspective of wellbeing. Their understanding of wellbeing can be categorised into three key themes: *personal*, *environmental*, and *social*. The *personal* theme related to internal and individual elements of wellbeing. The *social* theme represented elements of wellbeing that focused on the involvement of others, and the *environmental* theme represented external and physical factors that enable wellbeing.

Table 22 presents the themes identified in this second level of analysis across Stages 1-5a of the research. Themes are not equally weighted with several themes holding greater significance than others.

Table 22*Themes of children's wellbeing identified in second level analysis*

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
Environmental	Places	Outdoor space Own space Quiet environments
	Resources	Toys and games Technology
	Basic needs	Physiological needs Safety
Social	Relationships	Family Friends Pets Supportive adults Religion
	Making a difference for others	Helping others Sharing resources Being kind Looking after animals Looking after the environment
Personal	Physical health	Exercise Well not ill Diet
	Emotional regulation	Comfort Emotional regulation Time alone
	Personal growth	Engagement Smart Learning new things
	Personal qualities	Positive personal qualities
	Self-esteem	Success Independence Being important
	Having fun, enjoyment and being happy	Hobbies Adventures Playing Treats and gifts

6.1.1 Personal

The *personal* theme represented internal and individual elements of wellbeing. *Personal* subthemes included *having fun, enjoyment and being happy*, *physical health* and *emotional regulation*. *Having fun, enjoyment and being happy* was a key and consistent theme for all

children. A range of factors facilitated these positive feelings and experiences; friends, family, hobbies, helping others, going on holiday and playing. The children also viewed emotional regulation as significant for their wellbeing, to change from being angry or sad to happy. To support emotional regulation, children referenced access to time alone, a calm space to regulate, support from adults and play, which may demonstrate the schools ethos.

4B “so it was like about so you need of people to play with other like when you're angry and there's nobody to play with. You always just gonna be angry and upset, so when you get into the classroom, you'll just be angry at and people will be asking what's wrong, and it might be their fault and also, because if there's someone plays with you and you're happy you forget about that sad and angry feelings.”

Children noted the importance of *physical health* for their wellbeing, predominantly related to a healthy diet, exercise and being well (not ill). They recognised the need for food and drink to fulfil basic needs, but also the importance of a healthy diet. Exercise was often seen as an opportunity to develop strength, and to be with friends. *Personal qualities* included forgiveness, honesty, respectful, hope and humility, were often referenced in regard to relationships. Being respectful and well-behaved were highlighted, but less frequently.

6B “like respect others and they'll respect you back”

Personal growth was a sub-theme driven predominantly by 4G, although other children considered this was important. *Personal growth* was seen as a means to learn new things in order to become 'smart' and to ultimately get a job and money. In regard to the *self-esteem* sub-theme, the children noted the importance of external recognition from teachers and friends, but also internal rewards, i.e. feeling proud. Independence included being

independent, making choices and being able to speak for yourself. Being important consisted of the sub-themes privacy, being treated kindly and fairly, respected and cared for.

6.1.2 Social

Seligman (2011) suggests that “very little that is positive is solitary” (p.20), which was emphasised by the significance of the *social* theme. This theme related to elements of wellbeing that involved with others. *Relationships* and *making a difference* sub-themes formed this theme. Consistent with the literature, the children highlighted the importance of relationships for their wellbeing. Relationships with friends, family, supportive adults and pets were important for all children and provided support, fun and enjoyment, safety, care.

5G “I think it's really good wellbeing because she looks like she has fun at her house and her parents are really kind and they the joke with her,”

However, time alone was also recognised as being good for wellbeing. Religion was viewed as important for guidance and care, and all the children placed significant emphasis on the importance of making a difference by helping others, by being kind, sharing, and helping. The intrinsic value of this was noted.

3B “It was a good time because I'm helping some somebody and if I help somebody, it feels just like good.”

Several of the younger children referenced looking after animals and the environment, but this was not consistent for all children.

6.1.3 Environmental

The *environmental* theme related to external and physical factors that facilitate wellbeing, and sub-themes included *places*, *resources* and *basic needs*. These predominantly enabled other social or personal elements of wellbeing. Resources of importance included toys, games, and technology. These were attributed to having fun, and to the ability to engage in homework. The children also noted the importance of having their own space. They viewed outdoor spaces as important places to engage in sports, to enjoy the “fresh air” (4B) and to play, consistent with literature (UNICEF, 2020).

4B “When you’re angry you can play outside and you feel better, all the fresh air and stuff.”

6.1.4 Conceptualisation of Wellbeing

Although developmental understanding of abstract words occurs approximately around 6-10 years of age, this research demonstrates that is possible to explore and develop children’s understanding of abstract concepts such as wellbeing (Vigliocco et al., 2017). The children in this research understood wellbeing to be a dynamic, multi-functional concept, with many interconnected elements. The children were initially ambiguous about the term wellbeing, which was surprising given the popularity of the concept. However, their construction of wellbeing developed over time. For example, 5B and 6G initially viewed wellbeing as related to wealth. It was later agreed that ‘enough money’ to provide for basic needs was more appropriate for wellbeing. Although, this initial construction was likely encouraged by social desirability from peers.

5B “who’s yours [person with good wellbeing]?”

6G “a rich person”

....*Laughter*

6G *“money is falling down”*

R1 *“so what have we got in your bag [the bag of the person with good wellbeing] 5B?”*

5B *“A Tesla car keys, 10 gold bars, 100 iPhones 13, one hundred thousand pounds”*

Variations in individually ranked themes of wellbeing in the first stage of research were broader in the younger group. I questioned whether this difference related to developmental differences, and more advanced ability capacity to empathise with others' views and feelings (Piaget, 1954). However, this variance reduced as the research progressed, suggesting the younger children were able to develop their understanding of wellbeing and accommodate others' ideas. Thus, the interactions within the focus groups influenced the children's understanding and prioritised themes of wellbeing (Robson, 2011).

During the course of the research, the children progressed to a shared collective understanding of wellbeing through learning about their own understanding and of others. The construction included both a core conceptualisation of wellbeing consisting of agreed elements; relationships, helping others, physical health and basic needs, emotional regulation, enjoyment and being happy (see Table 23). Focus groups are suggested to develop a collective view such as this core conceptualisation, rather than individual views (Cohen et al., 2007), however, some children also maintained their own subjective interpretations of wellbeing. For example, 4G's emphasis on learning and being smart, 6B's preference for alone time. This research suggests that whilst, there are some core commonalities in children's understanding wellbeing, the concept is highly subjective.

Table 23

Core agreed themes of wellbeing as identified in the research

Core agreed themes of wellbeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• relationships• helping others• physical health and basic needs• emotional regulation• having fun, enjoyment and being happy

6.2 Differences from the First Level Analysis

Whilst this second level of analysis identified a similar conceptualisation of wellbeing to that in the live analysis by the children, several unidentified categories were discovered. These included *religion, being outside, toys and games, technology, garden, bedroom, and safety and comfort. Being important and positive personal qualities* were new categories, which incorporated less significant themes identified by the children as in the first stage of analysis (i.e. privacy, respected), as these yielded greater significance in the second level analysis.

As the research progressed, the children refined their understanding of wellbeing. Through this process, the children may have deemed the above unidentified themes less important to their understanding of wellbeing, explaining why they did not appear in the live analysis. However, the themes identified in the second level of analysis were member-checked with the children, who agreed these themes were representative of their conceptualisation of wellbeing. The gained themes and understanding from the second level analysis suggests there is value in further exploration and interpretation to capture the broad themes of wellbeing.

These additional themes and codes predominantly originated from the adapted ideal-self task and vignette task and subsequent discussions following these activities. The less directive nature of these tasks proved helpful in exploring complex topic (Barter & Renold, 1999; Burr et al., 2014). The children were able to use their imagination to create new characters through a non-threatening ideal-self task, which is also less reliant on language skills (Burr et al., 2014; Shilvock, 2014). The vignettes elicited in-depth conversation on sensitive topics in regard to wellbeing, i.e. not being fed, as these are less personal than individual experience (Barter & Renold, 1999). Both these tasks led to significant discussions, however, the themes gathered by the children did not reflect this breadth of data imparted from these activities. To realise the breadth of data developed from these tasks further interpretation was required, particularly to understand their implicit meaning. For example, fears of being bullied or discriminated derived in the ideal-self task were interpreted as a desire to be respected in the second level of analysis. Difficulties with follow-up questions in focus groups (Robson, 2011), and time constraints will have affected the joint interpretative process required in the ideal-self task (Burr et al., 2014) that occurred within the focus groups.

Furthermore, the children's capability to gather and identify themes varied. A number of factors may have influenced this; the children's capacity to construct themes, time constraints, excitement or fatigue. Throughout the research, I ensured I clarified and recorded themes, summarised and member-checked to support the theme development with children.

Children's ability to gather themes could have been enhanced through explicit training (Fox et al., 2007; Kellett, 2005). Time restraints of this research, however, restricted this as a viable option.

The second level, therefore, provided an in-depth analysis of the children's data to compliment the live analysis undertaken by the children. Whilst these findings do not aim to alter the action plan, it provides further detail to the breadth of the children's construction of wellbeing. This suggests there is a need for adults to work with children to support and explore their interpretations of wellbeing further.

6.3 Dimensions and Factors

A distinction can be drawn between the dimensions of wellbeing; the core components of wellbeing to be realised, and the factors which contribute to or facilitate it (Gillet-Swan, 2014). These dimensions denote core theoretical conceptualisations of wellbeing. The children's understanding of wellbeing in terms of dimensions and factors is illustrated in Table 24.

The children most commonly understood wellbeing in relation to the factors contributing to it. Factors, as concrete concepts and experienced in real life, are likely more easily understood by children in comparison to dimensions, which appear more abstract in their nature.

Although the children did identify some core theoretical dimensions such as relationships, positive affect and absence of negative affect, and physiological needs, a further level of interpretation was necessary to identify other dimensions, such as safety and security, social actualisation and social acceptance. The focus on factors was necessary in this research in order to develop an action, may have further contributed to this finding.

With regard to theoretical dimensions of wellbeing, the children's construction of wellbeing incorporated objective, subjective wellbeing including hedonic, eudaimonic and social

elements. The children's understanding in relation to these types of wellbeing are explored further below.

6.3.1 Objective Wellbeing

Objective wellbeing represents our basic human and physiological needs (DoH, 2014).

Children frequently referenced the importance of objective factors, often those that fulfilled their basic needs and good health. Health was viewed by the children as the absence of ill-health (Grubliauskiene & Vaicekauskaite, 2016). The children viewed being unwell negatively, perceiving those who are ill to be incapable, and needing to stay at home, missing school and other activities. This perception is likely compounded by the restrictions associated with coronavirus pandemic at the time of data gathering.

6.3.2 Subjective Wellbeing

Subjective wellbeing is based upon individuals own values, beliefs and needs (Diener, 2009; Sumner, 1996) and encompasses hedonic and eudaimonic types of wellbeing and also social wellbeing.

6.3.2.1 Hedonic Wellbeing

Hedonic wellbeing consists of the presence of positive affect, and absence of negative affect. personal evaluations of life satisfaction (Diener, 1984). Hedonic and eudaimonic behaviours (Steger et al., 2008) were both mentioned in regard to achieving happiness. For example feeling good for helping others or completing a difficult task could be considered eudaimonic behaviours. However, the children's perceptions closely associated with Bradburn's (1969) original model of hedonic wellbeing; the presence of positive and the absence of negative

emotions, as limited explicit reference was made to personal evaluations of life satisfaction. The research did not elicit personal reflections on their own state of wellbeing, although arguably children's importance of eudaimonic wellbeing dimensions suggests children are aware of factors important to life satisfaction.

6.3.2.2 Eudaimonic Wellbeing

Eudaimonic wellbeing focuses life satisfaction and living life to the full (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Factors which contribute to eudaimonic wellbeing were significant in children's wellbeing, suggesting that even at a young age children understand wellbeing as more than feelings of happiness and avoidance of sadness. The children's construction of wellbeing incorporated autonomy, personal growth, competence, and positive relationships.

6.3.2.3 Hedonic and Eudaimonic Wellbeing

Dimensions identified by the children considered both hedonic and eudaimonic included engagement and accomplishment. Engagement links to the notion of flow; "a state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience is so enjoyable that people will continue to do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013, p.4). This would suggest that through engagement and flow, learning opportunities can enhance wellbeing. Providing classrooms that are supportive, founded on respect and fairness, and learning that is challenging, captivating and authentic can facilitate such engagement (Marks, 2000).

Whilst the findings from this research suggest that the children's wellbeing appears to align with many different theoretical dimensions of wellbeing, they particularly align with Self

Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), emphasising the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, and the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness. Children need to be afforded opportunities for these three dimensions to support their motivation and wellbeing in school. These themes also emphasised the benefits of wellbeing upon learning and academic achievement, as internal motivation is found to correlate with academic achievement (Lemos & Veríssimo, 2013).

6.3.2.4 Social Wellbeing

The children's understanding supported a public perspective of wellbeing and aligned with several of Keyes's social wellbeing elements (1998), suggesting that wellbeing is more than just psychological but inclusive of social aspects. The children also placed significant emphasis on the importance of making a difference by helping others associated with social contribution and actualisation (Keyes, 1998). This suggests a motivation to enhance wellbeing through external factors, rather than just personal and internal drivers (Deci & Ryan, 2001). It is questioned whether the faith of the school and children may have influenced this, in addition to the time of this research coinciding with the harvest festival, which centres on giving food to those deemed less fortunate (BBC, n.d.).

6.3.3 Missing Dimensions

Whilst many theoretical dimensions were identified in the children's understanding of wellbeing, several key dimensions were missing; meaning and purpose, and personal evaluations of life satisfaction. Considering meaning and purpose in life requires contemplation of the future, which appears more common in adults than children

(McCormack et al., 2019). This may suggest that children viewed wellbeing as a current concept rather than future one.

Meaning and purpose in life are associated with identity. Erikson (1995) suggests that identity develops through adolescence. This may suggest that these dimensions are less important to primary aged children, who throughout this period are thought to instead develop their sense of competence (Erikson, 1995). The children in this research recognised the importance of competence and achievement in their understanding of wellbeing. Wellbeing therefore needs to be viewed as a concept that develops over time, and thus conceptualisation of wellbeing explored across different age phases.

6.3.4 Conclusion

In summary, children's wellbeing can be associated with many theoretical dimensions of wellbeing, factoring in all theoretical types of wellbeing; objective and subjective; hedonic, eudaimonic and social. McLellan (2019) recognises there is a need for comprehensive models of wellbeing accommodating both hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, in order to develop suitable measures to assess children's wellbeing. I conclude that rather than developing a definition of wellbeing with children, wellbeing should be understood through the dimensions and factors which account for wellbeing. This conceptualisation provides clarity and accommodates for the breadth of wellbeing and supports a deeper understanding of the purpose of wellbeing factors. Arguably, this can enhance support through targeting specific areas of wellbeing.

6.4 Differences to Adults

This analysis supports similar findings to other research in regard to differences between children and adult wellbeing. The children in this research shared many similarities with adult wellbeing, specifically, the importance of positive affect, relationships and personal growth. However, differences included the importance of play in achieving wellbeing which was viewed not only for enjoyment but for connection and emotional regulation. Research suggests that unstructured play can be associated with improving physical activity, mental health and reducing stress, in addition to exploration, expression and developing confidence (Lee et al., 2020). Opportunities to play in school therefore are fundamental to children's wellbeing.

4B "so it was like about so you need of people to play with other like when you're angry and there's nobody to play with. You always just gonna be angry and upset, so when you get into the classroom, you'll just be angry at and people will be asking what's wrong, and it might be their fault and also, because if there's someone plays with you and you're happy you forget about that sad and angry feelings."

The importance of relationships in wellbeing was significant for the children. Relationships were viewed as providing multiple benefits to enhance wellbeing; love and care, safety, trust, enjoyment. Pets and animals were noted as important to wellbeing. These findings support previous research highlighting the imperative role relationships have for children in providing security, and the development of confidence and competence (Fattore et al., 2007; McAuley, 2019).

Children are afforded less privacy and access to their own spaces in comparison to adults. In this research, the children emphasised the importance of safe, quiet relaxing spaces to provide them privacy and time alone. These factors were both considered important for the children's wellbeing.

RI "why is it good to have your own bedroom, why?"

4G "it's because you have your own personal space"

4B "you get privacy"

This difference is related to children's limited ability to control and influence decisions in everyday life in comparison to adults (Fattore et al., 2009). Therefore, it is important that children are both offered such safe space but also opportunities to develop their agency and autonomy.

Table 24

Factors identified by the children which support wellbeing and the theoretical dimensions these factors contribute towards (based on Deci & Ryan, 2000; Diener, 1984; Keyes, 1998; Maslow, 1954; Ryff, 1995; Seligman, 2011)

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Hedonic</u>	<u>Eudaimonic</u>	<u>Hedonic and Eudaimonic</u>	<u>Social</u>
Dimensions	Physiological Safety and security	Positive affect and absence of negative affect	Positive relations Autonomy Personal growth Self-acceptance Environmental mastery and competence	Accomplishment Engagement	Social integration Social acceptance Social actualisation Social contribution
Factors	Food Housing Warmth Clothing Services (NHS, police, fire) Supportive adults Money Exercise Healthy diet	Toys and games Treats and gifts Adventures (holidays, new places and trying new things) Garden Pets Technology Calm spaces and emotional regulation Hobbies Friends Family Recognition (external) Privacy	Learning new things Technology Quiet environment Recognition (internal) Opportunities to be independent, make choices and have a say Friends Family Supportive adults Pets Opportunities to showcase skills	Learning new things Hobbies and fun activities Recognition Quiet spaces	Helping others Respecting others Looking after the environment and animals Friends Family Supportive adults

6.5 Supporting Children's Wellbeing in School

The role of school in supporting wellbeing is much broader than targeting those who require additional support or teaching universal programmes on skills for wellbeing. Wellbeing does not just occur in the classroom but across the whole school (White, 2016), therefore whole-school approaches which include supportive ethos and environment alongside universal and targeted teaching are advocated (McCallum & Price, 2016; PHE & DfE, 2021; Weare & Nind, 2011).

The action plan developed by the children directly linked to the children's core agreed conceptualisation of wellbeing (see Table 25). This provided the school with a number of child-based suggestions to implement which are associated with general school provision and ethos, as opposed to teaching children skills to enhance their wellbeing.

To yield most benefit from a whole-school approach to supporting and maintaining children's wellbeing, it would seem useful for schools to provide universal support towards the core agreed elements of wellbeing constructed by the children; relationships, helping others, physical health and basic needs, emotional regulation, enjoyment and being happy. Schools are well-placed to offer support to accommodate these elements of wellbeing.

Alongside such proactive universal support, this research indicates a need for schools to work with children to develop their own conceptualisation of wellbeing. This is necessary, firstly, to gain this perspective from children, secondly as the children were not familiar with the term initially, and thirdly because of the importance of enhancing wellbeing given its associated benefits.

Furthermore, McCauley (2019) highlighted the influence of interacting socio-economic, religious and cultural factors upon children's priorities for wellbeing, and whilst detailed analysis on how these may have affected conceptualisations of wellbeing in this current research were outside the remit, subjectivity in wellbeing was noted. This emphasises the need to explore children's perceptions of wellbeing, and to develop their understanding, Arguably, participating in the project facilitated elements of the children's constructions of wellbeing, namely independence and being important. Therefore continued involvement of children in discussions around topics that matter to them is imperative.

This research suggests schools therefore have a role to support wellbeing. This support can be delivered on a proactive universal level through provision and ethos embedding in children's understanding of wellbeing and also through a personalised level to facilitate individuals to experience wellbeing. Such approaches can contribute to improved happiness in school, enhance pupil wellbeing, and achieve the associated benefits of positive wellbeing in children (i.e. engagement, academic achievement, Gutman & Vorhaus, 2012). Wellbeing support at the whole school level, founded upon children's understanding enabled the potential for schools to become positive institutions which can lead to "better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p.5).

Table 25

Points from the children's action plan and associated wellbeing categories

Action Plan Points	Associated categories as identified in second level analysis
<p>1. <i>Alone time</i> ★ A calm room or space with pillows, blankets, music and something you can care for. It is important to decide if you would like to be alone or not.</p>	Emotional regulation Places
<p>2. <i>Helping teachers and others</i> ★ Helping classmates with their work and doing things for teachers both when asked and by offering. ★ A daily feelings-check in for class members.</p>	Making a difference for others Emotional regulation
<p>3. <i>Healthy food</i> ★ Reminders to children to eat healthy through newsletters, teachers or school TV adverts. ★ Competitions, dares or checks to encourage children to increase their fruit and vegetable intake.</p>	Physical health
<p>4. <i>Friendship bench</i> ★ A friendship bench on both the playground and field for children to seek friendship if they would like to. The bench should look nice (i.e. flowers) and have a sign to inform children what it is. The bench should have monitors who support those who use the bench and feedback to teachers about those using the bench.</p>	Relationships Making a difference for others
<p>5. <i>Fun stuff</i> ★ A variety of sports and equipment available during playtimes and lunchtimes, and a range of different activities also. ★ A range of different lessons in class, e.g. Art and ICT.</p>	Having fun, enjoyment and being happy

6.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has provided further analysis and interpretation of the children's conceptualisation of wellbeing. Wellbeing was understood as a dynamic, interrelated and subjective concept. Wellbeing has also been distinguished in regard to its dimensions and factors. The children primarily relayed their understanding of wellbeing in regard to factors. In regard to the elements of wellbeing, core elements such as relationships, helping others, physical health and basic needs, emotional regulation, enjoyment and being happy, were

consistently considered important by all the children. Although individual preferences were also prevalent. This research thus demonstrates the complexity of wellbeing as a concept. This research is consistent with findings from previous research into children's wellbeing, which emphasised notable differences to adult conceptualisations as consistent with literature, namely, privacy and personal space, and the importance of play and relationships.

The children were able to develop ideas to support wellbeing, which linked directly to their conceptualisation. Schools are well-placed to support children's wellbeing, with whole-school approaches advocated (McCallum & Price, 2010; PHE & DfE, 2021; Weare & Nind, 2011). In supporting wellbeing, I suggest schools target universal support towards the core elements of wellbeing, whilst also exploring children's individual themes of wellbeing to offer support to more targeted and subjective notions of wellbeing.

Chapter 7: Reflections on the Research Project

This chapter outlines post-hoc reflections from both the children and me in order to answer ***RQ 5: How far do the post-hoc reflections endorse the integrity and instrumental value of the participatory action research process harnessing appreciative inquiry?*** Themes from the data gathered with the children in phase 2 of the research centre on *engagement, participation* and *outcomes* (see Table 26). These are used to structure this chapter, with the most significant themes prioritised for discussion, followed by general researcher reflections on the AI / PAR process.

Appendix 40 details the analytic process for this stage. Exemplar quotes and transcript can be found in Appendices 41 and 42 respectively.

Table 26

Themes and categories identified in phase 2 analysis

Engagement	Participation	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive experience• Enjoyable activities• Barriers to engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunity to participate• Being listened to• Relationships• Missing class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation of plan• Benefits to others• Benefits to self

7.1 Engagement

Overall, children described predominantly positive feelings about research participation (see Figure 19). The children concluded the project was “*just amazing*” (5B), “*enjoyable*” (6B), “*a lovely experience*” (4B) and 5G added that she “*felt really special coming here*”. This suggests AI is a positive and enjoyable process to use with children, as demonstrated by

previous research (Davies & Lewis, 2013; Lewis, 2015). This positivity is deemed necessary AI provided the basis for change (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

Figure 19

Word cloud of children’s description of how they felt about the research project



The children referred to the project as a *positive experience*. The research was described as a safe environment by several children. This is beneficial when discussing personal and sensitive topics such as wellbeing, and it is particularly important when working with children to create an environment which is comfortable (Eder & Fingersen, 2003). Although it was difficult to ascertain what was meant by ‘safe’, and it is questioned whether this theme was subject to social desirability and social influence.

Several parts of the research were explicitly identified by the children as *enjoyable activities*, associated with their fun and creative nature.

5G *“My best bit is definitely making the dream schools...because it was fun and I love art so much. And I also like making a new school coz it helps the school”*

4G *“I like that one [dream school] because erm instead of doing some work we got to do some creative to making the school a better place for all of us.”*

R1 *“When you had to draw the person with good WB and talk about their school?”*

4B *“No I like that”*

4G *“I liked that”*

3B *“I liked it”*

The less directive nature of these tasks proved helpful in exploring complex topic (Barter & Renold, 1999; Burr et al., 2014). The children were able to use their imagination to create new characters through a non-threatening ideal-self task, which is also less reliant on language skills (Burr et al., 2014; Shilvock, 2014). The vignettes elicited in-depth conversation on sensitive topics in regard to wellbeing, i.e. not being fed, arguably as these are less personal than individual experience (Barter & Renold, 1999).

These activities stimulated engagement. The vignette sorting activity and the ideal-self activities particularly yielded much discussion and debate on wellbeing. Therefore, such activities can be considered helpful when discussing complex topics (Burr et al., 2014). Such creative methods facilitated not only engagement and enjoyment but understanding of the complex and multifaceted concept of wellbeing. This highlights that adopting suitably

differentiated methods can enable children to engage in research exploring their wellbeing as opposed to research being done to them.

AI can be criticised for overlooking negative aspects and focusing solely on the positive (Bushe, 2012). These activities however, provided a balanced understanding of wellbeing, by eliciting what wellbeing is and is not. Providing an opportunity for the children to discuss what wellbeing wasn't, elicited deeper understanding of wellbeing. This may have been particularly valuable as children who attend voluntary-aided schools, like East Bridge Primary, are suggested to have better wellbeing (Gutman & Feinstein 2008). Through these tasks in particular, the children were able to reflect on circumstances which may contribute to people having poor wellbeing.

3B "because when he was little boy, little boy ... like Mum, had the baby yeah so that the mum died in a few years later when he's a bit older the dad died."

4G "so the parents probably have to try and get enough money because I think the money is like the monies on low, so they don't have much food because they have so much rent."

