A REALISTIC EVALUATION EXPLORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF LEARNING (SEAL) PROGRAMME ACROSS A WHOLE-SCHOOL CONTEXT

by

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For my Mum,

who inspired me to continue my professional development,

and who has supported me all the way through.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the ways in which the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme is being implemented and maintained within the context of a first school identified as an example of good practice using a Realistic Evaluation approach. The findings are used to inform the development of a Programme Specification relating to SEAL implementation. Methods employed to gather this information included interviewing school staff and parents, a focus group with pupils, observations, and analysis of SEAL documents and artefacts. The findings have emphasised the importance of a supportive school ethos, a high level of interaction across the school context including promotion of 'social time' for pupils and staff, integration of SEAL across all school activities, and a high level of consistency in approach to behaviour and teaching of social and emotional skills across all staff. Specific aspects of the role of the SEAL Coordinator, and specific characteristics of members of staff delivering SEAL have also been highlighted as important in order to allow the mechanisms to function effectively. Through using a Realistic Evaluation framework for the research, it is hoped that the theory (or Programme Specification) developed will be of relevance and applicability to other settings, in order that understanding and knowledge about SEAL implementation can be further developed through future research studies.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This volume comprises the first part of a two-volume thesis completed whilst working as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) within a Local Authority during Years 2 and 3 of my professional training, and studying for a Doctorate in Applied Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Birmingham. Volume 1 consists of a literature review in the area of social and emotional learning programmes in schools, a description of the methodology involved in my research study, presentation of the results, a discussion of the findings, and my reflections upon the research process.

1.1 Reasons underpinning the choice of research study

The reasons I decided to undertake this research study were twofold. Firstly, relating to my interest in social and emotional learning (SEL) and an identification of a need for research particularly within the area of implementation of SEL programmes. Secondly, relating to the priorities of the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) within which I was employed.

My interest in SEL began when I worked in various specialist provisions with children experiencing a range of social and emotional difficulties, and I was delivering programmes of support for these children using resources from SEL programmes. As a Graduate Psychologist for 2 years I then worked within an Educational

Psychology Service which was training schools to implement the newly developed Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme, and I attended this training alongside many senior staff from schools who were being introduced to the idea of teaching social and emotional (SE) skills in the classroom. During this time I also participated in a project group charged with raising awareness of SEAL with schools and parents.

These experiences led to an awareness of a heightened anxiety in schools around undertaking the teaching of SEL and the lack of support and expertise that staff felt they had access to. I also became aware of the range of attitudes towards SEL programmes, and of the differing degrees to which staff felt that this was an important or relevant aspect of their work.

As a Trainee Educational Psychologist, I have worked within three different Local Authorities (LAs) and with a range of schools, and have experienced a wide variety in the ways in which the SEAL programme has been promoted, and implemented in these different settings. As part of my training I have examined and discussed with other trainees and University tutors the research literature in the field of SEL, and I have become increasingly aware of the limitations relating to the rigorousness of the research studies conducted, the lack of consensus surrounding the theoretical underpinnings of SEL, and the varying terminologies and constructs in existence within this field. I have also become aware of the intense focus upon these issues, and a lack of focus upon the practical implementation of the programme, despite the programme being used within the majority of settings I worked. I felt that there was

limited use in knowing whether or not the programme had led to changes in social and emotional skills, when the measurement of these skills was questionable in itself, and the way in which the programme was being delivered varied immensely between different settings, making comparison of the improvements in these skills extremely difficult. I began to be of the opinion that it would be far more valuable to schools to be given support and advice about ways in