I believe these tasks supported an understanding that wellbeing is dynamic and fluid (Dodge et al., 2012), as the children noted ways they could improve wellbeing particularly during the vignette task. This research suggests these activities expanded children's understanding and construction of wellbeing without detracting from the positive nature of AI.

Whilst the children predominantly reflected upon the positive and enjoyable experience of the research, several barriers to engagement were noted. *More activities and less talking* was suggested to improve the research. 6G noted there was “*too much talking so my throat hurts*”. Upon reflection, discussion formed a significant part of the activities, which may have affected engagement. However, language and discussion are pivotal to the AI process (Cooperider et al., 2008) and to developing children’s constructions of wellbeing. Ways to reduce discussion and increase the number of activities, without losing the in-depth understanding of the topic should be considered for future implementation of AI with primary school children.

Further barriers were associated with the group size and associated off-topic talking in the group. During the research process, following consultation with the children, the two smaller focus groups were merged to form a larger group. The children differed on whether the smaller or larger focus groups was preferable. Although the larger group size of 8 is deemed suitable for focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2001), Eder and Fingersen (2003) recommend a smaller focus group size of 3-4 with children to minimise influence of group dynamics. The larger focus group may have meant some children felt less able to contribute, this may have been exacerbated for younger participants who may feel dismissed or intimidated (Field, & Bragg, 2003). Although those who contributed less frequently were afforded opportunities to do so.

Several children described the project as *tiring* and suggested the need for more breaks.

<p>5B “<i>like to wake our bodies up because we’ve been sitting down for loads of time</i>”</p>

My own reflections echoed the children's. I adapted the research and played short games to re-energise and re-engage the children to support engagement. I am, however, aware that time pressures may have affected the number of games and breaks available.

7.2 Participation

The children valued the *opportunity to participate* in the project. They felt their ideas has been listened to and were appreciative of this.

5G "I liked it because, like, we got our ideas and the grown-ups actually listened to our ideas"

It was imperative to the research that the children were afforded agency through bottom-up rather than supported elicitation. Upon reflection, I demonstrated these espoused values through assuming the position of an adult who wants to work with the children to gain their knowledge and insight in their unique experience (Mayall, 2000). This helped to avoid adult-centric perceptions of wellbeing placed on the children during data gathering (Fattore et al., 2009). However, further elicitation, could have elicited a deeper understanding, although this would risk biasing the children's views.

The collaborative nature of AI can result in connections and relationships between participants (Egan & Lancaster, 2005). The children valued both *meeting new people* from other year groups and valued *working with new people as a group*. The mixed year group provided a broader conceptualisation of wellbeing than focusing on one age group. This is pertinent given the differences noted in wellbeing across ages (Dex & Hollingsworth, 2012). Multi-age work with children can provide rich and diverse insight, and benefits children

through enhanced social competence, younger peers learning from older models, and older peers consolidating learning through teaching younger peers (Katz & Chard, 2000). This provides rationale for schools to explore wellbeing with different groups to develop a wider inclusive conceptualisation and support.

Missing class in order to participate in the research was noted, both with positive and negative connotations. The extent to which this negatively affected the children was considered. All children willingly participated and were reminded of their right to withdraw at any time. It is questioned whether these are accurate reflections on the research, or a felt pressure to provide critique of the research in the reflective stage.

Agency, confidence and social skills are viewed as common benefits for children in research (Alderson, 2001; Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Kränzl-Nagl & Zartler, 2009). Children had the opportunity to make choices and speak for themselves, and build new relationships. These relate to the children's understanding of wellbeing and therefore it can be assumed that participation in the research itself contributed towards the children's wellbeing. Therefore, this research provides further rationale for the beneficial nature of PAR with children, particularly to the children themselves.

7.3 Outcomes

AI has transformative potential through making “changes in the identity of a system and qualitative changes in the state of being of that system” (Bushe & Kassam, 2005, p.162).

Whilst this research was not transformative at a system level, due to the small group of child participants, the use of AI can be considered to have been transformative in regard to the

outcomes. The research transformed children's understanding of wellbeing and led to the initial transformation of East Bridge Primary schools' wellbeing provision through the implementation of the children's action plan. AI can therefore be viewed as an effective tool to explore and initiate change on multifaceted concept, such as wellbeing (Seaton, 2021). The children's reflections suggest that not only has the research been transformative in regard to the school provision but also provided several beneficial outcomes for them.

The children reflected positively on the *implementation of their ideas*. Children were keen to share which of their ideas had been implemented in their school noting the *“new equipment, and the calm room, calm books and stuff....[and the] friendly bench”* (5G). 4G noted that using the fun stuff at break had helped to *“make us feel happy when we come back to class”*.

AI can be seen to empower participants (San Martin & Calabrese, 2011; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010), and is central to the PAR (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008; Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Being listened to and the implementation of ideas from AI can be seen to empower the children participants, particularly as they felt proud of both of these.

Change is a process not an event (Fullan, 2016), and PAR and AI are based on a cycle of change (Cooperider et al., 2008; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008). This research, however, ended at the initial implementation stage, leaving the staff to implement actions and continue the cycle. This may have reduced power and subsequent participation from the children, as the children reported they were not involved in further discussions regarding their ideas with staff. This could be attributed to a number of factors, a busy school environment and teaching demands, perceptions of child participation and priority afforded to the project. The research

could have further supported implementation by offering a review stage with the children and steering group to facilitate the continued cycle of AI and PAR. Structured models such as the RADiO model (Timmins et al., 2006, as used by Greenwood, 2013) or the use of the AI and AR model (Egan & Lancaster, 2005), include stepped processes which include evaluation to ensure change is ongoing and cyclical. The use of a specific model alongside AI, may have supported further implementation and evaluation. The inclusion of an additional review stage in this research, could have continued to ensure the children were central to the project. Greater involvement of staff as part of the research may have helped further embed the importance and motivation for child participation in the ongoing implementation following completion of the research. Moreover, in my role of trainee educational psychologist, if I were the school's link EP, this may have continued the cycle through more frequent contact with the school.

Benefits to self resulting from the research included learning new things, feeling proud and recognition. 5G shared the recognition following the implementation of her ideas.

5G *"Because like, once the friendly bench was done, my dad was walking from school and I was like, oh, that was my idea. And he was like, that's good."*

The children shared many examples of feeling proud; proud to have been chosen, of being in the group, of the work, of being listened to, and to share their ideas. Through inclusion in PAR the children had felt proud of their achievements and valued the experience.

Benefits to others included being able to help others and make their school a better place, corresponding to a critical theme in the children's understanding of wellbeing.

4G “Oh, I know something that does come out of the project is helping others because people that usually don't have this stuff, they're lucky because, we have used our ideas to help them and stuff and calm down, or they can have someone to help them.”

Again, the outcomes of the project can be associated to key themes of wellbeing identified in the research identified. (i.e. recognition, helping others, personal growth).

Whole-school approaches are advocated to support children's wellbeing (McCallum & Price, 2010; PHE & DfE, 2021; Weare & Nind, 2011), however, personal reflections questioned the whole-school nature of the action plan resulting from this research. The research aimed to develop a whole-school approach to support wellbeing, and whilst the plan was proactive, salutogenic, and corresponded to several dimensions of wellbeing, the action plan focused solely on enhancing children's wellbeing.

Teacher wellbeing was briefly mentioned but was absent from the final action plan.

Positive and enabling wellbeing strategies in schools for teachers can facilitate their wellbeing and contribute to teacher retention (McCallum & Price, 2010). This is particularly important as teachers' wellbeing can be associated with children's achievement and satisfaction in school (McCallum & Price, 2016). The inclusion of parents and teachers from the AI, as suggested by the wholeness principle of AI (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010) and policy promoting whole-school wellbeing (PHE & DfE, 2021), could have contributed to this.

However, the primary focus of the research was to explore children's wellbeing, which has been achieved. Incorporating adults into the research may have resulted in more adult-centric constructions of wellbeing, and an action plan not truly reflective of children's wellbeing. As

AI is generative, in that it “grows and develops as people use it” (Hammond, 1998, p.41), there is scope for further generations of AI or PAR which could include the consideration of teacher wellbeing and parental involvement. As a time-limited an action research project, this shows potential to develop an approach that is based on children’s voices and extend into a wider holistic approach with incorporates teaching wellbeing, wellbeing ethos and the wider community (McCallum & Price, 2016).

7.4 Instrumental Value

This research has been instrumental in its approach to AI and PAR and meeting the research aims. In summary, through adhering to the 5D cycle of AI and key underpinning principles, the research facilitated children’s understanding of wellbeing and developed an action plan based on their views, to be both transformational in regard to theory and practice (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). The research was collaborative, participatory and emancipatory. Children were afforded agency and their voices facilitated, through a bottom-up approach. However, greater participation could have been realised through enabling the children to define the research project and in regard to their continued involvement in implementing the action plan. Whilst there is limited data to suggest that the research enabled a shift of views on pupil participation (Lewis, 2015), the implementation of many elements of the action plan highlights the value of the children’s ideas.

7.5 Research Integrity

Integrity has been demonstrated in this research through a clearly planned design which placed significant value on the children’s contributions, and reported in an honest and open manner (BPS, 2021a). In regard to trustworthiness, qualitative research is judged by its

credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability, and authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba 1985). These are briefly discussed in regard to this research.

Credibility was shown as the children reported feeling safe in the research, helping them to feel comfortable to share their perceptions of wellbeing, and additionally member-checking was used throughout the research to confirm understanding. Theoretical findings from the research are transferable, in regard to the children's conceptualisation of wellbeing constructed primarily through factors, and of the distinction between subjective and core elements of wellbeing. Practical knowledge was gained in relation to AI as a suitable method to facilitate understanding of wellbeing and initiate organisational change within schools.

Confirmability was highlighted through the bottom-up approach adopted which minimised adult-centric interpretation of children's wellbeing and was supported by researcher reflections. Furthermore, findings from the researcher-led second level analysis were member-checked with participants who confirmed this reflected their construction of wellbeing. These also demonstrate dependability.

Children's authentic views were central to the research and clearly described in Chapter 5, although these were not representative of all views across the school. The research is however considered authentic of all children participants views who were all given opportunity to impart their opinions throughout the research, facilitated through the engaging activities. The research authenticity was further demonstrated through resulting transformations.

7.6 Chapter Conclusion

The reflective phase has demonstrated the instrumental value of completing PAR using a full AI cycle with primary school aged children. The research was positively experienced by the children, who found it engaging and enjoyed benefits associated with participation. Benefits for the children included learning new things, meeting new people, enjoyment, being listened to and feeling proud. These are associated with other research highlighting the benefits of research with children (Alderson, 2001; Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Kränzl-Nagl & Zartler, 2009). Ironically, participating in the research can be seen to support children's wellbeing, as these benefits related to many of the elements in their construction of wellbeing.

The research is considered transformative through East Bridge Primary school's initial implementation of the children's action plan and also beneficial for the children themselves. However, the action plan does not constitute a whole-school plan as aimed for, but shows the potential for future use of PAR and/or AI to continue to develop the school. As action research, it is hoped the school community continue with the cyclical and iterative process (Egan & Lancaster, 2005).

As participation was fundamental to this research, integrity was demonstrated through placing the children's views as meaningful and central to the process of organisational change. This research can be considered transformative in regard to practice and theory (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Through PAR, this research has the potential to enhance practice at East Bridge Primary school and support it to become a positive institution. As a positive institution, this can offer positive experiences to their pupils, in order to enable them to flourish and enhance their wellbeing (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In regard to

theory, the research has developed a conceptualisation of wellbeing based on children's understanding and the use of engaging and participatory method to elicit understanding of wellbeing.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Children's wellbeing in the UK is decreasing, as is their happiness in school (The Children's Society, 2021). Declining child wellbeing requires action to ensure children are "feeling good, being happy, and able to live ... [*their*] life to the full" (Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2005, p.18). However, little is known about children's understanding of wellbeing, particularly for younger children. Combining these concerns, this research aimed to explore children's perceptions of wellbeing and ideas of how to support and maintain their wellbeing in school. Additionally, exploring the use of AI with younger children as a means to make change in school to support this.

In this research, the children were initially unclear about the meaning of the term wellbeing. To support their process of reflection, discussion and development of their individual and shared understanding, they were offered a simple and child-friendly sample definition (as discussed in Ch 5.1), amongst other methods to elicit their understanding of the construct. This definition afforded the children with a prompt to support their understanding and enable them to reflect on their own experiences of wellbeing, albeit with recognition that presentation of this adult-selected definition could have risked biasing the children's views. Relative to the participatory and bottom-up nature of this research, the children constructed their understanding of wellbeing, not in terms of a finite definition, but in regard to the core dimensions and factors that they consider wellbeing comprises of. This is consistent with other research into children's views on wellbeing (i.e. Fattore et al, 2007; Gillett-Swan, 2014; Sixsmith et al., 2007). As a researcher, I did not further pursue the development of a single definition of wellbeing, as to have done so may have risked implicitly criticising the children's suggestions, and the development of a categorical definition of so abstract a

concept may not have been achievable nor indeed a valid goal with this age group (Piaget, 1954).

The children understood wellbeing to be a multi-dimensional, interconnected, and dynamic construct. The individuality in perceptions of wellbeing was evident across the group, however, core themes focused on the significance of relationships, helping others, physical health and basic needs, emotional regulation and having fun, enjoyment and being happy. Children's wellbeing drew many similarities to adult wellbeing, however, differences centred on the importance of relationships in achieving many aspects of wellbeing, emphasis on play, and the need for privacy, spaces and agency. Adult-centric understanding of wellbeing is therefore not sufficient to understand nor measure children's wellbeing. This emphasised the need for continued research to explore children's wellbeing using methods that enable their participation.

Children's views are frequently absent from policy and interventions to support their wellbeing and are often unable to participate in decision-making (UNICEF, 2020). This research showcases children's potential to engage in decisions which are imperative to them. This can be supported through implementing suitable methods to gather such information. Appreciative inquiry facilitated a positive and empowering approach to do this. It enabled the children to progress from their ambiguity in understanding of wellbeing to developing an action plan to support their wellbeing that was implemented within their school. Further research should explore children's role alongside other school staff and parents in developing an approach that encompasses a truly whole-school to wellbeing, to make holistic and long-

lasting change. If implemented across schools, this could contribute to a society with greater wellbeing and reduce the significant implications poor wellbeing can lead to.

Arguably all adults responsible for children's education and care have a duty to listen to and harness the power of children's voices, particularly when it comes to matters of importance to them, such as personal wellbeing. Through empowering their voices, we can utilise their ideas to ensure children are provided with positive experiences, positive institutions and environments which support their wellbeing.

8.1 Original Contribution of this Research

This research has highlighted the potential of using PAR, AI and associated research activities to facilitate children's understanding of wellbeing, in order to initiate organisational change to support children's wellbeing. The research found that children are capable of conceptualising wellbeing, and developing realistic and achievable strategies to support this. Therefore reinforcing the need to explore wellbeing with children rather than accepting adult-centric models, particularly as by doing so children's wellbeing is enhanced.

In regard to children's understanding of wellbeing, this research supports similar findings which suggest key differences between children and adult understanding of wellbeing. This research has interpreted children's construction in relation to factors and dimensions of wellbeing, in order to provide clarity to the complex construct of wellbeing.

8.2 Limitations of the research

Key limitations of this research design and methods are summarised below. Reflections on the limitations in regard to the research process and outcomes are previously discussed in Chapter 7.

8.2.1 Participant Recruitment

Difficulties in recruitment resulted in no younger children (from Year 1 and 2) participating in the research, due to parental concerns of their child being too young to participate or of missing school time. The inclusion of these younger participants would have arguably enabled a broader conceptualisation of wellbeing and contributed to the limited literature on younger children's views of wellbeing. However, data from 1G, the Year 1 child participant, shared many similar key themes with the focus group data.

8.2.2 Participant Sample

The research recruited a small sample of 8 participants. The representativeness of this sample was limited by the participation inclusion and exclusion criteria, and ethical compromises were made as a result of these criteria. The decision to only include children with the age-related language and social skills was deemed necessary given the significance of language in AI, specifically the social interactions fundamental to AI method and to accommodate the complex terminology (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010).

However, this excluded children without the necessary language and social skills, which could be deemed concerning as children with SEND risk greater marginalisation (Abbott, 2010; Hardy & Hobbs, 2017a). Additionally, the equality of access to participation can also be questioned as children were selected rather than the opportunity being offered to all children

at East Bridge Primary. However, it would be valuable for future research to consider ways to include a wider variety of participants, such as through whole-class AI (Lewis, 2015), or through a range of techniques and inclusive strategies to empower these voices.

8.2.3 Participation

Whilst it was a core and aspirational value of the research to be participatory, the extent to which this was realised can be critiqued. Owing to the limits of this Doctoral project, children's views were unable to be embedded throughout all stages of the research design, analysis and implementation (i.e. initiation and write up). Therefore, the children's involvement in this research was as participants, rather than co-researchers, but they retained a significant participatory role. Their views were elicited and consulted through a bottom-up process and afforded involvement in the first level of analysis and action plan development; whilst also demonstrating active involvement in the decision-making. Both of which are deemed core principles of child participation (Coad & Evans, 2008; Lansdown et al., 2014). However, future research could seek to involve children as co-researchers by involving them at all stages of the research process.

As this research was undertaken in a real-world setting, where despite the requirement since 1989 to ascertain and involve children's views in decisions that matter to them (UNCRC, 1989), opportunities for children are often limited in reality (Children's Commissioner, 2020c; Davey, 2010). Within school environments, children are more commonly involved in typically minor decisions such as choices of canteen food or play equipment, and not in regard to more significant decisions such as school budget spending (Davey, 2010). Decisions of these kind remain with the headteacher and governors. It was therefore not expected that

the children would be afforded executive decision-making roles but rather to uphold a core participatory role in a process where they could influence decisions which mattered to them, and lead to change (Treseder, 1997).

8.2.4 Context of School

This research is situated in one case. Notably East Bridge Primary School was a faith voluntary-aided school, and therefore the children may have had higher levels of wellbeing typically associated with these types of schools (Gutman & Feinstein, 2008). Generalisations, therefore, can only be made in regard to phronesis and theory (Robson, 2011; Thomas, 2016; Yin, 2018), which this research has provided.

8.2.5 Children Missing Time from Learning to Participate

The research took place over several days resulting in the children missing several lessons. To address this, staff were asked to support the children to catch up with any necessary work missed and it was requested that this was not taken from the children's recreational time. During the research period, children continued to access their break and lunch times with their classmates, and extra curricular lessons, i.e. music. My daily liaison with teachers when collecting the children for the research sessions facilitated discussion and resulted in flexibility to allow some children to complete an essential task before attending the research session.

8.2.6 Focus Groups

The nature of the focus groups restricted the time which could be spent exploring individual views and ideas in depth (Robson, 2011). Although member-checking was used throughout

the research, deeper and richer understanding of children's wellbeing may have been realised in individual interviews and activities.

8.2.7 Quantitative Methods in Qualitative Research

Although this research adopted a qualitative approach, quantitative methods were incorporated to quantify data. These were utilised to reduce and prioritise the vast amount of ideas developed by the children, firstly, in regard to the themes related to wellbeing and secondly, in priorities for their action plan to support wellbeing. However, combining quantitative methods into qualitative research can cause difficulties relative to their different ontological and epistemological positions (Grix, 2010; Robson, 2011), typically positivism and interpretivism respectively (Kivunja & Kivunji, 2017). The incompatibility thesis suggests that due to these associations with different paradigms, qualitative and quantitative methods are incompatible (Robson, 2011). To address the incompatibility thesis, alternatives such as qualitative analysis and member checking to identify key themes or priorities from the data gathered, could have been utilised rather than quantitative methods. However, this was not possible in the time constraints within this research.

Therefore to manage, quantification was used to reduce and prioritise the qualitative data gathered in a participatory manner to utilise this in further stages of the research and to achieve the research aims. Bryman (2016) suggests that quantitative methods can be incorporated into qualitative research, and similar approaches have been used in AI projects (Cooperrider et al., 2008), as an acceptable way to provide further opportunities for all the children participants to express their views and provided greater accuracy (Bryman, 2016).

However, future research could consider ways to minimise combining these methods to increase adherence to qualitative approaches.

8.3 Implications for Future Research

Limitations of this research have revealed implications for future research. Firstly, given the difficulties in recruiting younger children in this research, future research could explore the perceptions of wellbeing for younger children to identify any further age-related differences. As noted, a wider and more inclusive sample size could be used in future research to address the associated limitations. These broader participant groups may result in a different understanding of wellbeing and ways in which to address this. Furthermore, as the conceptualisation of wellbeing can change over age ranges, it would be beneficial to explore the changing nature of wellbeing through longitudinal studies to identify which factors remain stable or differ and the reasons why.

The research did not develop a fully whole school action plan, as the voices of parents, teachers and other staff were not included as part of the research. Future research using an inclusive range of stakeholders may yield broader ideas for support, such as in the wider community. There is also scope to broaden child participation using AI to explore wellbeing at a wider whole class, whole year or whole school level. This research would provide further understanding of the conceptualisation of wellbeing within different groups of children, and also could contribute to the limited literature in the use of AI within primary school settings. There is further scope to broaden the role of children within the research, to give them a greater role within the implementation and future PAR cycles.

Whilst East Bridge Primary school has begun implementing the action plan, there is no means of evaluating the effectiveness of this plan upon children's wellbeing. Future studies could include outcome measures in order to evaluate more systematically the implications of the action plan. Given the significant barriers to implementing whole school approaches to wellbeing (White, 2016), evaluating effectiveness is important as contributions to the evidence-base could lead to greater access to wellbeing support through encouraging future systemic change to supportive wellbeing in schools. Working collaboratively with children and other stakeholders to design such evaluative studies would ensure meaningful and relevant research questions are explored and outcomes measures. Given EP's core skills in research (SEED, 2002) and close links with schools, they would be an ideal profession to continue to progress this area of research.

8.4 Implications for Educational Psychology Practice

This research has highlighted a number of potential benefits to EP practice. Firstly, in regard to understanding children's wellbeing, and secondly, relating to AI and whole school practices.

Firstly, this research has suggested the children's understanding comprised of core elements of wellbeing, but also subjective drivers. There is a role for EPs in working collaboratively with schools to plan and evaluate their universal provision towards these core elements of wellbeing (i.e. relationships, helping others, physical health and basic needs, emotional regulation, enjoyment and being happy), but also in supporting appropriate use of methods to explore individual differences in wellbeing. The mapping of children's understanding of

wellbeing via dimensions and factors, could provide a useful planning tool for wellbeing in schools.

At a targeted individual level, EPs could use the children's understanding of wellbeing to explore whether wellbeing support is meeting the needs of individual cases, and to explore this further with children, to identify exactly what underpins their wellbeing. This information can be used to target intervention and support that are specific and person-centred, alongside a whole-school approach that facilitates wellbeing.

Secondly, AI has been demonstrated a valuable tool to use with children to initiate action in schools, so could be applied within schools to facilitate organisational change in regard to other topics, such as curriculum development or inclusive practice.

Given this research did not accommodate a fully inclusive whole school approach, such organisational change projects may benefit from the transformative and generativity of AI through employing a whole staff, whole class or whole school approach in such change.

Adopting AI at a whole school level, could facilitate further AI cycles to explore and enhance other topic areas, illuminating the truly transformative nature of AI. Additionally, this would extend the benefits of participation for pupils, staff and school and also has the potential to challenge traditional views of child participation to more inclusive values (Lewis, 2015).

Finally, the positivity demonstrated within the AI process in the research suggests the philosophical underpinnings of AI could be applied into EP practice, not only in regard to organisational work but also in daily casework and conversations. Stavros and Torres (2018)

suggest that having appreciative conversations can be efficient, engaging and generative. These can support act to challenge deficit narratives by focusing on what strengths and possibilities are available to make change, adopting a positive psychology approach.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Initial letter inviting interest in the research

Tuesday 29th June 2021

Dear Headteacher,

I am writing to you to invite you and your school to take part in a research project which aims to develop a whole-school approach to wellbeing based upon children's views.

I am currently studying for an Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate at the University of Birmingham and am on placement with the Aldershire Educational Psychology Service, which is why I am contacting your school. As part of my Doctorate, I am required to complete a substantive research project and my area of focus is on children's wellbeing. This has stemmed from an interest in positive psychology and positive education.

Positive psychology focuses on what makes life worth living through studying positive experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. It aims to understand these three areas to enable individuals, communities and societies to flourish and thrive. Positive education is simply an approach that encompasses teaching skills for academic achievement and for wellbeing and happiness.

Despite a wealth of literature on wellbeing, recent literatures searches have highlighted limited research exploring children's views on their own wellbeing. Furthermore, these searches found limited research exploring whole-school approaches to supporting pupil wellbeing in the UK, particularly those that include children's voice. Therefore, my research aims to explore children's perceptions of wellbeing and their views of how to support their wellbeing across their school, in order to develop a whole-school approach to wellbeing.

In order to meet these aims, the research will employ an Appreciative Inquiry methodology. Appreciative Inquiry focuses on the positives and on what is currently working well, in order to achieve positive change. This methodology will be used with children to collaboratively explore their understanding of wellbeing, discover key times when they felt like their wellbeing was supported in school, and use these to create a dream vision to support wellbeing in their school. Finally, the pupils will create a realistic plan for supporting wellbeing across the whole-school which would be shared with and implemented by a steering group made up of staff members within your school. It is hoped that the implementation of the developed action plan would enable you to support your pupil's wellbeing.

It is proposed that the research would take place in one school during the Autumn term 2021 and would involve two nominated pupils from each year group, from year 1 to year 6.

A checklist is detailed below to help you consider whether participating in the research would be suitable for your school. Following consideration of the checklist, if you are interested in taking part in this research, please contact me to arrange a meeting to discuss this further and answer any questions. The checklist does not need to be returned to myself but will be discussed as part of this meeting.

In the event of interest from more than one school, I will, in order of receipt of responses, arrange a meeting with the headteacher at their earliest convenience to discuss the research proposal in greater detail, to address any queries and discuss the criteria as described in the checklist below. This meeting will conclude with a decision as to whether both the headteacher and myself agree or disagree that the research would be viable at their setting and commit for the research to proceed. If agreement is made for the research to proceed, other interested headteachers would be contacted at this time, to advise that subject to final agreement, a suitable focus school has been identified, and invite the headteachers to signal their wish for contact to be made should this focus school unexpectedly withdraw prior to the start of the Autumn Term 2021. If it is decided not to proceed with the research, I will contact the school next in order of receipt of responses.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or queries about my research.

I look forward to hearing from you soon, should you be interested in taking part in the research.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Checklist to participate

Is/does your school...?

- a) a mainstream primary school
- b) teach Year groups 1 to 6
- c) graded 'good' or 'outstanding' in your most recent OFSTED inspection
- d) have an in interest in developing pupil well-being
- e) willing to implement a whole school approach to well-being
- f) willing to create a steering group to support a whole school approach to well-being
- g) willing to gather and respond to children's views

Appendix 2: Headteacher information sheet (1)

Thursday 15th July 2021

Dear Headteacher,

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. Please find below further details regarding the project.

What is the project about?

The research project is, firstly, about exploring children's understanding of wellbeing, and secondly, about developing an action plan to support pupil wellbeing across the whole-school. This plan will be based on children's views and experiences of their own wellbeing.

Who is completing the research?

The research will be led by me and supported by my university supervisor, Sue Morris.

What is the time scale of the research?

It is proposed that the research will take place during the Autumn term in 2021. In total, it is estimated that research participation will span 5-6 days.

Who are the participants?

The participants will be 12 children: two from Year groups 1 to 6 who will form two focus groups. A further group of participants will be 2-5 members of staff and/or governors (perhaps including yourself), who will form a steering group to support implementation of the plan.

What will participants be asked to do?

Throughout the research, children will be asked to engage in drawing, talking and working collaboratively with each other. They will be asked what wellbeing means to them, about times when they have felt that they had a good sense of wellbeing and use this to develop action plans to support pupil wellbeing across their school. The children participants will be asked to share their plans with the steering group participants. The steering group will be asked to attend this final stage of the research and work collaboratively with the children to plan the initial and feasible steps to implement their action plans.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to:

- liaise with myself to arrange a suitable dates, times and spaces to present the research to staff/governors, parents/carers and children
- facilitate time for teaching staff to select two suitable pupils from their class to participate in the research
- give an information sheet and consent form, which I will draft, to the parents/carers of the selected pupils
- give an information sheet and consent form, which I will draft, to the selected pupils
- identify 2-5 members of staff/governors to form a steering group to support implementation of the action plan
- give an information sheet and consent form, which I will draft, to the selected members of staff/governors for the steering group
- provide a suitable space for the research to take place within your school
- allow the steering group to implement feasible initial steps from the children's action plan created through the research

Are there any risks associated with this research?

There are no substantive risks foreseen within the research. However, participants will be debriefed after each part of the research and given an opportunity to speak with myself or a designated member of staff.

What about consent?

Children participants and their parent/carer will be given an information sheet and consent form to read and sign, as will steering group participants and yourself. Without consent, participants will not be able to take part in the research.

What happens to the data?

All research activities will be recorded using an audio recorder and notes will be taken. The children's ideas and feedback will be scribed. Excerpts from these may be included in the write-up of the research. Any paper-based documents used in the research such as drawings, or written notes will be kept by the researcher. All data will be stored in password protected files on the University of Birmingham systems for the required 10 years. After this the data will be destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and I may share the data with my university supervisor, Sue.

Are the data confidential?

The data are confidential. No names or any other identifiable information will be included in the data, these will be replaced by pseudonyms. Contextual information about your school such as the number of pupils on roll, OFSTED rating and extracts from relevant policies will be included in the write-up of the research. Background information on the child participants (i.e. year group/age, gender, disability status, and ethnicity) and steering group participants (i.e. role) will also be included within the write up for contextual information. (The DfE classification of demographic information will be used, which, as you know, includes a 'prefer to not to say' response option). Confidentiality will be waived if a participant makes a disclosure which indicates a safeguarding concern. In such a case, I will follow the school's safeguarding policy and local authority safeguarding procedures.

What if I don't want this school take part?

You are under no obligation to agree for this research to take place in your school. If you do have any questions or queries about hosting the research, then do please ask.

What if participants change their mind?

If at any time a participant (or a child's participants parent/carer) decides that they no longer want to be part of the project, they can leave at any time with no consequence or need to explain why. If they do change their mind, then they can tell me in the session, tell their teacher or parent/carer who can then tell me. However, as we are working in small groups together, I won't be able to remove their data gathered in the research, but they will not have to return to any more of the project, unless they choose to.

What happens with the findings?

The findings will be written up as part of my thesis for my Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate. This will be available online and may be published at a later date. Once the report has been written up, a summary report will be sent to yourself and the participants. You will also be offered a copy of the full write up of the research report. The final write-up will also be shared with Aldershire Educational Psychology Service and findings may be discussed with other schools who expressed an interest in participating in the research.

What if I have a question or concern about the research?

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please feel free to contact myself on the details below.

What happens next?

If you are happy for this project to be completed within your school, then please complete and return the attached consent form on or by the date we arrange to meet during this summer.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 3: Headteacher consent form (1)

I would be grateful if you could carefully read each of the following statements and highlight your response, either Yes or No. If you are unsure about any of detail in the statements, please feel free to contact me.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study, and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	Yes	No
I agree for this research project to take part at the school of which I am the Headteacher of.	Yes	No
I understand that the focus groups will be audio recorded and excerpts may be used in the report.	Yes	No
I understand how the data collected in this study will be used and who will have access to it.	Yes	No
I understand the data collected in this project will be stored electronically on the University of Birmingham's secure network for 10 years, and that identifiable information will be replaced with pseudonyms.	Yes	No
I understand that the information gathered in the project will be written up as part of a doctoral thesis, and that I will receive a summary report upon completion of the research.	Yes	No
I know who to contact, should I have any questions or concerns about the research.	Yes	No

Name	
Signed:	
Date:	

Please return to your completed form to me, Suzanne Aynsworth, on or by the date we arrange to meet during this summer via the contact details below.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.
Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 4: Pre-research staff information sheet (1)

Friday 30th July 2021

Dear staff member,

I am writing to you to inform you about a research project that I will be completing at your school in the Autumn term 2021, as part of my studies towards an Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate. Further information on the research project is below and I will explain this in further detail in a brief introductory session on 8th September.

What is the project about?

The research project is, firstly, about exploring children's understanding of wellbeing, and secondly, about developing an action plan to support pupil wellbeing across the whole-school. This plan will be based on children's views and experiences of their own wellbeing.

Who is completing the research?

The research will be led by myself and supported by my university supervisor, Sue Morris.

What is the time scale of the research?

It is proposed that the research will take place during the Autumn term in 2021. In total, it is estimated that research participation will span 5-6 days.

Who are the participants?

The participants will be 12 children: two from Year groups 1 to 6 who will form two focus groups. A further group of participants will be 2-5 members of staff and/or governors who will form a steering group to support implementation of the plan.

What will participants be asked to do?

Throughout the research, children will be asked to engage in drawing, talking and working collaboratively with each other. They will be asked what wellbeing means to them, about times when they have felt that they had a good sense of wellbeing and use this to develop action plans to support pupil wellbeing across their school. The children participants will be asked to share their plans with the steering group participants. The steering group will be asked to attend this final stage of the research and work collaboratively with the children to plan the initial and feasible steps to implement their action plans.

What if I am interested in joining the steering group?

If you are interested in joining the steering group, please let your headteacher know.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to select 2 pupils from your class to take part.

They need to have:

- age-appropriate or above language and communication skills
- attended your school for at least 1 year
- skills to work collaboratively with other peers

They shouldn't have:

- ✗ below age-expected language and communication levels
- ✗ attended your school for less than 1 year
- ✗ difficulties working collaboratively with other peers

You don't need to do this yet; I will explain more about this in my introductory session and the next steps to take.

Are there any risks associated with this research?

There are no substantive risks foreseen within the research. However, participants will be debriefed after each part of the research and given an opportunity to speak with myself or a designated member of staff.

What about consent?

Children participants and their parent/carer will be given an information sheet and consent form to read and sign, as will steering group participants. Without consent, participants will not be able to take part in the research.

What happens to the data?

All research activities will be recorded using an audio recorder and notes will be taken. The children's ideas and feedback will be scribed. Excerpts from these may be included in the write-up of the research. Any paper-based documents used in the research such as drawings, or written notes will be kept by the researcher. All data will be stored in password protected files on the University of Birmingham systems for the required 10 years. After this the data will be destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and I may share the data with my university supervisor, Sue.

Are the data confidential?

The data are confidential. No names or any other identifiable information will be included in the data, these will be replaced by pseudonyms. Contextual information about your school such as the number of pupils on roll, OFSTED rating and extracts from relevant policies will be included in the write-up of the research. Background information on the child participants (i.e. year group/age, gender, disability status, and ethnicity) and steering group participants (i.e. role) will also be included within the write up for contextual information. (The DfE classification of demographic information will be used, which, includes a 'prefer to not to say' response option). Confidentiality will be waived if a participant makes a disclosure which indicates a safeguarding concern. In such a case, I will follow the school's safeguarding policy and local authority safeguarding procedures.

What if participants change their mind?

If at any time a participant (or a child's participants parent/carer) decides that they no longer want to be part of the project, they can leave at any time with no consequence or need to explain why. If they do change their mind, then they can tell me in the session, tell their teacher or parent/carer who can then tell me. However, as we are working in small groups together, I won't be able to remove their data gathered in the research, but they will not have to return to any more of the project, unless they choose to.

What happens with the findings?

The findings will be written up as part of my thesis for my Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate. This will be available online and may be published at a later date. Once the report has been written up, a summary report will be sent to your school and the participants. Your school will also be offered a copy of the full write up of the research report. The final write-up will also be shared with Aldershire Educational Psychology Service and findings may be discussed with other schools who expressed an interest in participating in the research.

What if I have a question or concern about the research?

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please feel free to contact myself on the details below.

Look forward to seeing you in September.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 5: Slides for staff introductory session

A case study using Appreciative Inquiry with children to develop a whole-school approach to wellbeing in a primary school

Staff

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Overview of the session

- The purpose of the research
- The rationale for the research
- The methods to be used in the research
- Ethical considerations
- Next steps
- Questions

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of the research is:

- To explore children's understanding of wellbeing
- To explore children's views and ideas about how their wellbeing can be supported in their school.
- To support the design and initial implementation of the pupil's views and ideas to supporting wellbeing across their whole-school.

What is positive education?

The diagram illustrates the concept of positive education as the sum of academic achievement and wellbeing and happiness. It features three green circles: 'Academic achievement' on the left, 'Wellbeing and happiness' in the middle, and 'Positive Education' on the right. A blue plus sign is between the first two circles, and a blue equals sign is between the second and third circles.

What is wellbeing?

- Dictionary definition - "the condition of being contented, healthy, or successful" (Collins Dictionary, n.d.)

<p>Subjective wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life satisfaction • frequent happiness / positive emotions • infrequent unhappiness / negative emotions 	<p>Objective wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food • income • housing physical health • education • safety and security • relationships and social networks
--	--

- No "one set meaning" (Mind, n.d.)

How might we support wellbeing?

"A secure school environment, without bullying or conflict, and a supportive family that spends time together are the foundations of good child wellbeing" (Public Health England, 2013)

Why do we want to support wellbeing?

- wellbeing:
 - positively impacts pupil engagement and attainment (Gutman & Vorhaus, 2012)
 - influences mental and physical health, and life expectancy (DoH, 2014)
- But in the UK:
 - children's general level of subjective, self-rated happiness and wellbeing are decreasing (The Children's Society, 2020)
 - children's subjective wellbeing is poorer than in other European countries (OECD, 2018; The Children's Society, 2020)

Why whole-school?

Whole-school approaches to wellbeing:

- can increase student wellbeing, morale, confidence, motivation and connectedness (Bernard & Walton, 2011)
- can enhance the school climate (Sawyer et al, 2010)
- are recommended by NICE (PHE & CYPMHC, 2015)

Why child voice?

- "Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life." (UNCRC, 1989)
- Benefits wider systems:
 - enhanced educative practice
 - improved citizenship and society (Lundy, 2007).
- Benefits children:
 - increased self-esteem
 - cognitive skills
 - social skills (Kidrad-Nagel & Zartler, 2009)

What is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)?

Appreciate: Valuing the best of

Inquire: Exploring and discovering possibilities

Appreciative Inquiry

- An approach that engages people to make effective and positive change
- Focuses on the positives, rather than the problems
- Explores our best experiences to learn from them and create more of them



The Research Project

The study

1. Define
 - Children will be asked what wellbeing means to them
 - Children will be asked to engage in a range of activities to explore this as a group:
 - Drawing a person with good wellbeing and a person with poor wellbeing
 - Sorting vignettes

The Research Project

2. Discover
 Let's try this out....
 Think about a time in your teaching career, that stands out as a real high point. Why was it such a good time? Share your experience with the person next to you.
 They will be asked to share their experience with the group.
 Anyone willing to share in the group?

The Research Project

3. Dream
 Let's try this one.
 You've been asleep for 5 years and now its 2026. As you look around, you see the world as you always wished and dreamed it would be. What is happening? How is the world different?
 You are asked to imagine what the world looks like if you were a child in 2026.

The Research Project

4. Design
 Children work together to turn their dream into a reality through an action plan

The Research Project

5. Destiny
 Children determine the first steps for their action plan
 Children present this to a group of teachers who will help put the plan into practice
 Children and teachers work together to make the plan feasible

Ethical Considerations

Further details on your information sheet

Ethical Considerations

Benefits

Children

- feel empowered and valued within their school
- potential improvements in collaborative and social skills

School

- An action plan to improve wellbeing across the school, which could produce positive change
- Emphasise the importance of child voice
- Encourage use of AI

Knowledge

- Greater understanding of children's perceptions of wellbeing and how they suggest to support this at [school name].

Risks

Potential Risk

- minimal risks only
- power imbalance
- possible upset

Measures to overcome these

- research is conducted in a familiar setting, with peers.
- Participants are free to withdraw from the research at any time.
- Debriefing at the end of each session
 - opportunity to speak with the researcher or a designated member of staff.
- End with a positive reflection

Next Steps

1. Select 2 pupils from your class to take part

They need to have:	They shouldn't have:
✓ age-appropriate or above language and communication skills	✗ below age-expected language and communication levels
✓ attended your school for at least 1 year	✗ Attended your school for less than 1 year
✓ skills to work collaboratively with other peers	✗ difficulties working collaboratively with other peers

Send an information sheet and consent home to parents/carers and invite them to attend the parent/carer meeting about the research on [date].
It may be helpful to have a couple of reserve children in mind.


Next Steps

2. Steering group

If you are interested in forming part of the steering group, let [headteacher] know.

You will need to read the information sheet and complete a consent form by [date].

Next Steps

• Any questions? 

Contact details:	Research Supervisor:
Researcher:	Sue Morris
Suzanne Aynsworth	Honorary Senior Lecturer
Trainee Educational Psychologist	Telephone number
Telephone number	Email address
Email address	

Appendix 6: Parent information sheet (1)

22nd September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am a trainee educational psychologist currently undertaking my supervised practice placement within Aldershire Educational Psychology Service, whilst studying at the University of Birmingham for a doctorate in Applied Educational and Child Psychology (to enable me to attain my professional qualification as an educational psychologist). As part of my training, I am required to complete a substantive research project and my area of focus is on primary school children's wellbeing. I am writing to you to invite your child to participate.

What is the project about?

The research project is, firstly, about exploring children's understanding of wellbeing, and secondly, about developing an action plan to support pupil wellbeing across their whole-school. This plan will be based on children's views and experiences of their own wellbeing.

Who is completing the research?

The research will be led by myself and supported by my university supervisor, Sue Morris.

Why has my child been selected?

Your child has been identified as someone able to make a positive contribution to this research by their teacher, as they have good language and communication skills, the skills to work collaboratively with other peers and because they have attended East Bridge Primary School for at least 1 year.

What is the time scale of the research?

It is expected that the research will take place on 4th – 13th October 2021. In total, it is estimated that the research will take no longer than 8-10 hours across 2-3 days. Arrangements will be made to help all the children who take part in the research to catch up with whatever classwork they miss at pace which does not put them under any additional pressure.

What will my child be asked to do?

The research will involve with 12 children forming two groups of 6. One group will be made up of pupils from years 1, 2 and 3. The other group will be made up on pupils from years 4, 5, and 6. Your child will be asked to engage in drawing, talking and working collaboratively with their group. They will be asked what wellbeing means to them, about times when they have felt that they had a good sense of wellbeing in school and build upon this to develop an action plan to support pupil wellbeing across their school. The children will then be asked to share their plans with a staff steering group, so they can collectively plan the initial and feasible steps to implement their action plans.

Are there any risks to the research?

There are no substantive risks foreseen within the research. However, after the research your child will have the opportunity to speak with myself or a designated member of staff. To maintain confidentiality, your child will be asked not to share things that have been said within the research activities with other children, but will be reminded that they are able to talk to you and/or a teacher if they are worried about anything.

What about consent?

I will seek consent from yourself and your child through separate consent forms which need to be signed and returned. Without consent, your child will not be able to take part in the research.

What happens to the data?

All research activities will be recorded using an audio-recorder and notes will be taken. The children's ideas and feedback will be scribed. Any paper-based documents used in the research such as drawings, or written notes will be kept by me, in my role as researcher. For all university research, there is a requirement that all data will be stored in password-protected files on secure University of Birmingham systems for 10 years. After this, the data will be destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and I may share the data with my university supervisor.

Is the data confidential?

The data is confidential. No names or any other identifiable information will be included in the data, these will be replaced by pseudonyms. Any excerpts included in the write up will be attributed to pseudonyms. Contextual information about East Bridge Primary School such as the number of pupils on role, size of school, OFSTED rating and extracts from relevant policies will be included with the write up of the research. Your child's year group, age, gender, ethnicity, and disability status will also be included within the write-up for contextual information. (The DfE classification of demographic information will be used, which include a 'prefer to not to say' response option which can be used, should you or your child so wish). As with all things in school, confidentiality would need to be waived if a child makes a disclosure which indicated a safeguarding concern. I will follow East Bridge Primary safeguarding policy and local authority safeguarding procedures.

What if I don't want my child to take part?

You are under no obligation to agree for your child to take part in this research. If you do have any questions or queries about the research, then please ask.

What if my child changes their mind?

If at any time yourself or your child decide that they no longer want to be part of the project, they can leave the project at any time with no consequence or need to explain why. If they do change their mind, then they can tell me in the session or tell their teacher or you, who can then tell me. As we are working in small groups together, I won't be able to remove their data once the research has started; however, if they ask to discontinue, they will not have to return to any more of the project, unless they choose to.

What happens with the findings?

The findings will be written up as part of my doctoral thesis. From late in 2022 / early in 2023, the thesis will be accessible online; the research may be published in a professional journal at a later date. Once the report has been written up, a summary report will be sent to yourself and all participants. The final write-up will also be shared with Aldershire Educational Psychology Service and findings may be discussed with other schools who expressed an interest in participating in the research.

What if I have a question or concern about the research?

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please feel free to contact myself on the details below.

What happens next?

I hope you can see the value that your child can add to this research! Do please take time to consider whether you are willing for your child to take part in this research, subject to their own agreement. If you agree that your child can take part, please complete and return the attached consent form by **12pm on Monday 27th September 2021**. Once I have received your consent, I will meet with your child and the others selected to participate on Monday 27th September to explain the study to them and ask them to read an information sheet and complete a consent form.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 7: Parent consent form (1)

I would be grateful if you could carefully read each of the following statements and tick your response, either Yes or No. If you are unsure about any of detail in the statements, please feel free to contact me.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study, and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	Yes	No
I understand that my child's participation in this research is voluntary.	Yes	No
I agree for my child to take part in this research.	Yes	No
I agree for my child to be audio recorded as part of this research.		
I understand how the data collected in this study will be used and who will have access to it.	Yes	No
I understand the data collected in this project will be stored electronically on the University of Birmingham's secure network for 10 years.	Yes	No
I understand that my child's views will be kept confidential, and that any identifiable information will be replaced with pseudonyms.	Yes	No
I understand that the information gathered in the project will be written up as part of a doctoral thesis, and that I will receive a summary report upon completion of the research.	Yes	No
I know my child is free to withdraw from the research at any time without consequence, but that their data cannot be removed because of the group method used.		
I know who to contact, should my child or I wish to withdraw them from the research.	Yes	No
I know who to contact, should I have any questions or concerns about the research.	Yes	No

Your Name:	
Name of your child:	
Signed:	
Date:	

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
 Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 8: Slides for parent introductory session

A case study using Appreciative Inquiry with children to develop a whole-school approach to wellbeing in a primary school

**Parent/
carers**

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Overview of the session

- The purpose of the research
- The rationale for the research
- The methods to be used in the research
- Ethical considerations
- Next steps
- Questions

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of the research is:

- To explore children's understanding of wellbeing
- To explore children's views and ideas about how their wellbeing can be supported in their school.
- To support the design and initial implementation of the pupil's views and ideas to supporting wellbeing across their whole-school.

Why has been my child been selected?

- They have been identified as having:
 - good language and communication skills
 - the skills to work collaboratively with other peers
 - attended East Bridge Primary for at least 1 year

What is positive education?

Academic achievement + Wellbeing and happiness = Positive Education

What is wellbeing?

- Dictionary definition - "the condition of being contented, healthy, or successful" (Collins Dictionary, n.d.)

<p>Subjective wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • life satisfaction • frequent happiness / positive emotions • infrequent unhappiness / negative emotions 	<p>Objective wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food • income • housing physical health • education • safety and security • relationships and social networks
--	--

- No "one set meaning" (Mind, n.d.)

How might we support wellbeing?

"A secure school environment, without bullying or conflict, and a supportive family that spends time together are the foundations of good child wellbeing" (Public Health England, 2013)

Why do we want to support wellbeing?

- wellbeing:
 - positively impacts pupil engagement and attainment (Gutman & Vorhaus, 2012)
 - influences mental and physical health, and life expectancy (DoH, 2014)
- But in the UK:
 - children's general level of subjective, self-rated happiness and wellbeing are decreasing (The Children's Society, 2020)
 - children's subjective wellbeing is poorer than in other European countries (OECD, 2018; The Children's Society, 2020)

Why whole-school?

Whole-school approaches to wellbeing:

- can increase student wellbeing, morale, confidence, motivation and connectedness (Bernard & Walton, 2011)
- can enhance the school climate (Sawyer et al, 2010)
- are recommended by NICE (PHE & CYPMMC, 2015)

Why child voice?

- "Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life." (UNCRC, 1989)
- Benefits wider systems:
 - enhanced educative practice
 - improved citizenship and society (Lundy, 2007).
- Benefits children:
 - increased self-esteem
 - cognitive skills
 - social skills (Könd-Nagl & Zartec, 2009)

What is Appreciative Inquiry (AI)?

Appreciate: Valuing the best of

Inquire: Exploring and discovering possibilities

Appreciative Inquiry

- An approach that engages people to make effective and positive change
- Focuses on the positives, rather than the problems
- Explores our best experiences to learn from them and create more of them

What is AI?

The 5-D model of AI

1. Define
2. Discover
3. Dream
4. Design
5. Destiny

The Research Project

1. Define

- Children will be asked what wellbeing means to them
- Children will be asked to engage in a range of activities to explore this as a group:
 - Drawing a person with good wellbeing and a person with poor wellbeing
 - Sorting vignettes

The Research Project

2. Discover

Let's try this out....
 Think about a time with your family that stands out as a real high point. Why was it such a good time? Sense Share your experience with the person next to you. They will be asked to share their own with the group.

The Research Project

3. Dream

Let's try this one...asked to imagine you've been asleep for 5 years and now its 2026. As you look around, you see the world as you always wished and dreamed it would be? What is happening? How is the world different?

The Research Project

4. Design

- Children work together to turn their dream into a reality through an action plan

The Research Project

5. Destiny

- Children determine the first steps for their action plan
- Children present this to a group of teachers who will help put the plan into practice
- Children and teachers work together to make the plan feasible

Ethical Considerations

Consent, Confidentiality, Data, Right to withdraw, Benefits and Risks

Further details on your information sheet

Ethical Considerations

Benefits

Children

- feel empowered and valued within their school
- potential improvements in collaborative and social skills

School

- An action plan to improve wellbeing across the school, which could produce positive change
- Emphasise the importance of child voice
- Encourage use of AI

Knowledge

- Greater understanding of children's perceptions of wellbeing and how they suggest to support this at [school name].

Benefits and Risks

Risks

Potential Risk

- minimal risks only
- power imbalance
- possible upset


Measures to overcome these

- research is conducted in a familiar setting, with peers.
- Participants are free to withdraw from the research at any time.
- Debriefing at the end of each session
 - opportunity to speak with the researcher or a designated member of staff.
- End with a positive reflection

Next Steps

1. Carefully read your information sheet.
2. If you're happy for your child to participate, complete the consent form and send it back to me by [DATE].

Next Steps

- Any questions? 

Contact details:

Researcher:
 Suzanne Aynworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist
 Telephone number
 Email address

Research Supervisor:
 Sue Morris
 Honorary Senior Lecturer
 Telephone number
 Email address

Appendix 9: Child Information sheet (1)

Monday 27th September 2021



I'm Suzanne. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. That means that I work with children, teachers and parents/carers to make school even better.



Why am I writing to you?

I'm doing a project at your school and your teacher thinks you would be a great person to join the project, so am I writing to you to invite you to take part.



What is this project about?

This project is about children's wellbeing. I'd like to work together with you to:

- see what you think about wellbeing;
- create some ideas and plans to make wellbeing better in your school; and
- share these plans with your school.



What will I be asked to do?

If you say 'yes' to taking part in the project, you will join 11 other children. In groups of 6, you will be asked to do some drawing, some talking and some creative work which you can share with others. You will work in pairs and groups to:

- draw and talk about what wellbeing is and means to you
- talk about a time when you felt like you had good wellbeing
- work together to make a plan to make wellbeing even better in your school.

We will share this plan with your school.

There are no right or wrong answers; I'm interested in what you think.

All the research will happen at your school and will happen over a few days. It should take no more than 8-10 hours. The work we do will be recorded using a Dictaphone. This means it only records voices. You don't have to take part in activities or answer questions if you don't want to. It is important that you don't share things that were said during our work together with children or others who were not part of the group. However, it would be OK for you to speak to your parents and/or a teacher if you are worried about anything. Also, after each time we finish working together, you can talk to me or your teachers.



Ok, but what happens to all the information?

All the information from our work together will be saved in a safe space and will be destroyed after 10 years. Only I will listen to the audio recording. Only I will have access to the data, but I may share the data with Sue. (Sue is my teacher at the university).

All the information will be written up into a report, but what you say will be confidential. That means that although people will know what has been said they

won't know who said what, because I will not include your name or the name of your school. I will use made-up names instead. In the report, I will include information about your school like how big it is and how many pupils are taught here. I will also include information about your year group, age, whether you are a girl or a boy, your ethnicity and whether you have any additional needs.

The only time I will share what you have said, is if I thought you or someone else was at harm. I'd need to tell someone about this, to try and get some help.

This report will be shared with your school, the Educational Psychology service I work at and possibly to other schools who might think this project is a good idea. The report will be available online too. I will write to you afterwards to tell you what we found out.



Do I have to be in the project? What if I don't want to?

You do not have to take part if you don't want to and you do not need to explain why you don't want to take part! If you are unsure whether you want to take part, you can ask me for more information.



What happens next?

If you would like to take part in this project, then you need to complete a consent form. I have already checked with your parents/carers and they are happy for you to take part.



What if I change my mind?

If at any time you think that you don't want to be part of the project anymore, you can leave the project. You just need to tell me when we are working together or tell your parents/carers, or teacher who can then tell me. You don't need to tell me why and there will be no problem with you leaving.

Because we are working in small groups together, I won't be able to remove what you have said but you will not have to come to any more of the project, unless you choose to.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.
If you have any questions, please ask me.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist



Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address











Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 10: Child consent form (1)

Name:	
Year:	

Please read the statements below and circle your answer: Yes or No.
If you need help, please ask.

 I have read the information sheet, or it has been read to me.	Yes	No
 I would like to take part in the research.	Yes	No
 I understand what I will be asked to do in this research.	Yes	No
 I understand that I am being audio recorded in this research.	Yes	No
 I know that my views will be shared but nobody will know that I said it.	Yes	No
 I know that the data collected will be stored safely and destroyed after 10 years.	Yes	No
 I know that this will be written up as a report.	Yes	No
 I know that I do not have to take part in this research.	Yes	No
 I know I can leave at any time but what I have said can't be removed.	Yes	No
 I know who to speak to if I want to leave.	Yes	No

Signed:	
Date:	

Thank you for completing this form.

Thanks,
Suzanne

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

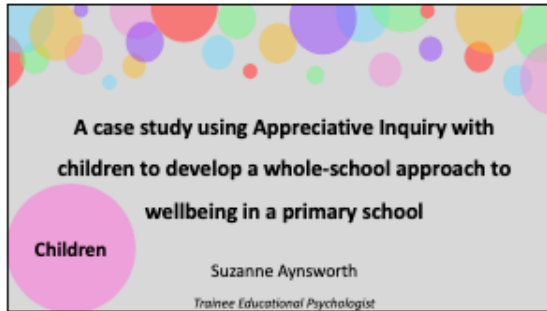


Appendix 11: Slides for child introductory session

A case study using Appreciative Inquiry with children to develop a whole-school approach to wellbeing in a primary school


Children

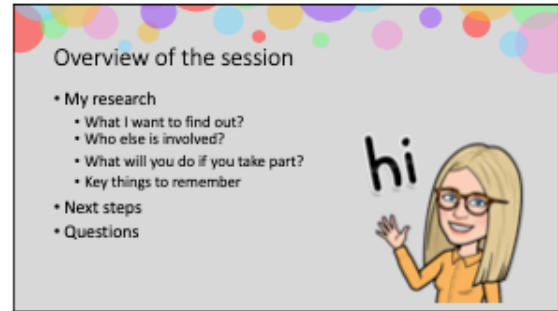
Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist



Overview of the session

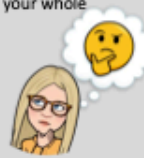
- My research
 - What I want to find out?
 - Who else is involved?
 - What will you do if you take part?
 - Key things to remember
- Next steps
- Questions

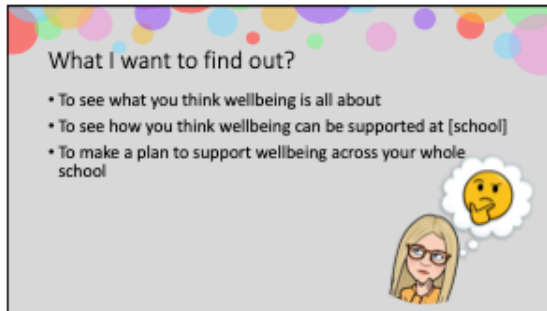
hi 



What I want to find out?


- To see what you think wellbeing is all about
- To see how you think wellbeing can be supported at [school]
- To make a plan to support wellbeing across your whole school

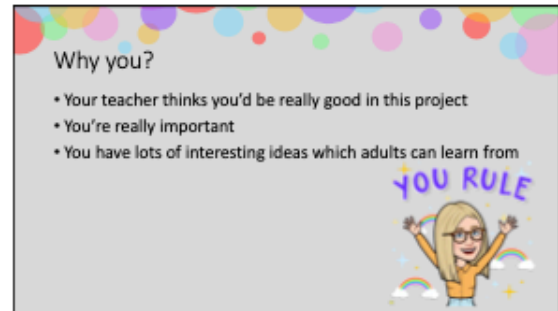




Why you?


- Your teacher thinks you'd be really good in this project
- You're really important
- You have lots of interesting ideas which adults can learn from

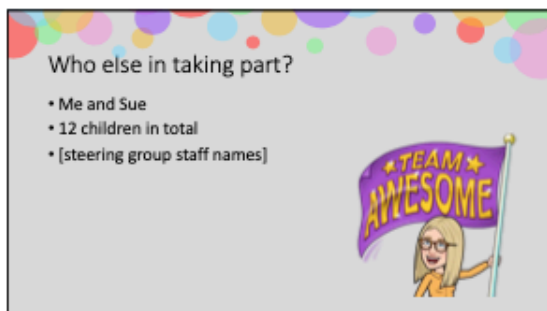
YOU RULE 



Who else in taking part?



- Me and Sue
- 12 children in total
- [steering group staff names]

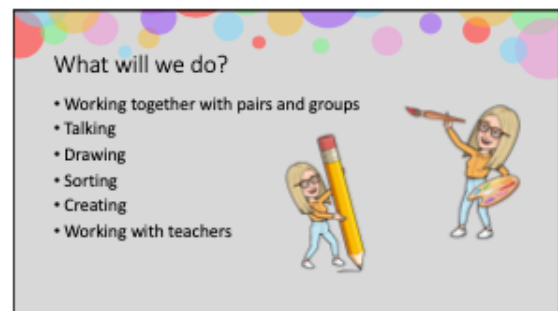
TEAM AWESOME 

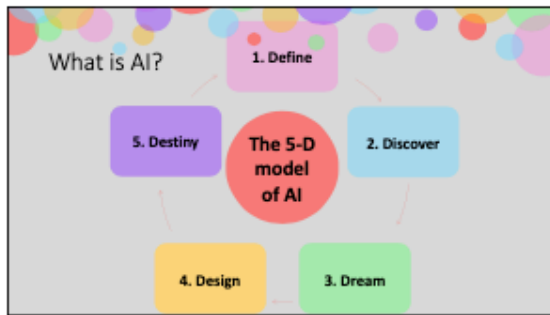


What will we do?

- Working together with pairs and groups
- Talking
- Drawing
- Sorting
- Creating
- Working with teachers





The Research Project

The 5-D model of AI is represented by a central red circle labeled "The study". Five colored boxes are arranged around it, connected by dashed lines: 1. Define (pink, top), 2. Discover (light blue, right), 3. Dream (light green, bottom right), 4. Design (yellow, bottom left), and 5. Destiny (purple, left).

1. Define

- What does wellbeing means to you?
- Drawing, sorting and talking

The Research Project

The 5-D model of AI is represented by a central red circle labeled "The study". Five colored boxes are arranged around it, connected by dashed lines: 1. Define (pink, top), 2. Discover (light blue, right), 3. Dream (light green, bottom right), 4. Design (yellow, bottom left), and 5. Destiny (purple, left).

2. Discover

- In pairs, you will think of a time when you felt like you had a particularly good sense of wellbeing.
- You will be asked to share your stories with the group

The Research Project

The 5-D model of AI is represented by a central red circle labeled "The study". Five colored boxes are arranged around it, connected by dashed lines: 1. Define (pink, top), 2. Discover (light blue, right), 3. Dream (light green, bottom right), 4. Design (yellow, bottom left), and 5. Destiny (purple, left).

3. Dream

- You will be asked to imagine what your school would look like if it was the best at supporting your wellbeing
- You will create presentations with a partner to showcase their dream

The Research Project

The 5-D model of AI is represented by a central red circle labeled "The study". Five colored boxes are arranged around it, connected by dashed lines: 1. Define (pink, top), 2. Discover (light blue, right), 3. Dream (light green, bottom right), 4. Design (yellow, bottom left), and 5. Destiny (purple, left).

4. Design

- You work together to turn their dream into a reality through making an action plan

The Research Project

The 5-D model of AI is represented by a central red circle labeled "The study". Five colored boxes are arranged around it, connected by dashed lines: 1. Define (pink, top), 2. Discover (light blue, right), 3. Dream (light green, bottom right), 4. Design (yellow, bottom left), and 5. Destiny (purple, left).

5. Destiny

- You will plan the first steps of your action plan
- You will present this to a group of teachers
- Work with your teachers together to make the plan happen


Key things to remember

- You do not have to take part if you don't want to.
- Anything you say will be confidential. I won't say you said it.
- You can chat to me or [staff name] after the research.
- You can leave at any time.
- I will write up what we found and I will write to you to let you know too.


Further details on your information sheet

Next Steps

- Carefully read your information sheet.
- If you're happy to take part in the study, complete the consent form and send it back to me by [DATE].



ANY QUESTIONS?



Appendix 12: Staff steering group information sheet (1)

13th September 2021

Dear staff member,

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. Please find below further details regarding my research project.

What is the project about?

The research project is, firstly, about exploring children's understanding of wellbeing, and secondly, about developing an action plan to support pupil wellbeing across your whole-school. This plan will be based on children's views and experiences of their own wellbeing.

Who is completing the research?

The research will be led by myself and supported by my university supervisor, Sue Morris.

What is the time scale of the research?

The research will take place during 4th – 13th October 2021. In total, it is estimated that the research will take no longer than 4-6 days.

Who are the participants?

There will be 12 children participants: 2 from each Year group (Year 1 - 6) who will form 2 focus groups. You are being asked to participate in a steering group of 2-5 members of staff or governors to support implementation of the plan.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to form a steering group with other staff members. As part of this group, you will be asked to attend this final stage of the research, where the children share their plans to support wellbeing at your school. You will be asked to work collaboratively with the children to plan the initial and feasible steps to implement their action plans.

Are there any risks to the research?

There are no substantive risks foreseen within the research. However, participants will be debriefed after each part of the research and given an opportunity to speak with myself or a designated member of staff.

What about consent?

You will need to read and sign a consent form. Without consent, you will not be able to take part in the research.

What happens to the data?

All research activities will be recorded using an audio recorder and notes will be taken. Any paper-based documents used in the research such as drawings, or written notes will be kept by the researcher. All data will be stored in password protected files on the University of Birmingham systems for the required 10 years. After this the data will be destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and I may share the data with my university supervisor.

Is the data confidential?

The data is will confidential. No names or any other identifiable information will be included in the data, these will be replaced by pseudonyms. Contextual information about your school such as the number of pupils on role, size of school, OFSTED rating and extracts from relevant policies will be included with the write up of the research. Your job role will also be included within the write up for contextual information. Confidentiality will be waived if a participant makes a disclosure which

indicated a safeguarding concern. I will follow your school's safeguarding policy and local authority safeguarding procedures.

What if I don't want to take part?

You are under no obligation to take part in the research. If you do have any questions or queries about the research, then please ask.

What if I change their mind?

If at any time you decide that you no longer want to be part of the project, you can leave at any time with no consequence or need to explain why. If you no longer want to participate you can tell me in the session or via my contact details below. However, as we are working in groups together, I won't be able to remove your data which has been gathered as part of the research.

What happens with the findings?

The findings will be written up as part of my doctoral thesis. From late in 2022 / early in 2023, the thesis will be accessible online; the research may be published in a professional journal at a later date. Once the report has been written up, a summary report will be sent to yourself and all participants. The final write-up will also be shared with Aldershire Educational Psychology Service and findings may be discussed with other schools who expressed an interest in participating in the research.

What if I have a question or concern about the research?

If you have any questions or concerns about the project, please feel free to contact myself on the details below.

What happens next?

Please take some time to consider whether you would be willing to take part in the research. If you are happy to take part, then please complete and return the attached consent form by Monday 27th September 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 13: Staff steering group consent form (1)

I would be grateful if you could carefully read each of the following statements and tick your response, either Yes or No. If you are unsure about any of detail in the statements, please feel free to contact me.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study, and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	Yes	No
I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary.	Yes	No
I agree to take part in this research.	Yes	No
I agree to be audio recorded as part of this research.	Yes	No
I understand how the data collected in this study will be used and who will have access to it.	Yes	No
I understand the data collected in this project will be stored electronically on the University of Birmingham's secure network for 10 years.	Yes	No
I understand that my views will be kept confidential, and that any identifiable information will be replaced with pseudonyms.	Yes	No
I understand that the information gathered in the project will be written up as part of a doctoral thesis, and that I will receive a summary report upon completion of the research.	Yes	No
I know I am free to withdraw from the research at any time without consequence, but that my data cannot be removed because of the group method used.	Yes	No
I know who to contact, should I wish to withdraw from the research.	Yes	No
I know who to contact, should I have any questions or concerns about the research.	Yes	No

Name:	
Role:	
Signed:	
Date:	

Please return the form by Monday 27th September either via the below email address, or hand into the office at school.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
 Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number

Email address

Email address

Appendix 14: Headteacher information sheet (2)

31st January 2022

Dear Headteacher,

I am writing to you again regarding a follow-up activity for the wellbeing research project I completed at your school in October 2021. Thanks to the contributions and hard work of the children, yourself and your staff, the project appears to have been beneficial. I would now like to undertake a follow-up activity. As the children are at the heart of this research, I would like to gain their views on participating in the project.

What will the children be asked to do?

This activity will involve the same 8 children (year 3-6) as the previous research. In a group, the children will be asked to engage in a discussion. They will be asked about their thoughts on the project, what they liked and what could be improved. Alike last time, this activity will be recorded using a Dictaphone and included in the write-up as part of my doctoral thesis.

When is this taking place?

It is expected that the research will take place over one afternoon, Friday 18th March 2022. The activity will be led by myself, and supported by my university supervisor, Sue Morris.

What about consent?

Again, like last time, I will seek verbal consent from yourself, and renewed written consent from parents and the children (via separate consent forms). You are under no obligation to agree for this additional research activity to take place.

This research activity will follow the same guidelines in regard to potential risk, data storage, confidentiality, and right to leave as in the research project (*see Appendix 1*).

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to:

- give information sheet (2) and consent form (2), which I will draft, to the parents/carers of the 8 pupils who took part in the research
- liaise with myself to arrange a date for me to visit your school and meet with the children to explain the additional activity and gain their renewed consent
- provide a suitable space for the research to take place within your school

What happens next?

If you agree that the additional research activity can take part at your school, please confirm with me by **Thursday 3rd February**. Once I have received your oral consent, I will send the consent forms to you to be distributed to parents. Once parental consent is received, I will meet with the children to explain this additional activity to them prior to Friday 18th March 2022. I will read the information sheet to them and ask them to complete a consent form, if they agree to participate.

If you have any questions or concerns about this additional part of the research project, please feel free to contact myself on the details below.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
 Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 1: Details regarding risks, data storage, confidentiality, write up and withdrawal from the research adapted from the initial information sheet to reflect this activity

Are there any risks to the research?	There are no substantive risks foreseen within the research. However, participants will be debriefed after each part of the research and given an opportunity to speak with myself or a designated member of staff. To maintain confidentiality, the children will be asked not to share things that have been said within the research activities with other children but will be reminded that they are able to talk to their parents and/or a teacher if they are worried about anything.
What happens to the data?	All research activities will be recorded using an audio-recorder and notes will be taken. The children's ideas and feedback will be scribed. Excerpts from these may be included in the write-up of the research. Any paper-based documents used in the research such as drawings, or written notes will be kept by me, in my role as researcher. For all university research, there is a requirement that all data will be stored in password-protected files on secure University of Birmingham systems for 10 years. After this, the data will be destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and I may share the data with my university supervisor.
Is the data confidential?	The data are confidential. No names or any other identifiable information will be included in the data, these will be replaced by pseudonyms. Contextual information about your school such as the number of pupils on roll, OFSTED rating and extracts from relevant policies will be included in the write-up of the research. Background information on the child participants (i.e. year group/age, gender, disability status, and ethnicity) and steering group participants (i.e. role) will also be included within the write up for contextual information. Confidentiality will be waived if a participant makes a disclosure which indicates a safeguarding concern. In such a case, I will follow the school's safeguarding policy and local authority safeguarding procedures.
What happens with the findings?	The findings will be written up as part of my thesis for my Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate. This will be available online and may be published at a later date. You will also be offered a copy of the full write up of the research report. The final write-up will also be shared with Aldershire Educational Psychology Service and findings may be discussed with other schools who expressed an interest in participating in the research.
What if participants change their mind?	If at any time a participant (or a child's participants parent/carer) decides that they no longer want to be part of the project, they can leave at any time with no consequence or need to explain why. If they do change their mind, then they can tell me in the session, tell their teacher or parent/carer who can then tell me. However, as we are working in small groups together, I won't be able to remove their data gathered in the research, but they will not have to return to any more of the project, unless they choose to.

Appendix 15: Parent information sheet (2)

1st February 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you again regarding a follow-up activity for the wellbeing research project I completed with your child in October 2021. As summarised in the feedback report previously sent to you, thanks to the contributions and hard work of your child the project appears to have been beneficial. I would now like to invite your child to take part in a follow-up activity. As the children are at the heart of this research, I would like to gain their views on participating in the project.

What will my child be asked to do?

This activity will involve the same 8 children (year 3-6) as the previous research. In a group with the other children, your child will be asked to engage in a discussion. They will be asked about their thoughts on the project, what they liked and what could be improved. Alike last time, this activity will be recorded using a Dictaphone and included in the write-up as part of my doctoral thesis.

When is this taking place?

It is expected that the research will take place over one afternoon, Friday 18th March 2022. The activity will be led by myself, and supported by my university supervisor, Sue Morris. As this research is running on a Friday afternoon, unfortunately, your child will miss the achievement assembly.

What about consent?

Similar to last time, I will seek renewed consent from yourself and your child via separate consent forms which need to be signed and returned. Without renewed consent, your child will not be able to take part in the research. You are under no obligation to agree for your child to take part in this additional research activity.

This research activity will follow the same guidelines in regard to potential risk, data storage, confidentiality, and right to leave as in the research project (*see Appendix 1*).

What happens next?

If you agree that your child can take part, please complete and return the attached consent form by **Friday 4th March 2022**. Once I have received your consent, I will meet with your child and the other children on Monday 14th March 2022 to explain this additional activity to them prior to Friday 18th March 2022. I will read the information sheet to them and ask them to complete a consent form, if they agree to participate.

If you have any questions or concerns about this additional part of the research project, please feel free to contact myself on the details below.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:**Researcher:**

Suzanne Aynsworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
 Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 1: Details regarding risks, data storage, confidentiality, write up and withdrawal from the research adapted from the initial information sheet to reflect this activity

Are there any risks to the research?	There are no substantive risks foreseen within the research. However, after the research your child will have the opportunity to speak with myself or a designated member of staff. To maintain confidentiality, your child will be asked not to share things that have been said within the research activities with other children but will be reminded that they are able to talk to you and/or a teacher if they are worried about anything.
What happens to the data?	All research activities will be recorded using an audio-recorder and notes will be taken. The children's ideas and feedback will be scribed. Any paper-based documents used in the research such as drawings, or written notes will be kept by me, in my role as researcher. For all university research, there is a requirement that all data will be stored in password-protected files on secure University of Birmingham systems for 10 years. After this, the data will be destroyed. Only I will have access to the data, and I may share the data with my university supervisor.
Is the data confidential?	The data is confidential. No names or any other identifiable information will be included in the data, these will be replaced by pseudonyms. Any excerpts included in the write up will be attributed to pseudonyms. Contextual information about East Bridge Primary school such as the number of pupils on role, size of school, OFSTED rating and extracts from relevant policies will be included with the write up of the research. Your child's year group, age, gender, ethnicity, and disability status will also be included within the write-up for contextual information. As with all things in school, confidentiality would need to be waived if a child makes a disclosure which indicated a safeguarding concern. I will follow East Bridge Primary safeguarding policy and local authority safeguarding procedures.
What happens with the findings?	The findings will be written up as part of my doctoral thesis. From late in 2022 / early in 2023, the thesis will be accessible online; the research may be published in a professional journal at a later date. The final write-up will also be shared with Aldershire Educational Psychology Service and findings may be discussed with other schools who expressed an interest in participating in the research.
What if my child changes their mind?	If at any time yourself or your child decide that they no longer want to be part of the project, they can leave the project at any time with no consequence or need to explain why. If they do change their mind, then they can tell me in the session or tell their teacher or you, who can then tell me. As we are working in a small group together, I won't be able to remove their data once the research has started; however, if they ask to discontinue, they are free to leave the activity.

Appendix 16: Parent consent form (2)

I would be grateful if you could carefully read the following statement and tick your response, either Yes or No. The previous consent protocols are detailed in Appendix 1. If you would like any additional information regarding consent, please feel free to contact me.

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet (2) for the additional activity as part of the above research project. This renewed consent is given in addition to previous consent given as outlined in Appendix 1.	Yes	No
---	-----	----

Your Name:	
Name of your child:	
Signed:	
Date:	

Please return the form to me by **Friday 4th March 2022** via the below email address, or hand into the office at school.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
 Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
 Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 1: Details of previous consent given

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study, and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions.
I understand that my child's participation in this research is voluntary.
I agree for my child to take part in this research.
I agree for my child to be audio recorded as part of this research.
I understand how the data collected in this study will be used and who will have access to it.
I understand the data collected in this project will be stored electronically on the University of Birmingham's secure network for 10 years.
I understand that my child's views will be kept confidential, and that any identifiable information will be replaced with pseudonyms.
I understand that the information gathered in the project will be written up as part of a doctoral thesis, and that I will receive a summary report upon completion of the research.
I know my child is free to withdraw from the research at any time without consequence, but that their data cannot be removed because of the group method used.
I know who to contact, should my child or I wish to withdraw them from the research.
I know who to contact, should I have any questions or concerns about the research.

Appendix 17: Child information sheet (2)

Monday 14th March 2022



It's Suzanne again, the trainee educational psychologist. Remember when we worked together in October to talk about wellbeing and make a plan to help your school to be the best at supporting wellbeing? Well, I'd like to invite to take part in one last activity, to conclude this project.

What will I be asked to do?

If you say 'yes' to taking part in this extra activity, you will join the other 7 children like last time. I will be there and so will Sue, my teacher at the university. You will be asked to do some talking about what you thought about the project. This will happen at your school in one afternoon.

Like last time:

- There are no right or wrong answers; I'm interested in what you think.
- You don't have to take part in activities or answer questions if you don't want to.
- It is important that you don't share things that were said during our work together with children or others who were not part of the group. However, it would be OK for you to speak to your parents and/or a teacher if you are worried about anything. Also, when we have finished working together, you can talk to me, or designated school staff.
- The work we do will be recorded using a Dictaphone.
- The data is stored safely for 10 years and written up into a report. Information will be kept confidential. I won't write your name or school but instead use made-up names.
- The only time I will share what you have said, is if I thought you or someone else was at harm. I'd need to tell someone about this, to try and get some help.
- You do not have to take part if you don't want to, and you do not need to explain why.
- You can leave the activity at any time if you don't want to join in, and you don't need to tell me why. You just need to let me, your parents/carers, or your teacher know. If you choose to leave, remember that because we are working in a group together, I won't be able to remove what you have said.

What happens next?

If you would like to take part in this activity, then you need to complete a new consent form and give this to me. I have already checked with your parents/carers and they are happy for you to take part.

Thank you and please ask if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist



Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer




Telephone number
Email address

Telephone number
Email address

Appendix 18: Child consent form (2)

Name:	
Year:	

Like last time, please read the statements below and circle your answer: Yes or No.
If you need help, please ask.

 I have read the information sheet (2), or it has been read to me.	Yes	No
 I would like to take part in this additional research activity.	Yes	No
 I understand what I will be asked to do in this additional research activity.	Yes	No

Signed:	
Date:	

Thank you for completing this form.

Thanks,
Suzanne

Contact details:

Researcher:

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Telephone number
Email address

Research Supervisor:

Sue Morris
Honorary Senior Lecturer
Telephone number
Email address



Appendix 19: Staff research feedback report

15th November 2021

Dear staff,

I am writing to you to feedback the findings of this research project which took place in your school in October 2021. The research explored children's understanding of wellbeing and developed an initial action plan based on the children's ideas to support wellbeing across their whole-school.

What happened in the research?

A group of 8 children from year 3, 4, 5, and 6 worked together in small groups with myself and Sue, my university supervisor, on the below activities. Additional views on wellbeing were gathered from a year 1 pupil separately on a one-to-one basis. This research emphasised the importance of children's voices and used an appreciative inquiry approach to use their voices to support positive change in their school. This approach appreciates: values the best of what already is happening and inquires: explores and discovers possibilities.

The research activities included:

1. Exploring what wellbeing meant to the children through creating characters who had good and not so good wellbeing, and ranking vignettes based on wellbeing.
2. Exploring a time when children felt like they had good wellbeing in school through interviewing each other and asking questions about this time.
3. Dreaming the possibilities of a school that was the best at supporting wellbeing using arts and crafts.
4. Designing an action plan to turn their dream school into reality by writing a sentence or paragraph which explains what their dream school would look like if it were real.
5. Working with staff members to share their understanding of wellbeing, ideas, and action plan to collaboratively make feasible steps to implement this into their school.

What did the research find?

What do the children think wellbeing is:

There was great variation between the children's individual priorities for wellbeing. Overall, the children identified family as a key priority for wellbeing, and also trusted adults, being grateful for what we have, being healthy and having friends. Below is a list of additional factors they discussed.

- Being respected by others
- Being kind to, sharing with and helping others
- Being happy and enjoying, doing fun things and having hobbies
- Looking after animals and the environment
- Having our own space and time alone
- Having the things we need
- Having a job and enough money
- Managing difficulties
- Being successful
- Trying hard
- Learning new things
- Being able to make choices and share your views

- Knowing we are all equal and not about being the best

What the children believe are important for wellbeing in their school:

- Having fun and feeling good
- Helping and caring for others
- Looking after the environment
- Friendships
- Time alone
- Being relaxed and calm
- Being healthy: healthy food and exercise
- Learning new skills
- Being able to concentrate on activities and having quiet time in classrooms

The children's top 5 points from their action plan to support wellbeing in their school:

1. Having time alone – The children agreed it would be important to have a calm space. The room would include pillows, music, blankets, and something to care for, such as a pet, teddy, toy or friend. They also thought it was important to be able to decide if you wanted to be alone or have some company. They suggested fundraising to fund this space.
2. Helping teachers and helping others – The children thought it would be good to help other peers in their class and offer to help teachers. As well as helping other peers in their class with work, the children agreed a daily feelings check-in with their classmates as well as feelings monitors at breaktimes would be helpful for their wellbeing.
3. Healthy food – The children recognised that their school already has healthy options at lunchtime but thought it would be good to remind children to eat healthy food, through reminders from teachers, newsletters or a school TV channel. Another suggestion was to hold competitions to encourage greater fruit and vegetables in their diets, through daring you to try new and exotic fruits and vegetables, and baking vegetable-based cakes!
4. Friendship bench – The children thought a friendship bench on the field and playground would be helpful for children who do not have anyone to play with at playtime. Friendship monitors would help these children and let the teachers know if a child has been to the bench. The children felt it was important to make sure the friendship bench looked nice and had a clear sign.
5. Fun stuff – The children considered fun stuff to be important to their wellbeing, specifically at lunchtimes and during lessons. They suggested that a range of different sports, different equipment and different activities, such as drawing and colouring, should be available during playtimes and lunchtimes. The children also recommended more fun stuff in lessons, such as art and ICT.

Other ideas included quiet time in the lunchroom and classroom, and recycling initiatives to look after the environment.

When the children met with the staff members, we discussed the following:

1. Having time alone – A calm space was considered an important idea, but it was agreed that staff need to consider how this can be implemented in the future.

2. Helping others – We discussed the use of worry boxes and mood monsters already available in the school. We talked about how we could use the mood monsters to indicate to our teachers how we are feeling. The school council are already looking into the use of worry boxes.
3. Healthy food – We considered starting a tuck shop at break times to allow children to choose what they would like to eat. This could also include special offers or items of the week to introduce new and exciting fruit and vegetables. We thought it would be helpful to carry out a school survey to find out what foods to sell in the tuck shop.
4. Friendship bench – The friendship bench was considered a good idea which could be implemented once the school has the resources needed. We discussed the importance of informing all the children about the friendship bench in assemblies and through posters.
5. Fun stuff – We agreed to have more equipment outside during lunchtimes and different sports such as table tennis, and also a colouring table outside. We also discussed how we could have more art in class where children draw independently, rather than being told what to do by an adult.

We also talked about having calming music in class and at lunchtimes. Additionally, we discussed about pupil recognition, and also teacher recognition and happiness, but decided these could be explored further in the future.

What has happened since the research took place?

Since the research has taken place, I understand there have already been some positive changes at East Bridge Primary School to support wellbeing.

1. Music is being played in the dining rooms during lunchtimes and different activities have been introduced during lunchtimes such as a chalk, colouring and reading area.
2. The friendship bench is underway.
3. Plans are being made to find a calm and nurturing space in school.
4. “I want to talk” boxes are being introduced into the classroom.
5. Staff are considering creating wellbeing champion roles for the pupils involved in the research.

What happens next?

It is hoped your school will continue to review the wellbeing action plan developed in the research and continue to utilise the children’s views and superb ideas in this area!

The final write-up of this research project will be available online from late 2022/early 2023. I would be happy to send you a copy.

Please feel free to contact myself if you require any further information on the research project, and once again thank you for agreeing for the research to take place in your school.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

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Appendix 20: Parent research feedback report

15th November 2021

Dear parent/carer,

I am writing to you to feedback the findings of this research project which your child took place in at school in October 2021. The research explored children's understanding of wellbeing and developed an initial action plan based on their ideas to support wellbeing across their whole-school.

What happened in the research?

A group of 8 children from year 3, 4, 5, and 6 worked together in small groups with myself and Sue, my university supervisor, on the below activities. Additional views on wellbeing were gathered from a year 1 pupil separately on a one-to-one basis. This research emphasised the importance of children's voices and used an appreciative inquiry approach to use their voices to support positive change in their school.

The research activities included:

1. Exploring what wellbeing meant to the children through creating characters who had good and not so good wellbeing, and ranking vignettes based on wellbeing.
2. Exploring a time when children felt like they had good wellbeing in school through interviewing each other and asking questions about this time.
3. Dreaming the possibilities of a school that was the best at supporting wellbeing using arts and crafts.
4. Designing an action plan to turn their dream school into reality by writing a sentence or paragraph which explains what their dream school would look like if it were real.
5. Working with staff members to share their understanding of wellbeing, ideas, and action plan to collaboratively make feasible steps to implement this into their school.

What did the research find?

What do the children think wellbeing is:

There was great variation between the children's individual priorities for wellbeing. Overall, the children identified family as a key priority for wellbeing, and also trusted adults, being grateful for what we have, being healthy and having friends. Below is a list of additional factors they discussed.

- Being respected by others
- Being kind to, sharing with and helping others
- Being happy and enjoying, doing fun things and having hobbies
- Looking after animals and the environment
- Having our own space and time alone
- Having the things we need
- Having a job and enough money
- Managing difficulties
- Being successful
- Trying hard
- Learning new things
- Being able to make choices and share your views
- Knowing we are all equal and not about being the best

What the children believe are important for wellbeing in their school:

- Having fun and feeling good
- Helping and caring for others
- Looking after the environment
- Friendships
- Time alone
- Being relaxed and calm
- Being healthy: healthy food and exercise
- Learning new skills
- Being able to concentrate on activities and having quiet time in classrooms

The children's top 5 points from their action plan to support wellbeing in their school:

1. Having time alone and a calm space with something to care for.
2. Helping teachers and helping others, and having feelings check-ins with your classmates.
3. Having (even more) healthy food, telling children about healthy foods and having competitions which dare you to try exotic fruits and vegetables, or bake vegetable cakes!
4. A friendship bench on the playground with friendship monitors to help children who have no one to play with.
5. Having (more) fun stuff including having different sports, equipment and activities at lunchtimes and more art and ICT in lessons.

Other ideas included quiet time in the lunchroom and classroom, and recycling initiatives to look after the environment.

What has happened since the research took place?

Since the research has taken place, I understand there have already been some positive changes at East Bridge Primary school to support wellbeing.

1. Music is being played in the dining rooms during lunchtimes and different activities have been introduced during lunchtimes such as a chalk, colouring and reading area.
2. The friendship bench is underway.
3. Plans are being made to find a calm and nurturing space in school.
4. "I want to talk" boxes are being introduced into the classroom.
5. The school are considering creating wellbeing champion roles for the pupils involved in the research.

What happens next?

It is hoped East Bridge Primary school will continue to review the wellbeing action plan developed in the research and continue to utilise the children's views and superb ideas in this area! Please feel free to contact myself if you require any further information on the research project, and once again thank you for agreeing for your child to take place in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth

Trainee Educational Psychologist

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Honorary Senior Lecturer

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Appendix 21: Child research feedback report

15th November 2021

Hi wellbeing wonders!



Do you remember in October 2021 when we worked together to talk about wellbeing and how we could support wellbeing at East Bridge Primary School? I hope you do because you came up with some amazing ideas! I'm writing to you to tell you about all the great things that you helped to come up with!

What you thought wellbeing was:

You all had different ideas about wellbeing, but you thought the most important things for wellbeing were:



You also came up with other ideas too:

- Being respected by others
- Being kind to, sharing with and helping others
- Being happy and enjoying, doing fun things and having hobbies
- Looking after animals and the environment
- Having our own space and time alone
- Having the things we need
- Having a job and enough money
- Managing difficulties
- Being successful
- Trying hard
- Learning new things
- Being able to make choices and share your views
- Knowing we are all equal and not about being the best



What you thought was important for wellbeing in your school:

- Having fun and feeling good
- Helping and caring for others
- Looking after the environment
- Friendships
- Time alone
- Being relaxed and calm
- Being healthy
- Learning new skills
- Being able to concentrate on activities and having quiet time in classrooms





Your top 5 things to support wellbeing in your school:

1. Having time alone and a calm space with something to care for.
2. Helping teachers and helping others, and having feelings check-ins with your classmates.
3. Having (even more) healthy food and telling children about healthy foods and having competitions.
4. A friendship bench on the playground with friendship monitors to help children who have no one to play with.
5. (more) fun stuff – having different sports, equipment and activities at lunchtimes and more art and ICT in lessons.

We talked about these ideas with your teachers and now I hear lots of good things are happening at your school to support wellbeing:

- “I want to talk” boxes are in your classrooms.
- The friendship bench is getting ready.
- Teachers are thinking about finding calm space in school.
- Music is being played in the dining room and there are more activities at lunchtimes.
- The school are considering creating wellbeing champion roles.

This is pretty amazing, and it all came from your fabulous ideas. You should be really proud of yourselves! I hope your school carries on using your wonderful ideas to help make East Bridge Primary the best school at supporting children’s wellbeing! And finally, I want to thank you again for all your incredibly hard work!

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist



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Appendix 22: Parent of 1G research feedback report

15th November 2021

Dear parent/carer,

I am writing to you to feedback the findings of this research project which your child took place in school in October 2021. The research explored the children's understanding of wellbeing and developed an initial action plan based on their ideas to support wellbeing across their whole-school.

What happened in the research?

A group of 8 children from year 3, 4, 5, and 6 worked together in small groups with myself and Sue, my university supervisor, on the below activities. Additional views on wellbeing were gathered from your child separately on a one-to-one basis. This research emphasised the importance of children's voices and used an appreciative inquiry approach to use their voices to support positive change in their school.

The research activities included:

1. Exploring what wellbeing meant to the children through creating characters who had good and not so good wellbeing, and ranking vignettes based on wellbeing.
2. Exploring a time when children felt like they had good wellbeing in school through interviewing each other and asking questions about this time.
3. Dreaming the possibilities of a school that was the best at supporting wellbeing using arts and crafts.
4. Designing an action plan to turn their dream school into reality by writing a sentence or paragraph which explains what their dream school would look like if it were real.
5. Working with staff members to share their understanding of wellbeing, ideas, and action plan to collaboratively make feasible steps to implement this into their school.

What did the research find?

What do the children think wellbeing is:

Your child thought wellbeing was about:

- Having fun
- Playing with friends and family
- Being nice

This was similar to the other children's ideas, who thought key priorities for wellbeing were family, trusted adults, being grateful for what we have, being healthy and having friends.

What the children believe are important for wellbeing in their school:

Your child thought it was important for schools to have the following to support wellbeing:

- Tidy classrooms and school
- Lots of playing
- Playing with different things
- Being nice
- Teachers who are kind (and not mad!)

Again, these ideas were similar to those from the other children. Their other ideas also included:

- Helping and caring for others

- Looking after the environment
- Time alone
- Being relaxed and calm
- Being healthy
- Learning new skills

What has happened since the research took place?

Since the children shared their ideas of how to support wellbeing in school with the teachers, I understand there have already been some positive changes at East Bridge Primary School to support wellbeing.

1. Music is being played in the dining rooms during lunchtimes and different activities have been introduced during lunchtimes such as a chalk, colouring and reading area.
2. The friendship bench is underway.
3. Plans are being made to find a calm and nurturing space in school.
4. "I want to talk" boxes are being introduced into the classroom.
5. The school are considering creating wellbeing champion roles for the pupils involved in the research.

What happens next?

It is hoped East Bridge Primary school will continue to review the wellbeing action plan developed in the research and continue to utilise the children's views and superb ideas in this area!

Please feel free to contact myself if you require any further information on the research project, and once again thank you for agreeing for your child to take place in this research.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Aynsworth
Trainee Educational Psychologist

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Appendix 23: Child 1G research feedback report

15th November 2021

Hi wellbeing wonder!

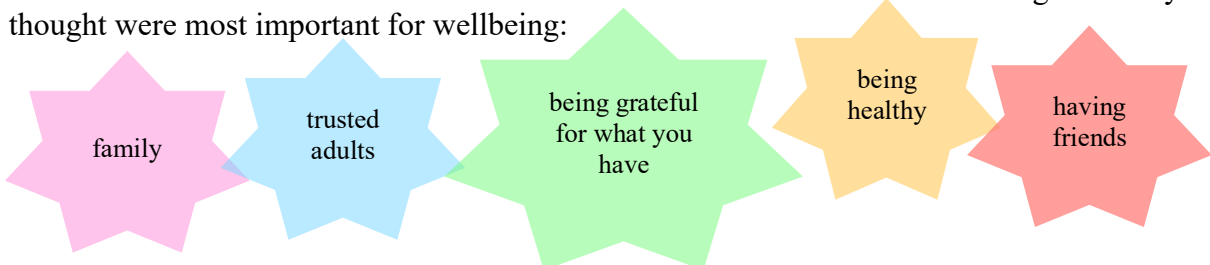


Do you remember in October 2021 when we worked together to talk about wellbeing and how we could support wellbeing at your school? I'm writing to you to tell you about all the great things that you and the other children helped to come up with!

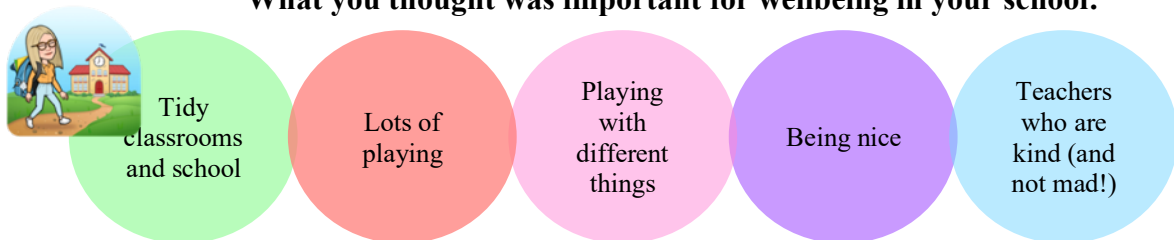
What you thought wellbeing was:



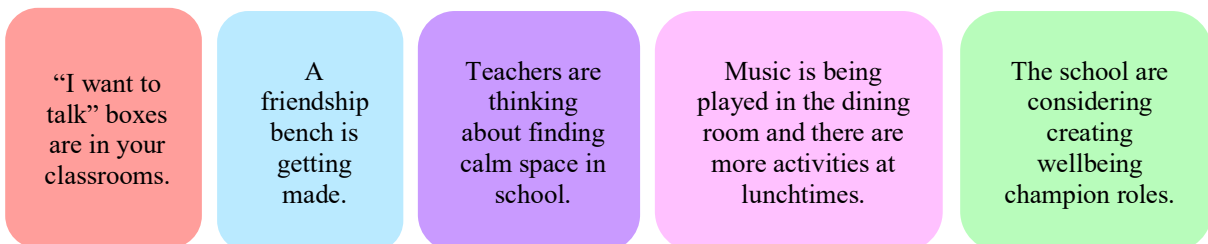
This was similar to some of the ideas from the other children. These are the things that they thought were most important for wellbeing:



What you thought was important for wellbeing in your school:



Thanks to yours and the other children's ideas, I now hear lots of good things are happening at your school to support wellbeing:



This is amazing, and it came from your fabulous ideas. You should be proud! I hope your school carries on using your wonderful ideas to help make East Bridge Primary the best school at supporting children's wellbeing! And finally, I want to thank you again for your incredibly hard work!

Thank you!
Suzanne



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Appendix 24: Focus group guide (1)

Introduction

- Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in the research.
- Introduce the research team and their roles
- Remind participants of the purpose of the research
- Remind participants that they are the experts and we want to learn from them.
- Confirm participants have given informed consent and are willing to participate.
- Remind participants of their right to withdraw and that this session will be audio recorded
- Remind children of confidentiality (that they should not share what has been said in the focus groups to others, although they can, and indeed, should speak to their parents or teachers if they are worried about anything)
- Collectively set ground rules (*and remind participants of ground rules in subsequent sessions*). Ground rules may include listening to each other, not talking over each other, no right or wrong answer, challenging others respectfully
- Inform participants of the expected length of time of the session
- Give participants an opportunity to ask any questions and address these accordingly.

(Complete icebreaker activity)

Focus group starts: Turn on audio recorder

1. Define - What does wellbeing mean to you?

Research Task Explanation (a)

Have you heard of wellbeing?

- If yes – ask what it means to you (scribe)
- If no read the following definition. Wellbeing is defined as “feeling good, being happy, and able to live your life to the full” (Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2005).
- What does that mean to you? What does feeling good / being happy / living life to the full mean?

We are going to work together to understand what wellbeing means to you.

First, think of the kind of person who does not have good wellbeing. This isn't a real person, but somebody you can make up from your imagination.

- What kind of person is this? How would you describe this person who doesn't have good wellbeing (*additional prompts - What kind of person are they? What is their personality like? What are XX people like?*)
- Everyone has a bag. What would a person who doesn't have good wellbeing have in their bag?
- What present would they like for their birthday?
- How do they get on with their family and friends?
- How do they get on at school/with their teachers?
- Everyone is afraid of something. What would a person like this be afraid of?

- How did this person come to be like this? What happened in their past? Were they born like this or did something happen to make them like this? Tell me what you think?
- What kind of future will this person have? How will things work out for them?

Put drawing to one side, so it is out of sight.

Let's think about a person who does have good wellbeing. Remember, this isn't a real person, but somebody that you have made up from your imagination.
(Repeat above for a person who does have good wellbeing).

Then we will hear your ideas as a group.

Focus Group Feedback

(ask questions as above, asking why they have given that answer and collate key themes)

Research Task Explanation (b)

We are going to sort these children into good wellbeing to not good wellbeing. What is the opposite of wellbeing/not good wellbeing?
(*read vignettes, initially order independently, and then order as a group*)

Where shall we put XXX? Why? What would make them have better / worse wellbeing?
Why did you put XX there? Why not there and not there?
Who has the best/good wellbeing? Why?
Who has the worst wellbeing? Why?

Focus Group Feedback

So what is wellbeing?

Wellbeing is...

Wellbeing is when....

Wellbeing is being

What things make up wellbeing?

If you have good wellbeing, what do you have? What do you feel?

How do you get wellbeing? What helps wellbeing? What makes it worse?

Does it stay the same or does it change? When? Why? (i.e. when you get older? What about in different places?)

Do you like the word wellbeing? Is there a better word?

(*give summary of themes*) Does that sound like what we have talked about?
Have we missed anything out?

2. Discover - What is wellbeing at your school like?

Research Task Explanation

You are going to work in pairs. In your pair, you are going to take it in turns to interview each other. You are going to think about a time in school when you had good wellbeing. Your partner is going to ask you some questions about this and write some notes or draw some pictures. Then you will swap over. When we have all finished, we will share our stories with the group.

Tell your partner about a time when you felt like you had good wellbeing in school? Why? If you can't think about a time in school, perhaps think about a time outside of school when you felt like you had a good sense of wellbeing?

Tell your partner about that time:

- What happened?
- How did you feel?
- Who was there?
- Where were you?
- Why was this such a good time?
- What did you do that helped?
- What did school do that helped?
- What other things helped this?
- What was important about you and your school at this time?
- Why do you still remember this?

(repeat so each partner shares a story)

Focus Group feedback

(ask partners to share their stories and scribe key themes)

(revisit questions as above)

Why did this help your wellbeing? Why did this make you have good wellbeing?

What does this tell us about your wellbeing at school?

What was important in your story? What things helped your wellbeing? Why?

What things have been repeated in the stories?

(give summary of themes) Does that sound like what we have talked about?

Do you all agree? Have we missed anything out?

3. Dream - What could wellbeing at your school be like?

Research Task Explanation

In your pairs, you are going to work together to imagine the best school for supporting your wellbeing. If you had a magic wand to make your whole-school the best at supporting your wellbeing, what things would be happening? What would it look like? What would be different?

Try to think about the whole-school not just your classroom. You could think about your playtimes, teachers, parents, dinner time staff and your friends. Then in your pairs you are going to create a presentation to show your 'dream school'. This could be a:

- Role play
- TV show/ advert
- Interview
- News report
- PowerPoint
- Poster
- Video
- Newspaper article
- Crafts
- Menu
- Timetable

- Map
 - Wellbeing hero (show examples)
- (revisit themes from 2. Discover session and display these)

Focus Group Feedback

(each group shares their ideas with group, scribe ideas and themes, praise effort and ideas)

Can you spot any similarities in the dream schools? What are our dreams hoping to do?

What things do we think are important in our dreams? Why? Is anything more/less important?

Why have we chosen XXX? How will that help our wellbeing?

Does everyone agree with this?

Research Task Explanation

Now you've heard about all the fantastic dream schools, you are going to pick your favourite dream. This doesn't have to be your own dream. You can pick another groups. You are going to plan this dream next, so pick one you that you think is the best at supporting wellbeing.

4. Design - How can wellbeing at school be supported?

Research Task Explanation

Now you have picked your favourite dream, you are going to work in your new groups to design the dream. You are going to come up with a plan that shows how your dream will happen in school in real life. Think about the important things from your dream – why did you include XXX, because it represented XXX. How can you achieve that in reality?

Describe and record exactly what should be happening in school (show examples of designs)

Think about:

- In class
- At break/lunch
- In lessons
- Your teachers
- Your parents
- Your friends

When you've finished your design work, in your groups you need to write a provocative preposition that captures your groups dream (share examples of provocative prepositions). Provocative propositions (PP) join up what is already the best of your school and what is possible in your school in the future. Then you will share your ideas with the group.

Imagine your dream school is happening right now and you are there....

What words come to mind? What words sum this up? Use these words to write a PP.

In your PP:

- Tell me what is happening in the future? Is it in the present tense – is it written like it is happening now?
- Tell me what's important about your school – what do people need to know about your school?
- Is it imaginative / innovative?
- Is it what you want your school to be like?
- Is it positive?

- It is based on real things that have happened in school.
- It can be a sentence or a paragraph.

Focus Group Feedback

(groups share their designs and smart sentences)

Can you spot any similarities in the designs? What things stand out to you? Why? What will these things achieve for our wellbeing?

(give summary of themes) Does that sound like what we have talked about?

Do you all agree? Do we need to add anything else?

5a. Destiny - What will we do at your school to make sure everyone has good wellbeing?

Research task Explanation

Now you have your designs, your job in your groups is to create an action plan to put your plan to make your school the best at supporting wellbeing into action.

This could be your first 3 steps, a list of things you need, a flow chart.

Think back to your design and provocative proposition. What was most important? What needs to happen first?

You will need to think about:

- What things do you want to do first?
- Do you need anything to help with your plan?
- How do you break ideas down into smaller steps?

Focus Group Feedback

(groups share their initial steps for their plans)

What things are most important? Why? What does that tell us? How will it help our wellbeing?

(give summary of initial steps) Is that what we have said?

Have we missed anything out?

Next time we are going to share our dreams and plans with your teachers.

5b. Destiny: Implementation - What will we do at your school to make sure everyone has good wellbeing?

Research task Explanation

The children are going to present their plans to support wellbeing across the whole-school.

We will then work together to make a plan together to decide on the first steps you can take to put this plan into action. (children showcase their plans with opportunities for steering group participants to ask questions).

Focus Group Feedback

What ideas can we start to do now?

What ideas may need longer to do?

Can we break these down into smaller steps?

(action plan scribed)

(summarise plan) Are we happy with this plan?

Do we need to change or add anything?

Focus group concludes: turn off audio recorder.

Debrief:

- Thank participants for their contributions and taking part.
- Check in with participants about how they are feeling.
- Remind children of confidentiality (that they should not share what has been said in the focus groups with others, but they should speak to their parents or teachers if they are worried about anything that has arisen in the course of the discussions)
- Offer an opportunity for participants to ask any questions and address these accordingly.
- Remind participants of their right to withdraw at any time and how they can do this.
- Remind participants to record any reflections which can be discussed next session and remind participants when next session will be.
- Remind participants that feedback will be sent to them.
- Before we leave, I'd like to end by sharing a positive reflection about something you thought someone in the group did well at or something they said or did that you liked.

Appendix 25: Focus group guide (2)

Introduction

- Welcome participants and thank them for agreeing to participate in this final research activity.
- Introduce the research team and their roles.
- Remind participants of the purpose of the research
- Remind participants that they are the experts and we want to learn from them.
- Confirm participants have given informed consent and are willing to participate in this final research activity.
- Remind participants of their right to withdraw
- Remind participants that this session will be audio recorded
- Remind children of confidentiality (that they should not share what is said in the focus groups with others, although they can, and indeed, should speak to their parents or teachers if they are worried about anything)
- Revisit ground rules set in previous research activities. Check with the children whether these rules are still relevant and make adaptations accordingly
- Inform participants of the expected duration of the session
- Give participants an opportunity to ask any questions and address these

(Complete icebreaker activity)

Focus group starts: Turn on audio recorder

6. Review

Research Task Explanation

Remember in October when we worked together to create a plan for your school to support wellbeing?

Recap previous research activities completed in October 2021 and praise their contributions.

Now, I'd like to learn about your thoughts and feelings about the work we did.

What did you think of the project?

Prompts: what we aimed to achieve; how we worked together; how far you felt able to put forward your own ideas and suggestions; how far other children built upon your own /one-another's' ideas; how easy it was to disagree, if there were times when you thought people's suggestions weren't that good

What words would you use to describe the project?

Prompts: enjoyable or dull; worthwhile, or a bit of a waste of time; effective in the suggestions made and the take-up by the staff steering group, or unrealistic, with nothing much happening as a result of the time we invested

What did you like?

Prompts: the focus on wellbeing; the chance to work with children from other classes; the activities we used to help agree what wellbeing is and ways to support wellbeing better in our school; balance between working on my own and with other children; felt important – being consulted and listened to

What didn't you like?

Prompts: the focus on wellbeing; having to work with children from other classes; some of the activities we used to help agree what wellbeing is and ways to support

wellbeing better in our school; balance between working on my own and with other children; the impact at the end of it; missing a lot of lesson time

What are the benefits of the projects?

Prompts: the focus on wellbeing; your understanding of wellbeing; changes in the school; being listened to; the chance to work with children from other classes

Do you think it has helped you?

Prompts: understand your wellbeing; feeling important; confidence; being part of a project, being listened to; new friendships with the children in the research; improved wellbeing in school; not helpful; missed too much time out of class

Do you think it has helped your school?

Prompts: any changes occurred at school: lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes; teachers; assemblies

How would you rate the project out of 10?

How could you make it better? How could you make it a 10?

Focus Group Feedback

(give summary of themes) Does that sound like what we have talked about?

Have we missed anything out?

What does that tell us about the project?

What does that tell us about your school?

What does that tell us about you?

Focus group concludes: turn off audio recorder.

Debrief:

- Thank participants for their contributions and taking part.
- Check in with participants about how they are feeling, using a thumbs up (great!) / thumbs down (not so good) / thumbs in the middle (ok) exercise.
- Remind the children they can speak to the researcher or the designated adults in school.
- Remind children of confidentiality (that they should not share what has been said in the focus groups with others, but they should speak to their parents or teachers if they are worried about anything that has arisen in the course of the discussions)
- Offer an opportunity for participants to ask any questions and address these accordingly
- Before leaving, ask participants to end by each sharing a positive reflection about something you thought someone in the group did well at or something they said or did that you thought was helpful.

Appendix 26: Research resource booklet

This booklet gives detailed description of the research activities, guidance and questions asked in each stage of the research. Additional reference should be made to the focus group guides in appendices 24 and 25.

Phase 1. What is wellbeing and how can we support wellbeing in school?

1. Define: What does wellbeing mean to you?

1a) Group discussion

Following an icebreaker activity and collaborative productive of group rules, the children were firstly asked:

*Have you heard about wellbeing?
If yes, the children were then asked: what does it mean to you?
If no, the children were provided with the following child-friendly definition: “feeling good, being happy, and able to live your life to the full” (Gabhainn & Sixsmith, 2005, p.18).*

Following this, children were asked the following and key themes collated on a mind map:

*What does that (wellbeing definition) mean to you?
What does feeling good / being happy / living life to the full mean?*

1b) Drawing the adapted Ideal-Self

In this adapted version of the Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) technique ‘Drawing the Ideal Self’ (Moran, 2001; 2020), children were asked firstly to draw an imaginary character with not so good wellbeing, and eight associated lifestyle factors to develop the character: the person, the bag, the birthday present, their family, their friends, at school, greatest fear and history (see below for question prompts used). This technique was repeated for an imaginary person with good wellbeing. Visual prompts were used to support understanding and engagement. After each lifestyle factor question the children gave their responses and these were recorded on A1 paper.

*First, think of the kind of person who does not have good wellbeing. This isn't a real person, but somebody you can make up from your imagination.
What kind of person is this? How would you describe this person who doesn't have good wellbeing (additional prompts - What kind of person are they? What is their personality like? What are XX people like?)
Everyone has a bag. What would a person who doesn't have good wellbeing have in their bag?
What present would they like for their birthday?
How do they get on with their family and friends?
How do they get on at school/with their teachers?
Everyone is afraid of something. What would a person like this be afraid of?
How did this person come to be like this? What happened in their past? Were they born like this, or did something happen to make them like this? Tell me what you think?
What kind of future will this person have? How will things work out for them?*

*Let's think about a person who does have good wellbeing. Remember, this isn't a real person, but somebody that you have made up from your imagination.
(Repeat above for a person who does have good wellbeing).*

1a. A kind of person who doesn't have good wellbeing



Describe them

What present would they like for their birthday?



What will their future look like?



Draw them

What's in their bag?



What happened in the past?



How do they get on with their family?



What is their greatest fear?



How do they get on at school?



How do they get on with their friends?



1b. A kind of person with good wellbeing



Describe them

What present would they like for their birthday?



What will their future look like?



Draw them

What's in their bag?



What happened in the past?



How do they get on with their family?



What is their greatest fear?



How do they get on at school?



How do they get on with their friends?



1c. Sorting vignettes

Children were shown the five vignettes, and I explained that they would be asked to sort these vignettes on a scale from good wellbeing to not good wellbeing as a group. Vignettes were read out and placed on the table to allow the children to move the vignettes accordingly. The group discussion was guided by the below questions:

*Where shall we put XXX? Why? What would make them have better / worse wellbeing?
 Why did you put XX there? Why not there and not there?
 Who has the best/good wellbeing? Why?
 Who has the worst wellbeing? Why?*

Figure A

Scale used to sort vignettes

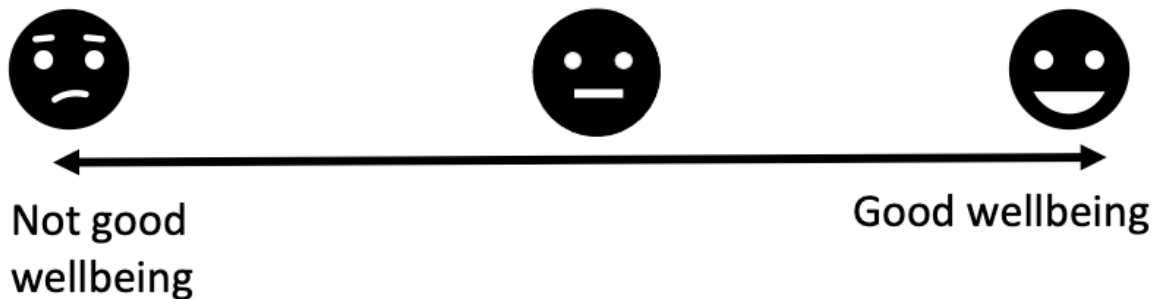


Figure B

Vignettes used in the sorting activity

?????X?????

At home, I don't get to make many choices and get told what to do a lot of the time.

Sometimes I feel hungry and there's not much food in the fridge.

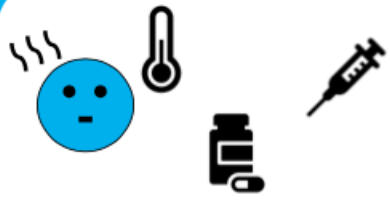
I live at home with my mum, dad, two sisters and two brothers. My sisters are really kind to me and plait my hair in the morning.

I never really win anything.

Tamara




I have really good friends. They are called Joey, Avnique and Violet.




I'm poorly a lot of the time.




I like to play in my garden at home. I enjoy watering the plants and getting lost in the trees.



Glory




I don't really have many toys at home. I don't have a computer either.




I have my own guitar and make up my own songs.




I have my own iPad – its my favourite thing to play with.



We have a cat, called Tigger. He is really friendly and always purrs.



Seb



At school, I have to play by myself most of the time.



I go to every after school club. I play for the football team, I'm in chess club and art club.



I live in a flat, so I don't have a garden.



I am healthy and play lots of sports.



Andre



We always go to visit our family in Portugal. We still have a house out there too.



I always play board games with my Mum and Dad. They always make me smile and Dad tells jokes to cheer me up.



I'm really good at spelling and have won the last two spellings competitions at school!



We go to the seaside on holiday every summer and sometimes at Christmas too!



Ava



I live in a house with my family and I have my own bedroom.

1a. continued: Group discussion

In the final group discussion of this stage, I asked the children:

*So what is wellbeing?
Wellbeing is...
Wellbeing is when....
Wellbeing is being
What things make up wellbeing?
If you have good wellbeing, what do you have? What do you feel?
How do you get wellbeing? What helps wellbeing? What makes it worse?
Does it stay the same or does it change? When? Why? (i.e. when you get older? What about in different places?)
Do you like the word wellbeing? Is there a better word?*

Responses were clarified and recorded on a mind map. Children were then asked to rate their top 5 themes of wellbeing using star stickers.

2. Discovery: What is wellbeing at your school like?

2a) paired interviews

I explained to the children that they would be asked to interview each other about a time when they felt like they had good wellbeing in school. I introduced the interview guide and recording sheet.

Children were asked to work in pairs or groups of three to conduct the interviews. Each child took it in turn to be interviewed whilst the other recorded their story on the recording sheet.

2. Discover - What is wellbeing at your school like?

Tell your partner about a time when you felt like you had good wellbeing in school.

What happened?



How did you feel?



Who was there?



Where were you?



Why was this such a good time?



What helped?

What did you do that helped?
What did school do that helped?
What other things helped?

What was important about you and school at this time?



Why do you still remember this?



2b) group discussion

Partners were then asked to retell the other child's story with the rest of the group. After each story, the children were asked what the key themes were identified in the stories were, and these were recorded as a mind map.

3. Dream: What could wellbeing at your school be like?

This research stage consisted of 2 parts:

- 3a) creating the dream
- 3b) group discussion

3a) creating the dream

In small groups, the children were asked to plan and create a 'dream school' for wellbeing.

In your groups, you are going to work together to imagine the best school for supporting your wellbeing. If you had a magic wand to make your whole-school the best at supporting your wellbeing, what things would be happening? What would it look like? What would be different?

Try to think about the whole-school not just your classroom. You could think about your playtimes, teachers, parents, dinner time staff and your friends. Then in your pairs you are going to create a presentation to show your 'dream school'.

Images of examples ideas to support the planning and creation of their dream school were provided (i.e. a menu, collage, newspaper article or report, map, poster, tv advert). The children were asked to first plan their dream school using the planning sheets provided (and then to create their dream school. Arts and crafts materials were provided.

3. Dream - What could wellbeing at your school be like?

The Dream School



If you had a magic wand to make your whole-school the best at supporting your wellbeing, what things would be happening? What would it look like? What would be different?

Try to think about the whole-school not just your classroom. You could think about your playtimes, teachers, parents, dinner time staff and your friends.

You can write your ideas here.



3b) group discussion

Once completed, the groups presented their dream schools to the rest of the focus group and key themes were gathered. This discussion was guided by the below questions:

*Can you spot any similarities in the dream schools?
What are our dreams hoping to do?
What things do we think are important in our dreams? Why? Is anything more/less important?
Why have we chosen XXX? How will that help our wellbeing?
Does everyone agree with this?*

4. Design: How can wellbeing at your school be supported?

4a) developing provocative propositions

I explained to the children that they would be asked to write a sentence or paragraph that captured and showcased what was happening in their dream school if it were real (i.e. provocative propositions). I also explained each point on the adapted checklist to further explain what was required. An example provocative proposition was modelled to the children following the adapted checklist and children were asked the following and to write their own sentences on the recording sheet.

Imagine your dream school is happening right now and you are there.... What words come to mind? What words sum this up?

A provocative proposition for your dream school design



Provocative Proposition Checklist <i>(Cooperrider et al., 2008, p.168)</i>	Adapted Provocative Proposition Checklist used in the research <i>(based on Cooperrider et al., 2008)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Is it provocative? Does it stretch, challenge or interrupt the status quo? • Is it grounded? Are examples available that illustrate the ideal as a real possibility? Is it grounded in the organisation’s collective history? • Is it desired? Do you want it as a preferred future? • Is it stated in affirmative and bold terms? • Does it follow a social architecture approach? • Does it expand the zone of proximal development? -used with a third party (outside appreciative eye) -completed with benchmarking data) • Is it a participative process? • Is it used to stimulate intergenerational learning? • Is there balanced management of continuity, novelty and transition?” (p.168) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me what is happening in the future? Is it in the present tense – is it written like it is happening now? • Tell me what’s important about your school – what do people need to know about your school? • Is it imaginative / innovative? • Is it what you want your school to be like? • Is it positive? • It is based on real things that have happened in school.

4b) group discussion

The children then were asked to read their sentences with the group. I used the following questions to guide the group discussion and key themes were gathered on a mind map.

*Can you spot any similarities in the designs?
 What things stand out to you? Why?
 What will these things achieve for our wellbeing?*

5. Destiny: What will we do at your school to make sure everyone has good wellbeing?

5a. Destiny

5a.i) small group planning

In their dream school groups, children were asked to write a list of the first 3 things that they’d like to see from their dream schools and provocative propositions in order to develop an action plan to support wellbeing in their school to share with the staff steering group. The following prompts were given to the children:

Think back to your design and provocative proposition. What was most important? What needs to happen first?

*You will need to think about:
 What things do you want to do first?
 Do you need anything to help with your plan?*

How do you break ideas down into smaller steps?

5a.ii) group discussion and action planning

The small groups were asked to share their lists. The key themes were gathered from all of the plans to gain a holistic overview of the steps and actions suggested. The following questions guided this discussion:

What things are most important? Why? What does that tell us? How will it help our wellbeing?

(give summary of initial steps) Is that what we have said?

Have we missed anything out?

A list of actions were developed and the children were asked to vote for their top 3 ideas which formed the top 5 points of the action plan. The children were asked how we should present this to the staff. This was planned collaboratively, and a script developed. Children were given a copy of the scripts and time was provided to rehearse their presentation.

5b. Destiny: implementation

The children used the script to present their action plans to the staff steering group. This presentation included revisiting the work completed in previous stages of the research. The steering group were encouraged to ask questions about the presentation. The children and steering group discussed how these ideas could be moved forward and develop a list of first steps collaboratively. This discussion was prompted by the following questions:

What ideas can we start to do now?

What ideas may need longer to do?

Can we break these down into smaller steps?

(summarise plan) Are we happy with this plan?

Do we need to change or add anything?

Phase 2. Reflections on the research project

6. Reflections:

6a) Writing words to describe the research

Following an icebreaker activity and recapping the ground rules set in phase 1 of the research, I revisited the previous stages and activities completed in the research, with the children. Children were asked to write three words to describe how they felt in the project and were asked to share these with the group and explain why.

6b) group discussion

The children were asked what they thought of the project. The following questions were used to guide the discussion:

What did you think of the project?

What did you like?

What didn't you like?

How could you make it better?

What are the benefits of the projects?

Do you think it has helped you?

Do you think it has helped your school?

Key themes were gathered as a group and recorded on mind maps.

6c) Rating the research

The final task involved children rating the project on a scale of 0-10 and to share their rating and rationale for this. An opportunity for final questions was provided before concluding the session.

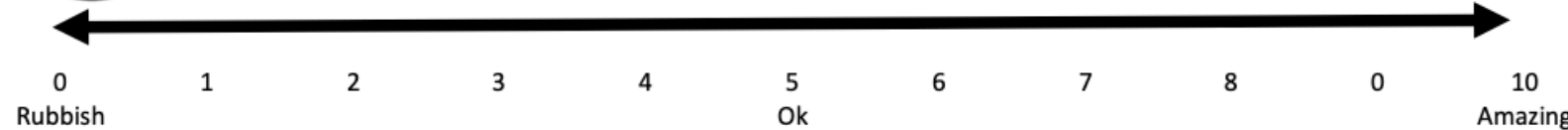


6. What did you think of the project?

Write three words to show you feel about the project?

A large, empty rounded rectangular box for writing three words.

How would you rate project out of 10?



Appendix 27: Background and rationale for chosen research activities

1b) Drawing the adapted ideal-self (person with good and not so good wellbeing)

Background

The ideal-self activity is based on Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) technique (Moran, 2020). PCP was developed by Kelly (1995) and is based on a constructive alternativist philosophical assumption. Kelly's position suggests that individuals make sense of the world through a system of constructs, undertaking experiments to confirm or deny these constructs, noting that constructs are individual, in that we all interpret events differently. Kelly (1995) suggests that constructs are dichotomous concepts: an entity and its opposite.

The ideal-self activity uses these dichotomies; ideal and non-ideal to explore the construct of self (Moran, 2020). These dichotomies were adapted to an individual with good and not so good wellbeing for the purpose of this research. Step by step instructions to complete this activity are detailed in Appendix 26.

Rationale

- The application of PCP techniques can be considered to afford “an unthreatening, enjoyable and highly accessible way of gathering young people’s views” (Shilvock, 2014, p.123). Moran (2020) notes that in drawing the ideal-self, direct questions about the self are not asked until later in the process.
- The technique also provides an opportunity for children to use their imagination, and creativity. Moran (2020) also notes that children may use characters who are not human.
- The ideal-self can be used with individuals of any age (Moran, 2020).
- PCP techniques have “the capacity to provide in-depth insight into personal experience, to establish a ‘democratic’ relationship between researcher and participants and to represent the participant’s ‘voice’” (Burr et al., 2014, p.341). The collaborative nature of these techniques can help to alleviate concerns that participants may hold about doing it right or being correct (Burr et al., 2014).
- Such techniques are considered useful in qualitative research when exploring views is the focus, and when research topics are complex (Burr et al., 2014), such as wellbeing. PCP techniques are also deemed interesting, engaging and less reliant on verbal fluency (Burr et al., 2014), all of benefit when working with children.

1c) Sorting vignettes

Background

- Vignettes are “short stories about a fictional character or fictional scenario appropriate to a particular study” (O’Dell et al., 2012, p.703), which can be used to explore perceptions, views and attitudes from the responses to the vignettes (Barter & Renold, 1999).

Rationale

- Vignettes are widely and effectively used in conjunction with other methods of data collection, often reported to enrich the existing data (Barter & Renold, 2000), and therefore were chosen as an additional technique to further explore children’s perceptions of wellbeing.

- Such a projection technique is considered useful when working with children (Cohen et al., 2007). Vignettes have the potential to facilitate group discussion and debate and are considered less personally threatening as questions centre on the character rather than the child (Barter & Renold, 1999; Finch, 1987).
- Some argue that the use of vignettes can reduce the effects of social desirability bias in responding from the viewpoint of the character (Hughes & Huby, 2001). Barter and Renold (1999; 2000) highlight the potential for participants to initially provide socially desirable responses, but recommend asking participants to consider how the character feels and why, and also consider how they themselves would act and why to address this.

Appendix 28: Analysis of 1G data

I completed phase 1 (stage 1-5a) with 1G on a 1:1 basis due to the age gap between her and the rest of the focus group participants. These activities followed the same procedure as outlined in Appendix 26, however, greater prompts were needed to support 1G's engagement. We were also unable to gather themes for each research stage collaboratively, rather I provided summaries of what she had reported to me in order to member check.

Initial	Age	School year	Gender	Ethnicity	SEN status
1G	5	1	Female	White British	None

Analysis: RQ6. What does the data tell us about children's understanding of wellbeing?
Key themes gathered from 1G's data set are presented below. These are mapped onto the same themes, sub-themes as the focus group data trends.

Environmental	Social	Personal	
<u>Places</u> Outdoor space Clean and tidy environment <u>Resources</u> Toys and games Technology	<u>Relationships</u> Family Friends Pets Supportive adults <u>Making a difference for others</u> Being kind	<u>Physical health</u> Well not ill <u>Personal growth</u> Learning new things	<u>Self-esteem</u> Success Being important <u>Having fun, enjoyment and being happy</u> Hobbies Adventures Playing Treats

1G discussed many similar themes considered important to wellbeing as constructed in the focus group discussions. Prominent themes for 1G centred on *having fun and playing, being nice*, and *winning*. Although *winning* wasn't considered a theme within the focus group data, this links with the subthemes of *success* and *having fun*.

<i>R1 wellbeing is...</i> <i>1G be nice</i> <i>R1 Being nice what else? tell me all the things? Being nice,</i> <i>1G being nice, playing with others</i> <i>R1 yeah....</i> <i>1G playing on iPads</i> <i>1G er spinning in the spinny chair</i> <i>R1 why is that good?</i> <i>1G cuz you have fun</i> <i>1G winning trophies</i> <i>R1 so why is winning good for wellbeing?</i>

1G cuz ...It's fun.

1G also referenced her family and friends in regard to playing and making her happy. Following the vignette task, 1G noted that pets and holidays were important for wellbeing as they were “fun”. 1G also referenced toys and technology as a means for having fun.

Distinct to the focus group data, 1G expressed a number of times the importance of a *clean and tidy environment* in regard to supporting her wellbeing:

1G keeping our classroom tidy

R1 So you think it is, so you think it would be important to keep your classroom tidy? How would you do that?

1G er by, by very where the things we're we put them back

...

R1 Okay. And what happened if you had a messy classroom? How would that make you feel?

1G angry

1G yeah cuz I hate toys, could they get messy

R1 oh so is mess good for your wellbeing?

1G No, it's not

Similarly to the focus group of children, 1G was initially unsure of the term wellbeing, so providing her with the child friendly definition supported her understanding. Moreover, her views centred on factors of wellbeing, and she made no reference was made to dimensions of wellbeing.

Reflections

Due to time constraints, this data collection was completed in one afternoon which may have affected 1G's engagement, although many breaks were included. Through the research activities, 1G was able to provide insight into her understanding. However, the work with 1G indicated that some of the activities may have been too complex for her age group, such as the vignette sort and some elements of the adapted ideal-self task. The vignettes themselves may have included too much detail to recall and compare, although it is noted the images appeared to support 1G's understanding. Some more abstract concepts of the adapted ideal-self activity seemed difficult for 1G to answer (i.e. what happened in their past or will happen in their future?). At times, 1G was not able to explain the reasoning for her suggestions, and appears to change her mind often. These may need to be adapted should these be activities be carried out in future research.

Appendix 30: First level analysis (phase 1) - Key themes from Define stage

Define y3-4	Define y5-6
<p>Learning new things Job / money Working hard Looking after animals Being healthy (Looking after yourself) Being successful Looking after the environment / planet Own space / time alone Friends Family Managing difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telling the truth / being honest • Forgiveness <p>Be kind to each other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgiveness <p>(Feeling good for) helping others Sharing Food and drink Making choices for yourself Saying things for yourself Doing fun things Things we need</p>	<p>A loving family Dealing with anger / difficult things Being happy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobbies • Enjoying • Looking forward to <p>Going to new places/ trying new things Trying hard Enough money Personal health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Drink • Medicine • Telling people what to do if somethings not right <p>Being kind to others and you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share things with others <p>Real friends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respected by and for <p>Adults who trust / help / support us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respected by and for <p>Grateful for things you have / people do for you Being confident (to share views) Time alone Knowing we are all equal</p>

Appendix 31: First level analysis (phase 1) - information gathered from ideal-self tasks

Year 3/4 Person who doesn't have good wellbeing

angry
funny
jealous
uncaring
only cares about
members

4/3/4

if help
open → no answering
class day - late
school - friend

- camping → 'bad'
- knife
- scare off children
- a day
- back to work & happy

FUTURE
deasin
revenge
mean
friends

doesn't
have good
wellbeing

FAMILY
- shouting
- no family
- murder
- loves her family

PAST
family died
injury - laughed
grandparents died
had friends - laugh

FRIENDS
no friends
- mean
- let down
- fight

SCHOOL
- no school
- messed around
- kills other people
- hits lots of people
- told off
- bossy
- non-need

Year 3/4 Person who has good wellbeing

kind
helpful
fun
smart
cool
helping/caring
healthy
happy
wealthy
well behaved

4/3/4

transes
nintendo switch
yummy mcdonalds
new bottle
lots of her favourite toy
food - burger (treasure)
portal - go into time + see
god / Jesus

food
chocolate milkshake
mcdonalds
bed - wearing
bible
poster
magic stone - 10 commandments
books - at library / glasses
toy → always 'forget'
chocolate, water,
bible

has
good
well being

FUTURE
mean - alone
die in race with god
good at parenting
marriage

PAST
like
smell
role of
Bobby
baby
smart
- lost being
- autistic
- came to
- gifts
- played
- 10 commandments

FAMILY
very well
party → busy - popular
good
brevements → they are
great
they are
love

FEAR
no friends - lonely
- no wellbeing
cats
unkind to god / Jesus
blackbirds
& snakes

SCHOOL
head of council
well-behaved
good at maths
smart, popular, great at
intelligent
- know
- know

FRIENDS
great & cool
- have friends
not many friends - and
get over
everyone is friend → to be
2000 friends
- 2000
- 2000

Year 5/6 Person who doesn't have good wellbeing

rude
 mean
 homeless
 not wealthy
 helpless
 sick
 abused
 sad
 not wanting to live life
 ugly → acting
 → shocking - cleaners

teddy bear - comfort
 bread - hungry
 money - \$\$\$ - buy food clothes

food - crumbs
 cup - for money
 jumper jacket → for warmth
 apple
 cup
 hat
 destroyed boots

1 discount for 5 hours

FUTURE
 - dead
 - rich → guitar - famous
 - bully
 - poor
 → anxious
 → anxious

PAST
 - fired from many jobs
 - took his friends
 - abusive parents
 - failed school
 - didn't have money
 - very rich - used money for
 bad things / waste / reckless / insecure
 - child taken away
 - making bad decisions
 - making bad decisions
 - making bad decisions

doesn't have good wellbeing

FAMILY
 - parents not bonding
 - kind - not abusive
 - bossy to their family
 - want him to be wealthy

FRIENDS
 - no friends
 - not respected
 - treated badly by friends, but he still
 - fake friends
 - fake friends

SCHOOL
 - can't focus well because family
 - embarrassed - don't want
 - hurt → bullied
 - horrible minded
 - worried about bullying
 - conspired by 'fake friends'
 - bullied → become a scared man

Year 5/6 Person who has good wellbeing

rich
 healthy
 kind - shares
 loved
 living life
 wealthy
 cool
 caring
 sweet
 smart

grapple hook → see the sky
 → hope

Tesla
 iPhone 13
 G wagon
 Jeep
 2x vacations
 Money & gold
 Pet pug
 Postman

in return

car key
 gold
 iPhones → give to people
 \$\$\$ → give charity
 make up
 phone
 spare clothes
 self defense - because you
 grapple hook - keep safe
 teddy bear - for his room

good wellbeing

FUTURE
 - wealthiest person
 - hairdresser - became
 → talents caring
 - good job - performer
 dancing

FAMILY
 - good family relationships
 - sweet, caring
 - sometimes bossy / ungrateful → if you
 - get on good with their family

PAST
 - dream → inspired
 - not respected at school
 - hurt → faith in themselves

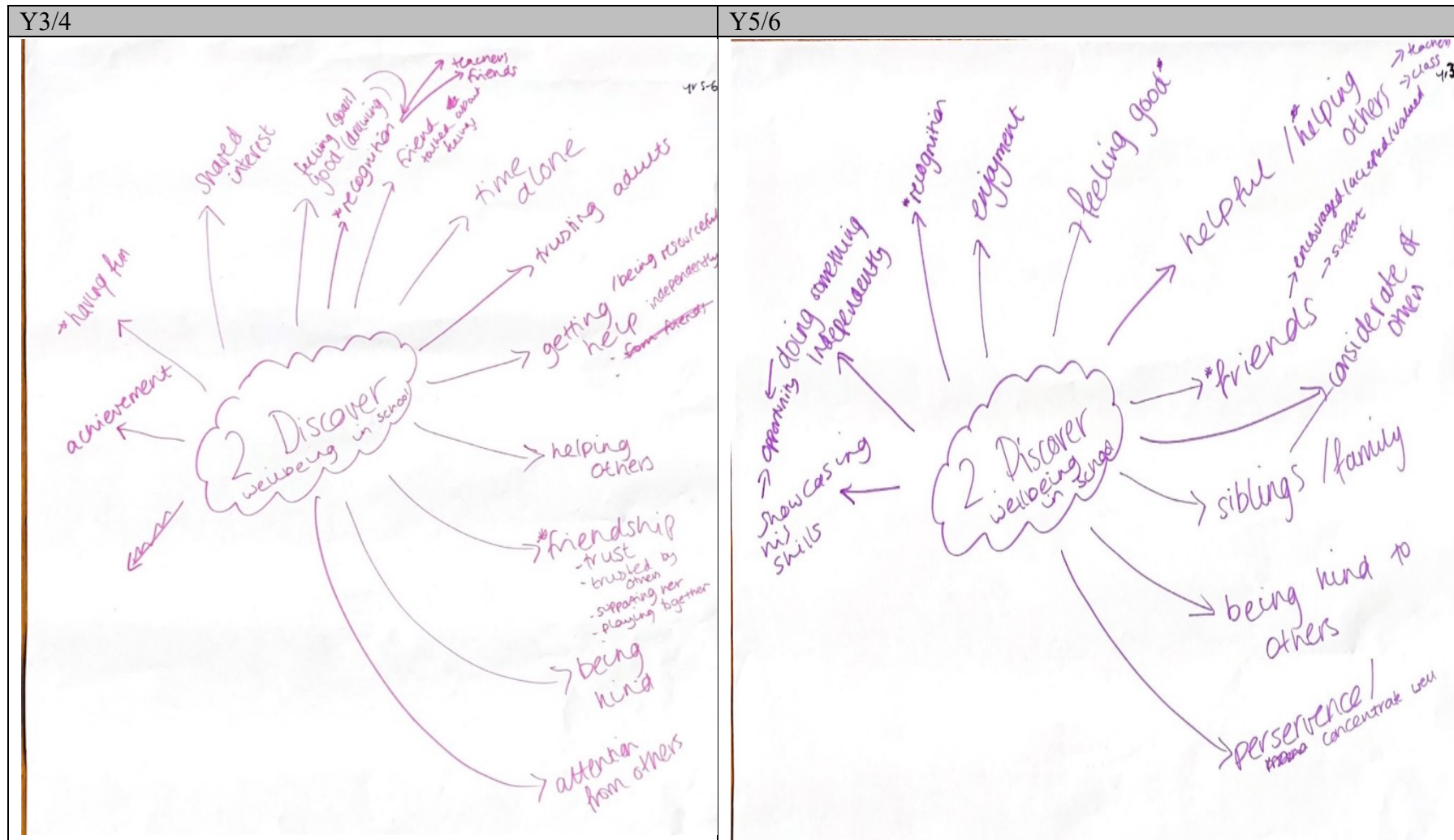
SCHOOL
 - get on well
 - president
 - minister
 - homeschooled → support his anxiety
 - good, well, respected, smart - some things good and care
 - money gets stolen
 - not being respected
 - losing family & friends

FEAR
 - fake friends
 - normal people
 - he get on well - but aware of gold diggers

Appendix 32: First level analysis (phase 1) - key themes identified in Discovery stage

Discovery	Discovery
<p>Y3-4 (Opportunity to) showcase skills (Opportunity to) doing something independently Recognition Enjoyment Feeling good Helpful / helping others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • Class <p>Friends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged • Accepted • Valued • Support <p>Siblings / family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considerate of others / empathy <p>Being kind to others Perseverance / concentration</p>	<p>Y5-6 Achievement Having fun Shared interests Feeling good</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Scoring) goals • drawing <p>Recognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • Friends <p>Friend talked about feelings Time alone Trusting adults Getting help / being resourceful Helping others Friendship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust • Trusted by others • Supporting others • Playing together <p>Being kind Attention from others</p>

Appendix 33: First level analysis (phase 1) - exemplar mind maps collated in focus groups (Discovery stage)



Appendix 34: First level analysis (phase 1) - key themes identified in Dream and Design stage

Dream	Design
<p>Y3-4 Quiet Looking after the environment Learning to be smarter (education) Helping /playing with others</p> <p>Y5-6 Caring for others Feeling good Concentrating on an activity</p> <p>Y6 Feel better Playing / friendship Learning new skills Exercise</p> <p>All groups Being healthy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Exercise / strength Time alone Relax / calm (when stressed) Learning new skills Having fun Friendships</p>	<p>Feel better Being healthy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food (vegetables) • Exercise / strength (sports, PE, games, play area) Caring for others (first aid) Learning to be smarter / (education) Learning new skills Having fun Feeling good Helping /playing with others Relax / calm (when stressed) Friendships</p>

Appendix 35: First level analysis (phase 1) - A list of children's possible ideas of how to ensure wellbeing is maintained and improved in school

- Calm room
- Fun stuff (i.e. different sports, equipment available at lunchtime, and different lessons on fun stuff)
- Siblings
- Supportive adults
- Quiet time in class / at lunch
- Help the teachers
- Alone time
- Healthy food
- Friendship bench
- Looking after the environment (i.e. recycling)
- Helping others
- Toilets
- More recognition
- Being resourceful / using initiative
- Being / feeling successful
- Working hard
- Looking after yourself independently
- Truthful

Appendix 36: Second level analysis (phase 1) - Data analysis and theme development

This appendix provides detail on the second level analysis used in phase 1 of the research.

First cycle coding

Deductive themes derived from the live analysis with the children were initially colour coded. The majority of codes aligned with key themes identified by the children in the live analysis (first level) due to the deductive nature of analysis, however, additional detail was added to code labels to provide greater detail than those developed with children (sub-codes). Code labels are demarked by square brackets.

Quote	Deductive theme from live analysis	[Code]: sub-code
<i>4B It calms the emotions, if you've got bad emotions in your stomach, if you breathe, you, your emotions they like it's like they disappear and like sometimes I think like I've got volcano inside me and it's about to erupt when I put water on it by breathing.</i>	[managing difficulties]	[managing difficulties]; emotional regulation, strategies, breathing

Inductive codes were highlighted, and codes labels created, i.e.

Quote	[Code]
<i>6G Erm if you get hurt, the person who was with you would make sure that they take care of you....they'll keep you safe.</i>	[safety]

Where codes represented the same concept, these were grouped to form new codes, i.e.

Initial codes	Final code
Loving Loved	Loved
Supportive Help Care	Care
First aid Medicine	Medical support
Fun Happiness	Enjoyment

The final codes (and sub-codes) gathered from this first cycle are below.

[Basic needs]:	[Hobbies]:	[Recognition]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money • Clothes • Food and drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Theatre • Art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal – feeling proud

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warmth • House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports • Managing difficulties, fun enjoyment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External – awards, peers, teachers, assemblies
[Being outside / outdoor space]:	[Holidays]	[Religion]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to play • fresh air • managing difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun • Time with family • Visiting new places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As connection • As guidance • As people who care • As faith
[Being successful]:	[Honest]	[Resources]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winning • Trying your best • Achievement • talents 	[Hope]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationary for homework • PE equipment – for sports • For fun – guitar, iPads, playing
[Cared for]:	[Included]	[Respected]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who care • family 	[Being independent]:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By friends and adults • By others
[Choices]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using initiative, getting help online • Looking after ourselves 	[Safety]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking for your self 	[Being important]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-defence • protection
[Comfort]:	[Being kind]:	[Services]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teddy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To others • Empathy • Not leaving people out • Respecting others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS – health • Police • Fire • To care • To provide safety
[Computer]:	[Learning new things]:	[Sharing]:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music, smart, job for future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With others, the poor, friends • Food, money, guitar
[Confidence]:	[Looking after animals]:	[Showcasing skills]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To share views • Self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For food • For company • For fun • To keep them well 	[Smart]:
[Equality]	[Looking after the environment]:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart • Reading books
[Family]:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To protect the animals • To protect earth • Our health • Feed the plants • Recycling • Local environment 	Space to calm / calm room
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loved • Care • Enjoyment • Interaction 	[Managing difficulties]:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To regulate emotions (anger)
[Forgiveness]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forgiveness • emotional regulation (anger, or sad, anxiety) • strategies for emotional regulation 	[Sports]:
[Friends]:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team • Fun • Friends
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real friends • Care • Online friends • Respectful friends • Trust them and trust us • Enjoyment 		[Supportive adults]:
[Garden]:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trusting and responsive • To help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To grow food • To grow plants • To play in • To practice sports • To be outside 		

[Grateful for things we have]	[Medical support]	• Safe
[Having fun, enjoyment and being happy]:	[Money]:	• Kind to us
• Fun	• Wealth	[Technology]:
• Hobbies (art, music, PE, sports)	• Luxury items	• Homework
• Play	• Enough money	• Playing
• Activities	• job	• communication
[Health]:	[Own space]:	[Things to look forward to]
• Exercise – strength	• Bedroom – link to sleep / privacy	[Time alone]:
• Well not ill – missing school, missing out, medical support	• quiet	• To manage difficulties / emotional regulation
• Diet – food and drink, strong, energy	[Others being kind to you]	• Enjoy time by yourself
[Helping others]:	[Pets]:	[Toilets]
• Who we help	• As company	[Toys and games]:
• Teachers	• To make us happy	• As company
• the poor / those in need / charity	• To calm	• Fun
• friends	• To take care of	• To play
• classmates	[Playing]:	[Treats]:
• family	• With friends	• Foods
• people we don't know	• Makes us happy	• Days outs
• how we do help	• Inside and outside	[Treated fairly]
• when somethings wrong	• By self	[Trying new things / visiting new places]
• caring for others	[Proud]:	[Gifts]
• providing company	• Feeling good, happy	[Well-behaved / respects others]
• feel good for helping others	• At school, money, job	[Working hard]:
	[Privacy]	• Perseverance
	[Quiet environments]:	• Motivation
	• For lunch	• Concentration
	• For learning and concentration	• Trying your best
	• For alone time	• Ambition

Second cycle coding

The final first cycle codes were collated and grouped into categories. Again due to the deductive nature of this analysis, the majority of categories aligned with themes identified by the children in the live analysis (stage 1: analysis), i.e. friends, learning new things, being kind. New categories identified through this process included safety, emotional regulation, positive personal qualities and outdoor space.

Example category development are demonstrated below:

	Category	Code
Codes becoming categories in their own right	Helping others	[helping others]
	Friends	[friends]

New categories created through grouping codes	Positive personal qualities	[Humility] [Forgiveness] [Honest] [Respectful] [Hope]
	Adventures	[Trying new things / visiting new places] [Holidays] [Time with family] [Visiting new places]

As part of this process, some codes were further refined. i.e.

Initial codes	Final code
Equality Grateful for things we have	[Humility]

Through repeated cycles of categorisation, themes and sub-themes were developed. The final themes, sub-themes and categories are detailed below.

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
Environmental	Places	Outdoor space Own space Quiet environments
	Resources	Toys and games Technology
	Basic needs	Physiological needs Safety
Social	Relationships	Family Friends Pets Supportive adults Religion
	Making a difference for others	Helping others Sharing resources Being kind Looking after animals Looking after the environment
Personal	Physical health	Exercise Well not ill Diet
	Emotional regulation	Comfort Emotional regulation Time alone
	Personal growth	Engagement Smart Learning new things
	Personal qualities	Positive personal qualities
	Self-esteem	Success

		Independence Being important
	Having fun, enjoyment and being happy	Hobbies Adventures Playing Treats and gifts

Appendix 37: Second level analysis (phase 1) - Exemplar quotes for themes/codes

The following three tables indicates the codes grouped into each category and example quotes relative to code. Each theme is presented in a separate table.

Theme: Environmental

Sub-themes	Subordinate -categories	Codes/sub-codes	Quote
Places	Outdoor space	Being outside	<i>4B When you're angry you can play outside and you feel better, all the fresh air and stuff.</i>
		Garden	<i>4B Well I'm not saying he doesn't go outside but just think about it, you would be a bit sad if you couldn't go in your own garden</i> <i>5G I think Glory should go up where Seb is because that's in the middle of bad wellbeing good wellbeing, I think she really likes to play garden, which is good for her.</i>
	Own space	Bedroom	<i>R1 why is it good to have your own bedroom, why?</i> <i>4G it's because you have your own personal space.</i> <i>4B you get privacy</i> <i>5G and she has her own bedroom so when she's sad or needs some quiet time she can go in her bedroom.</i>
		Calm room	<i>5G This is the calm room and it's got a nice cushions, calm music and a dog and</i> <i>6G Happy colourful teacher.</i> <i>R1 because</i> <i>5G to supervise, and if you're angry, you can relax in this room.</i>
	Quiet environments	For lunch	<i>3B the dining room,</i> <i>R1 dining room that...tell me a bit more about that 3B.</i> <i>3B cuz erm it's not that loud there and sometimes you just want to be like erm have a quiet room</i>
		For learning and concentration	<i>4G A quiet time in classrooms?</i> <i>R1 ok quiet time in...</i> <i>4G concentrating</i>

		For alone time	<i>4G here's a small quiet room. It's a quiet room for people who are sad, and they just want to be alone and a nature book here and a chair where you can relax.</i>
Resources	Toys and games	As company	<i>4B I think it is, it is good like things to play with, and it connects to wellbeing because he's got a point 3B that you can have like complete with like, friends and stuff when you want like just in time alone and something you can go to your room. And then you've got things to keep you company still instead of just going to a room, you still got your still with people and you don't get any like time alone at all.</i>
		Fun	<i>5G She didn't have any toys on the computer, so she could get very bored</i>
		To play	<i>4B I think I know, is it like when you're healthy, you've got a home, you you have things to play with.</i>
		Teddy	<i>4B you've got the teddy bear, so if you're sad and lonely you've got you've got something to keep your company even though it's not something real life though, but it still gives you like company to like play with</i>
		Equipment for hobbies	<i>5G And we would all be busy with the fun stuff. Like the activities, likes art, things like art and stuff, and playtime equipment, and some sports things; skipping ropes and everyone will be happy</i>
	Technology	Homework	<i>5G and also if he doesn't have a computer she can't do homework online.</i>
		Playing	<i>5B He's got good wellbeing cuz he plays on his iPad all day</i>
		Communication	<i>6G and she doesn't have any electronics or anything... to communicate with her friends, so I think actually half good</i>
		Stationary for homework	<i>R2 so I was asking, is it specifically an iPad or whatever? Or is it generally stuff that you need so? You've got pens, paper, there's a library you can go.... 3B yeah like that</i>
	Basic needs	Physiological needs	Money
Clothes			<i>4G I think that important to them is keeping themselves healthy and you need food and water. And also, you'll need anytime it's winter, you need a coat, mittens and when it's hot you'll need like a T shirt and something to keep you make sure that you're not. You're burning</i>
Food and drink			<i>4G but the three things are bad ... And when she's hungry, she does, there's not much food</i>
Warmth			<i>6B a jumper... to keep him warm.</i>
House			<i>3G Yeah if you don't have a home you'll get freezing cold in out in the...</i>

			<i>4G and you'll shelter</i>
		Medical support	<i>6G and then we have a first aid room just to get like if you hurt just so they can help you. And get yourself have some medicines and the first aid bag</i>
		Toilets	<i>R1 so what do we think? Is having toilets gonna be good for our wellbeing? 4G / 5G / 6G Yes</i>
		Services; NHS	<i>4B Also, saying about the NHS they also can help us....with the diseases that we might have like hypothermia. Yeah, and because they NHS care about us and don't want us having loads of illnesses</i>
	Safety	Self-defence	<i>6G And some self-defence things. R1 okay, self-defence, why you need self-defence things? 6G because, well, what treat you like because you're a girl? People might maybe kidnap you something I don't and it's something to take care of you like self defence</i>
		Protection	<i>6B He has a robot that protected him.</i>
		Services; police, fire	<i>6G maybe police officers</i>

Theme: Social

Sub-themes	Subordinate-categories	Codes/sub-codes	Quote
Relationships	Family	Loved	5B I said loving 5G and I said family
		Care	6G cuz I couldn't stop crying And my parents took me home
		Enjoyment	3G if you don't have a family and you don't have anyone to play with. You might get really bored. 5G I think it's really good wellbeing because she looks like she has fun at her house and her parents are really kind and they the joke with her
		Interaction	R1 how does your person with good wellbeing get on with their family? 4G very well. She ask her mum how was her day...
	Friends	Real friends	5G it's very important that if one of your friends says like you have to have real friends
		Respectful friends	that are good to you and treat you with respect
		Online friends	5B and if you play online, that one day then you might be able to play with them in real life.
		Trust them and trust us	6G Yeah you can only tell a friend you 5B trust
		Care	4G I felt too shy, so I didn't wanna go alone. So my friend came with me 4G she has friends in high school because they cared for her no matter what
		Enjoyment	5G She's got friends so she's not like bored all the time. 5B 5G was playing with her friends. She was talking and she having a happy time
	Pets	As company	4B Because because when you want to do alone time, you can go through it and you can also put the dog in, but it's not another person with you
		To make us happy	4B otherwise they can help us with our doggies and then we we get happy instead of lower
		To calm	5G In my school, this is my own, in my school in the calm room we have a cute dog to help children who are tense, angry, or upset.
		To take care of	5B green dog cs I like green dogs.

			<i>R1 and those are for your wellbeing? 5B because you can take care of it.</i>
	Supportive adults	Trusting and responsive	<i>5G yeah you need to trust me them. If you say can you help me? They can't just like erm you can't tell an adult who you don't trust, or you feel like suss about them cuz then they could tell the whole world and then you could feel really embarrassed, and stuff ... they need to act quick and help you.</i>
		To help	<i>5B and a supportive teacher that helps you calm down</i>
		Safe	<i>6G I mean that adults will like by your side, so like they make sure that they stay with everyone to make sure that that is safe. Not like just leave.</i>
		Kind to us	<i>6G we have the best teachers who care for you and make sure that you are okay.</i>
	Religion	As connection	<i>4G God and Jesus are always your friends</i>
		As guidance	<i>4B er I don't know. And then.... What you call them, don't know how to 10 commandments.</i>
		As people who care	<i>R1 who cares about us? 3B Jesus R1 ok 3G God</i>
		As faith	<i>4B Because before he died they said they all said that he looked, they all loved him and they would all be with him by, like spirits.</i>
Making a difference for others	Helping others	Who we help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers • The poor / those in need / charity • Friends • Classmates • Family 	<i>3B cool, help the poor and care about others. 4B We think it's important to help teachers because they trust us and that, we can do our work and not make a fuss. 3B I helped my on brother from the playground when he fell down.</i>
		How we help <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When somethings wrong • Caring for others • Providing company 	<i>4G erm I was gonna say like if you could help the school by helping other people so that anytime anyone's feeling worried or anything they think that, and they think that something wrong with them, like something's wrong with the school, erm, you could go help them.</i>

		<i>3B erm I brought one of my friends and we tried to give him like company and he wanted to go home.</i>
	Feel good for helping others	<i>3B It was a good time because I'm helping some somebody and if I help somebody, it feels just like good.</i>
Sharing resources	With others, the poor, friends	<i>3G Does wellbeing mean sharing lots of food to other people that are poor?</i>
Being kind	To others	<i>4B Being kind to other people.</i>
	Empathy	<i>4B well no like there are some people that really need it, but they're actually some people that don't need it but maybe just in case if like something is going on with them and they don't seem very happy that day, you can maybe like, check in on them and see what's on their mind, and how to like help them with what's happened.</i>
	Not leaving people out	<i>6G they hang around with normal people because they don't wanna leave out those people.</i>
Looking after animals	For food	<i>3G about that if you don't have any animals, they make food for us.</i>
	For company	<i>R1 yeah, do you want a world without any animals?</i>
	For fun	<i>All no R1 Why not? 4B Because it will be boring, and we wouldn't have any company.</i>
	To keep them well	<i>3G because, if they are sick we should take him to the hospital to make them better</i>
Looking after the environment	To protect the animals	<i>3B Maybe we should stop letting with the trash go into the sea, because that's killing all the animals. 4G I could also make sure people don't cut anymore trees down because the animals will find any of the animals will have any home,</i>
	To protect earth	<i>4B Yeah, to protect the earth,</i>
	Our health	<i>R2 could we go back to where you said about driving less because the difficult words carbon emissions....erm how does that affect people's wellbeing if there's bad air their breathing? 4B because they can get infections or breathing bad days like a little. It's a little bit like smoke.</i>
	Plants	<i>4B Yeah ok erm feeding the plants.</i>
	Recycling	<i>5G More recycling bins maybe</i>

		Local environment	<i>R2 I think there is 4G, the caring, just caring for the building, keeping it nice and clean and tidy so that you you're in a sort of an attractive environment uncluttered. R1 oh yes because you were going to make everybody stay after school and tidy up weren't you? 4G yeah</i>
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Theme: Personal

Sub-themes	Subordinate -categories	Codes/sub-codes	Quote
Physical health	Exercise	Strength	<i>3G You can get like exercise and get more stronger</i>
		Well not ill	Missing school
	Missing out		<i>5G but when she's poorly all the time, she might have to miss out on likes of things like swimming and stuff,</i>
	Medical support		<i>6G and then we have a first aid room just to get like if you hurt just so they can help you. And get yourself have some medicines and the first aid bag</i>
	Diet	Food and drink	<i>6G and some healthy foods for eating, so you're healthy and strong,</i>
		Strong	<i>6G you can be strong and healthy</i>
		Energy	<i>4B You get really cramped up and you you just can't work, and you have no energy.</i>
Emotional regulation	Comfort	Comfort	<i>6G to comfort them</i>
	Emotional regulation	Forgiveness	<i>3B always forgive someone,</i>
		Emotional regulation	<i>4G angry. R1 okay, so about being good and not being angry. 4G being calm</i>
		Strategies for emotional regulation	<i>3G we take a breath in</i>
	Time alone	Time alone	<i>6G 6B has such a good time cuz he was enjoying the time alone</i>
<i>4G we need time alone</i>			
Personal growth	Engagement	Working hard	<i>4G Because I was because it felt it was a good time because I was working hard and enjoying myself and I was doing lots of good work and.</i>
		Perseverance	<i>4G I was writing a lot and even though my hand was hurting, I still carry on carried on and I didn't listen to anyone., any people who was annoying me.</i>
		Motivation	<i>R1 she's not really motivated 5G yeah</i>
		Concentration	<i>4G I know, what was important about my story, that I was concentrating and like any disturbance, even in year 4 when I'm in year, I don't listen to any disturbances, I just get on with my work</i>

		Trying your best	<i>5G As long as you're kind, I think and you try hard. I think it's OK, but if you're just like sitting there like I don't wanna do it, that's not, that's not very good, but at least if you try,</i>	
		Ambition	<i>5B they just. They just wanted to be. They got inspired by the president. So they wanted to become one. R2 so they've got ambition 5B uh hum (yes sound)</i>	
	Smart	Smart	<i>4G kind, helpful and very smart 3B like great at school, like he's very smart</i>	
		Reading books	<i>3B the books, so if erm if you just want to like read a book you go to like the classroom to get a book and just like sit down and read a book...erm just to get like smart,</i>	
	Learning new things	Music	<i>3B Because? Because it is like good to like have your own like songs.</i>	
		Smart	<i>4G I think studying could do wellbeing, because it could increase your brain.</i>	
		Job for future	<i>4G We, our teachers help us with lots of things, with our work, teaching us with lots of things so we can get a job in the future.</i>	
	Personal qualities	Positive personal qualities	Humility	<i>6G I was gonna say grateful for the things you have.</i>
			Forgiveness	<i>4B He also forgive loads of people</i>
Honest			<i>4B yeah, always tell the truth for your wellbeing</i>	
Respectful			<i>6B like respect others and they'll respect you back</i>	
Hope			<i>6B he likes seeing the the sky because it gives him hope....there's a chance it can get better</i>	
Self-esteem	Success	Recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal – feeling proud • External – awards, peers, teachers, assembles 	<i>4G It just made me smile a lot and feel proud of myself. 5G it makes you feel good inside and people, when the adults think you're doing good work and stuff.</i>	
		Being successful <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winning • Trying your best 	<i>R1 so does winning give you any sense of good wellbeing? 4B yes, because I felt pretty happy like just an example, I felt pretty happy that my teachers chose me and 4G and I thought I felt like I won something</i>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement • Talents • Showcasing skills 	<p><i>5B I play for a football team and my coach It doesn't matter as long as you're paying attention cuz then one day might be successful in what you want to do.</i></p> <p><i>4B I had helped the class, but I had also helped the school as well and I had done a little bit of of I done a little bit teaching myself</i></p>
	Independence	Being independent	<p><i>4G doing, what else was great was what he was doing, something that nobody else is doing, and that he did it without the teachers even asking him to do it.</i></p> <p><i>5G the things to look after ourselves</i></p> <p><i>6G because the adults will not always be here for you when you're on, when you become an adult, you can't expect the adults to be there for you.</i></p>
		Choices	<i>4G but the three things are bad and that she doesn't get to make choices.</i>
		Speaking for yourself	<i>4G and you want to make you want to make a choice by yourself by saying by yourself</i>
	Being important	Included	<i>(From 6B's provocative proposition) We believe no child should be left out.</i>
		Privacy	<i>5G The last thing is a first aid area where you can have privacy and not embarrass yourself.</i>
		Treated kindly and fairly	<p><i>R1 is about before being prejudiced and discriminating?</i></p> <p><i>6G Yeah, like</i></p>
		Respected	<i>6B like respect others and they'll respect you back</i>
		Cared for	<p><i>4B because the dad and mum they're not caring about her,</i></p> <p><i>6G I put so we have the best teachers who care for you and make sure that you are OK</i></p>
Having fun, enjoyment and being happy	Having fun, enjoyment and being happy	Having fun, enjoyment and being happy	<p><i>R2 And if you're enjoying life, what are you doing?</i></p> <p><i>5B having a fun time</i></p> <p><i>4G she's always happy</i></p>
		Things to look forward to	<i>5G we have to be excited. You have to be like looking forward to it.</i>
		Enjoy time by yourself	<i>3B maybe not have that much friends cuz sometimes you just want to be like on your own.</i>

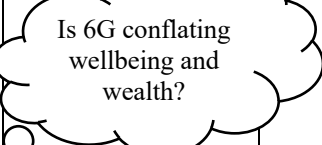
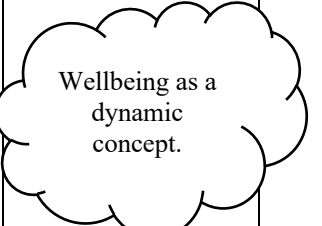
			<i>6G So, it was such a good time to him cuz 6B enjoyed the time alone</i>
Hobbies	Music		<i>3B Because? Because it is like good to like have your own like songs.</i> <i>6G I put that because he has his own guitar which is good wellbeing</i>
	Theatre		<i>5G I do theatre school; 3 hours and I enjoy it</i>
	Art		<i>5G the fun bit is the chess club and the art club</i> <i>3G erm we don't like, we don't do lots of we don't do lots of painting on. I think we should do lots of paintings every like,</i>
	Sports		<i>3B I like the football area because you can get like exercise and get more stronger and it's a place where you can see your friends and</i>
Adventures	Trying new things / visiting new places		<i>6G for live life, maybe like before you. Like imagine if you feel gonna die soon. If you want to do all the things you wanted to do ever since, you can get a chance to finally try for first time, before you pass away,</i>
	Holidays		<i>5G they go on holidays as well so they like are having fun.</i>
	Time with family		<i>6B the holiday</i> <i>R1 why do you think the holidays is more important?</i> <i>6B cuz you're spending time your family</i>
	Visiting new places		<i>R1 Oh, so spending time your family is really important. I think 5B, you said just about visiting new places as well, didn't you....?</i>
Playing	With friends		<i>4B erm the indoor play club where there's like bowling things</i>
	Inside and outside		<i>4B So we can play somewhere without having to be inside with all the other children</i>
	By self		<i>5B He's got good wellbeing cuz he plays on his iPad all day</i> <i>3G I think it's should in the good side cuz you've got all the stuff to ourselves,</i>
Treats and gifts	Foods		<i>R1 okay. So what else is going to make you feel good?</i> <i>5B Some ice cream</i>
	Days outs		<i>5B going somewhere you wanna be?</i> <i>R1 what do you mean?</i> <i>5B if you wanna go to Legoland? Maybe getting treated to go there</i>

Appendix 38: Second level analysis (phase 1) - Exemplar transcript FG3/4

<p>R1 What do you think is really important for your wellbeing? What have we got? Well, go will go around in circles so you don't need to put your hand up. Ok, 4B what have we got?</p> <p>4B to have friends and family</p> <p>R1 So friends. I'm going to do those two separate ones if that's okay.</p> <p>4B Yeah,</p> <p>R1 I think friends and family. Yeah,</p> <p>4G I think it's important for wellbeing to have food and water.</p> <p>R1 OK, so those basic. Food and drink. Basic needs lovely great.</p> <p>3B good to help like other people, just not you like also helping out the poor</p> <p>R1 so helping out others as we had lots of sharing. Didn't we and wanted to be kind to others.</p> <p>4B Having your own space.</p> <p>R1 ok</p> <p>4G Also, making a few choices for yourself.</p> <p>R1 Choice for yourself. Like what?</p> <p>4G erm like making choices like, choosing like, something's happened at. Your parents are just you like sometimes when your your older sisters, no your younger sister make some better big mess and your parents tell but your you to do it but just and you want to make you want to make a choice by yourself by saying by yourself. It's not my mess at that my little sister should clean up because it's her own</p> <p>R1 so is that about having a choice or about being able to?</p> <p>4G do stuff for yourself?</p> <p>R1 do stuff for yourself</p> <p>4G and make sure that other people do their clean up that they do Their own things.</p> <p>R1 I'm going to put say things for yourself, so to be able to say your because in the example, you said it was about your parents it's not me. It was my sister that did it. So, it's about being able to say this is what happened and have your kind of your voice. Do you want me to leave choices up there?</p> <p>4G yeah</p> <p>R1 Okay, do you think?</p> <p>3B yeah</p> <p>4B uh uh</p> <p>R2 Think of things we've talked about before and things even here that we talked about.</p> <p>R1 I've got all this space.</p> <p>4G and we need to fill it</p> <p>R2 Do you want to pass and then the other people have another go, if something comes to we'll have another go?</p> <p>4B Being kind to other people.</p>	<p>[friends] [family]</p> <p>[basic needs]; food and drink [helping others]; the poor</p> <p>[own space]</p> <p>[choices for yourself] ; speaking for yourself</p> <p>[being kind]</p>
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<p>R1 So helping others, I'm going to put it next to helping. 3B you know if you're struggling you can look back and see what you think is important with things that we discussed on the stories if you struggling.</p> <p>R1 Yeah, who's next, 4G?</p> <p>4G Also helping the world</p> <p>R1 ok shall I put helping others slash helping, or what do you mean, Sorry?</p> <p>4G like helping the world make sure it isn't sick and make sure people are OK around the world.</p> <p>R2 How does that help your own wellbeing?</p> <p>4G Like helping the world, like Make sure it's not going to be sick and all of that, and also other people aren't going sick.</p> <p>R2 that about their wellbeing. How does it contribute to your wellbeing?</p> <p>4G by...</p> <p>R2 Is it you just feel good because you're doing...</p> <p>4G something good?</p> <p>R2 Yeah.</p> <p>R1 So helping others feeling good for helping others. Okay. I was just wondering if there was anything if you are you saying about the whole earth or are you saying about where you live when you're saying helping?</p> <p>4G The whole earth.</p> <p>R1 To make it, ok so that kind of leads back to feeling good for helping others. Okay, 3B do you have you got any ideas?</p> <p>3B maybe not have that much friends cuz sometimes you just want to be like on your own.</p> <p>R1 Having a good amount of friends, but also began to have time out, time alone at home space slash time alone. Yeah, okay.</p> <p>4B we...</p> <p>R1 do you want to pass?</p> <p>R2 is it sneaky to look at yesterday's list to remind ourselves what we don't want to lose?</p> <p>4B Winning some awards just some.</p> <p>3B does that really help you?</p> <p>4B yeah</p> <p>R2 is it the winning awards or just being successful in what you do?</p> <p>4B successful?</p> <p>R1 So being success. OK, so this is the first time we did yesterday. We said about helping other people, we've got that about the world. But we've got about keeping the.. Avoiding infections.</p> <p>4G make sure you don't breathe in the carbon emissions.</p> <p>R1 We talked about caring, having enough money. We've got about helping</p> <p>4G school charity</p>	<p>[helping others] : people are not ill, looking after earth</p> <p>[feel good] for helping others</p> <p>[time alone]</p> <p>[being successful]; winning, recognition</p> <p>[looking after the environment] ; health [Helping others] : charity</p>
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Appendix 39: Second level analysis (phase 1) - Exemplar transcript FG5/6

<p>R1 okay what is wellbeing? Wellbeing is... can anybody finish the sentence?</p>	 <p>Is 6G conflating wellbeing and wealth?</p>
<p>6G wellbeing is something like you have much like other people So like wellbeing means for good wellbeing it's mean like you have anything anyone could want and affordable, not good wellbeing means you don't have much things you barely have much things, like anything, R1 so you're saying that wellbeing is all about having everything that you need?</p>	<p>[money] [resources]</p>
<p>6G no like wellbeing is a something that you have but you could not have it next time,</p>	 <p>Wellbeing as a dynamic concept.</p>
<p>R1 so wellbeing can change OK, do we agree with that? Do you think wellbeing stays the same, or do you think it changes?</p>	
<p>5B it changes</p>	
<p>5G it changes because if your parents have got really good the jobs but they get fired or something like that it can change the money that you have and stuff like that</p>	<p>[money]</p>
<p>R1 yep</p>	
<p>5G you couldn't be able to buy enough food or you gonna have to sell your toys.</p>	<p>[basic needs]; food</p>
<p>R1 ok so things can change then changes your life circumstances and you might have different wellbeing</p>	
<p>5G yeah upset</p>	
<p>R2 or your parents just really worries and then then your dad isn't telling you jokes cause he's really worried. They can change how they are. ...</p>	
<p>R1 Okay, so we think that wellbeing changes you said it's something to do with having been having enough things or having things,</p>	<p>[money]</p>
<p>5G yeah</p>	
<p>R1 okay, should we shout out all the things that we think are important to wellbeing? And then we're going to go and we're going to pick them off which ones are top ones, and then we'll be able to find the top ones from. So right? Let's all go around and will keep going. So 6B tell me something about that's good for wellbeing.</p>	
<p>6B someone's personal health</p>	<p>[health]</p>
<p>R1 So your personal health lovely. 5B?</p>	
<p>5B kind</p>	<p>[being kind]; to others</p>
<p>R1 Being kind, so someone is it good for you to be kind to others or for people to be kind to you, or both or</p>	
<p>5B be kind to others, and they'll be kind to you</p>	
<p>R1 Okay. 5G?</p>	<p>[friends]; respect you</p>
<p>5G it's very important that if one of your friends says like you have to have real friends that are good to you and treat you with respect and if they don't and they are being really mean it's really important that you tell an adult</p>	<p>[supportive adults]</p>
<p>R1 OK, so I think you picked up on two things there, so real friends is something we talked about. You said you were saying fake friends are not good things, so it's important to have real friends. And you said</p>	

something about adults. Is there anything else word to add on here about adults?

5G If you feel worried about something that happened you need to report straight away to adults because they can't do anything about it if

R1 so we need adults who...

R2 that we trust that we can tell. Is that what you're saying?

5G yeah you need to trust me them. If you say can you help me? They can't just like erm you can't tell an adult who you don't trust or you feel like suss about them cuz then they could tell the whole world and then you could feel really embarrassed, and stuff

R1 so we adults who we who we trust and is anything about them doing anything as well?

5G they need to act quick and help you.

R1 ok

5G if they don't help you then you can't really trust them.

R1 So yeah, it's important that we. We know we've got adults we can trust an adult or people who can help us, so kind of that support. Okay, 6G.

6G I think it'll be might be like grateful.

R1 For?

6G cuz like if your parents get you something, so like the shoes I have, and you go to school.

R1 Yeah,

6G at someone a school has the same shoes of you like 5G. You should be Grateful that you've got something new

R1 so Grateful for the things you have.

R2 that's a lovely one that you appreciate that people do things for you you don't just take it for granted, yeah?

R1 Grateful for the things you have.

R2 and that people do for you as well as it's a nice one isn't it

R1 things you have, people do for you. Ok back to you 6B?...something else to do with wellbeing?

6B how you get on with others?

R1 tell me a bit more

6B like respect others and they'll respect you back

R1 Okay, is that friends adults?

6B both

R1 both. Yeah respected by and respect for others. What else?

5B loving

R1 Nothing? We just had this great conversation. We talked about all these things that we thought were important for a wellbeing over here.

5G families

R1 ok we got family

5B I said loving

R1 so a loving family

5B yeah


R1 OK.

[supportive adults]; trusting, responsive

[grateful]; resources

[respected] ; respect others, respect you

[family]; loving



Misheard 5B
loving as
nothing

R2 Is that you?

5B I said loving

5G and I said family

Appendix 40: Second level Analysis (phase 2) - Data analysis and theme development

This appendix provides additional detail on the analytic process for phase 2: reflection of the research. This followed the same procedure as second level analysis.

First cycle coding

Deductive themes derived from the live analysis with the children were colour coded, i.e.

Quote	Code label
<i>4G Oh, I know something that does come out of the project is helping others because people that usually don't have this stuff, they're lucky because, we have used our ideas to help them and stuff and calm down, or they can have someone to help them.</i>	[helping others]

Inductive codes were highlighted, and codes labels created, i.e.

Quote	Code label
<i>6G Made it shorter</i>	[less time]
<i>4B 10 because it was a lovely experience. 4B I loved it.</i>	[positive experience]
<i>4B Well because it's really nice. Just like being in like thing. It's like a nice experience.</i>	

Where codes represented the same concept, these were grouped to form new codes, i.e.

Initial codes	Final code
Exciting Enjoyable Amazing Fun Happy Engaging	[Enjoyable]
Less talking and more activities Too much talking	[Less talking and more activities]

Some inductive codes were discarded as they did not answer the research question.

Quote	Code label
<i>6G so to me, it's from there, out your hand up. I've been teaching my friend to do that something a because he shouts all the time. He is probably, but yeah</i>	[applying ground rules from group]

Below is a list of the final codes identified from the data pertaining to phase 2. These were initially organised by strengths and critique.

Strengths	Critique
Being listened to Creativity Challenging Enjoyable Enjoyable activities Helping others Helping school Ideas created Implementation of ideas Learning new things Meeting new people in group Missing lessons Opportunity to do different things in school Positive experience Privilege to participate Proud to be chosen Proud of work in group Proud to be part of group Proud to share ideas Proud to be listened to Recognition Relaxed Safe Working with new people	Group make up Less enjoyable activities Less talking / more activities Less time Missing lessons Missing teachers More breaks Need for improvement and feedback from children Tiring

First cycle codes were collated and grouped into categories. Through repeated cycles of categorisation, categories were refined and themes developed. These are illustrated below.

Theme	Categories	Codes
Engagement	Positive experience	Enjoyable
		Safe
		Relaxed
		Positive experience
	Enjoyable activities	Challenge
		Creativity
		Enjoyable activities
	Barriers to engagement	Less talking and more activities
		Tiring
		Group make up
More breaks		
Less enjoyable activities		
Participation	Opportunity to participate	Privilege to participate
		Opportunity to do different things in school
		Proud to be chosen
	Being listened to	Being listened to
		Proud to be listened to
	Relationships	Meeting new people in group
		Working with new people
		Proud to be part of group
	Missing class	Missing lessons
		Missing teachers
		Less time
	Outcomes	Implementation of plan
Implementation of ideas		
Need for improvement and feedback from children		
Benefits to others		Helping others
		Helping school
Benefits to self		Learning new things
		Recognition
		Pride
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proud of work in group • Proud to share ideas • Proud to be part of group • Proud to be listened to • Proud to be chosen 	

Appendix 41: Second level Analysis (phase 2) - Exemplar quotes

The following tables indicates the codes grouped into each category and example quotes relative to code.

Theme	Categories	Codes	
Engagement	Positive experience	Enjoyable	<i>3B but it felt more fun doing work here.</i> <i>5B 10 because overall, it was just amazing.</i>
		Safe	<i>5B I don't know, it was because we were in a room without anybody else.</i>
		Relaxed	<i>4B thankful relaxed</i>
		Positive experience	<i>4B 10 because it was a lovely experience,</i> <i>4B I loved it.</i> <i>4B Well because it's really nice. Just like being in like thing. It's like a nice experience.</i>
	Enjoyable activities	Creativity	<i>5G My best bit is definitely making the dream schools. ... Because it was fun, and I love art so much. And I also like making a new school cuz it helps the school</i> <i>4G 10 because I liked And creative things</i> <i>R1 oh the dream school?</i> <i>4G yeah... I like that one because erm instead of doing some work we got to do some creative to making the school a better place for all of us.</i>
		Challenge	<i>4G Good level of challenge</i>
		Enjoyable activities	<i>R1 when you had to draw the person with good wellbeing and talk about their school?</i> <i>4B no I like that</i> <i>4G I liked that</i> <i>3B I liked it</i>
	Barriers to engagement	Less talking and more activities	<i>5G Like when you talking, not like when you're talking, but like more activities</i> <i>6G too much talking so my throat hurts.</i>
		Tiring	<i>5B I was tired because we were there for like 5 hours</i>

		Group make up	<p>5G maybe, erm like more children but more adults or like less children and more adults</p> <p>R1 Okay because?</p> <p>5G cuz then you get like more, like there's less people talking in the background</p> <p>5B there'd be less chatter all the time</p>
		More breaks	<p>5B we could do like singing and dancing.</p> <p>R1 OK, tell me a bit more about what you mean about that?</p> <p>5B Like to wake our bodies up because we've been sitting down for loads of time.</p> <p>R1 So a few more movement breaks?</p> <p>3B and 4G Yeah</p>
		Less enjoyable activities	<p>3B felt nervous when we were sharing on our ideas with the adults</p> <p>4G I don't really, I didn't really like the part where we were sitting around and we were doing this project where we have this like big timeline in the middle and we will talk about these children about their worries,</p> <p>R1 yeah the stories</p> <p>4G yeah</p> <p>R1 so why didn't you like that?</p> <p>4G Because I didn't really like that because, I was thinking that some of those people might be people there, but that problem they every every time they have that problem, they don't like to tell anybody. They just wanna keep it to themselves. And also they keep on, they will just keep being sad if they don't</p>
Participation	Opportunity to participate	Privilege to participate	5G And I was like it was like a privilege to be here
		Opportunity to do different things in school	4G having the opportunity to do something different. Like fun things
		Proud to be chosen	5B I'm really proud that I got chose
	Being listened to	Being listened to	5G I liked it because, like, we got our ideas and the grown-ups actually listened to our ideas
		Proud to be listened to	R1 how did you feel that...because you've been listened to? 5G I felt really like proud.

	Relationships	Meeting new people in group	<p>4G We could, we could be meeting people, that we haven't met before</p> <p>R1 what do you mean?</p> <p>4G because when I first came here and I actually didn't really, know anyone here except 4B</p> <p>R1 so you think the group was good because you met all these new people in the group?</p> <p>R2 from different years and the classes</p> <p>5B Yeah, I only knew, I really need them too.</p>
		Working with new people	<p>R2 and working with lovely people, particularly R1 and me!</p> <p>Laughter</p> <p>6G yes yeah</p>
		Proud to be part of group	<p>R1 or being proud that you were part of the group?</p> <p>5G Both</p>
	Missing class	Missing lessons	<p>3B The reason I did excited is because I missed class.</p> <p>6G missing some lessons</p> <p>R1 OK? OK, so being out the classroom and missing some lessons.</p> <p>5B You found that bad?</p> <p>6G yes I like some lessons.</p>
		Missing teachers	<p>6G And [class teacher] left like, but I came here so I didn't got to spend any time with him</p>
		Less time	<p>6G made it shorter</p>
Outcomes	Implementation of plan	Ideas created	<p>5B making new ideas ...for the school.</p>
		Implementation of ideas	<p>6G erm the music idea in lunch got done</p> <p>5G new equipment, and the calm room, calm books, and stuff</p> <p>R1 So hang on, we've got the calm room, you've got the equipment</p> <p>5G friendly bench... we've got more equipment for like playtime and stuff</p>
		Need for improvement and feedback from children	<p>5G the stuff about the worry box that's bad though is like is in the class and if you were going to write about it and the class, everyone would probably see you writing it and, you know, allowed in the classroom at break time so how would you do it? And also it's not really discrete.</p>

			<p><i>R1 OK. Did they feed, did they grown up come back and talk to you about any of the things in project?</i></p> <p><i>6G no</i></p> <p><i>4B no</i></p> <p><i>R1 ok, not yet.</i></p> <p><i>5B They said they would though</i></p>
Benefits to others	Helping others		<p><i>4G Oh, I know something that does come out of the project is helping others because people that usually don't have this stuff, they're lucky because, we have used our ideas to help them and stuff and calm down, or they can have someone to help them.</i></p>
	Helping school		<p><i>6B I got to help the school</i></p> <p><i>4G yeah... I like that one because erm Instead of doing some work we got to do some creative to making the school a better place for all of us.</i></p>
Benefits to self	Learning new things		<p><i>3B No, it's erm happy because erm I was learning new things.</i></p> <p><i>3G learning about wellbeing and helping others</i></p>
	Recognition		<p><i>5G Because like, once the friendly bench was done, my dad was walking from school and I was like, oh, that was my idea. And he was like, that's good.</i></p>
	Pride <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proud of work in group • Proud to share ideas • Proud to be part of group • Proud to be listened to • Proud to be chosen 		<p><i>3B Yeah, I feel proud of myself for doing more work.</i></p> <p><i>R2 to share some good ideas that you have.</i></p> <p><i>3B and that</i></p> <p><i>R1 or being proud that you were part of the group?</i></p> <p><i>5G Both</i></p> <p><i>R1 how did you feel that...because you've been listened to?</i></p> <p><i>5G I felt really like proud.</i></p> <p><i>5B I'm really proud that I got chose</i></p>

Appendix 42: Second level Analysis (phase 2) - Exemplar transcript FG3/4 and FG5/6

From discussions about what the children liked and disliked about the project:

<p><i>R1 so what I would like to know now is what you did like and what you didn't like. So specifically, what things were you doing when you felt absolutely that was a load of rubbish that so boring and what things you were doing you were like yes, I love that part, that was my favourite part thing ...</i></p>	
<p><i>5G My best bit is definitely making the dream schools. R1 Ok because? 5G Because it was fun, and I love art so much. And I also like making a new school cuz it helps the school R1 sorry could you say that again because someone was talking over you so I couldn't get into last, last little bit? You like to?</i></p>	<p>[creativity] [enjoyable activities] [fun] [helping the school]</p>
<p><i>5G help the school R1 help the school.</i></p>	
<p><i>5B stop doing that with the table R1 ok so making the dream school, did anything else, like making the dream school? 4G me, definitely 3B hmm R1 a few hands, did you not like it? ...you did? We all liked it? 4G Yes 5B durh 4B it was amazing, no questions</i></p>	<p>[enjoyable activities]</p>
<p><i>R1 Okay okay, fab thanks 5G. Anything else that we did like or didn't like? I don't mind which way we go around, erm 5B? 5B making new ideas .. R1 ok 5B ...for the school. R1 anything in particular that you are talking about?</i></p>	<p>[ideas created]</p>
<p><i>R1 I can't hear you 5B erm no, I just liked the ideas, R1 so just like in general being able to come up with the idea that we came out with in the end? 5B and the football picture I liked R1 okay so making new ideas in general, coming up with some ideas coming up with solutions, and sharing that, fab ok. 6G?</i></p>	
<p><i>6G I thing I've not liked... R1 hang on let me get my red pen, go on then P/B/W/3B Ohh (shock noises) R1 it's absolutely fine to not like things, it's ok</i></p>	
<p><i>6G missing some lessons R1 OK? OK, so being out the classroom and missing some lessons. 5B You found that bad? 6G yes I like some lessons. 5B I mean, I like maths favourite subject.</i></p>	<p>[missing lessons]</p>

R1 ok what would have been better 6G?

R1 missing lessons

R1 if 6G thinks missing lessons actually was difficult. What, how could we made it better?

6G Because you're learning, if you're not there how can you learn and we are doing SATs soon

R1 Yeah,

6G so we have to mostly be there

R2 but it's what could we've done if we wanted to get children's ideas,

6G made it shorter

R1 do you think we could have done everything in the time? Do you think we could have, erm were there things would have got rid of that weren't so or more important?

5B Yeah

R1 Can you think of anything that wasn't...?

6G er making that poor person

R1 so you'd cut out so the poor person and the good wellbeing person

R1 what does everyone else think? Does anyone think that was not very useful piece of the task?

4G I don't know

4B hmm

5B not really

3B no

R1 when you had to draw the person with good wellbeing and talk about their school

4B no I like that

4G I liked that

3B I liked it

5B it was fun, but it was kind of boring at the same

R1 do you think it was helpful to understand wellbeing?

5G it was helpful kind of

R1 again we've got a mixed,

4G feeling?

R1 mixed opinions

R1 4G what are you saying cuz I can't quite...

4B we are going to have to rock paper scissors this

R1 what do you think about that one?

4G erm

R1 About when you drew the person, we said we were going to buy them for their birthday, you know, what they got on with the school and those kind of things.

4G I like that one

5B it was a mix max

4G I like that one. I think I was like a bit a bit useful because because, those things might be the same as the real people we have here

R1 okay so was able to make it a bit more in reality?

4B in reality

[less time]

[enjoyable activities]

[Less enjoyable activities]

Illustrates the benefit of this activity in rooting wellbeing in more concrete understanding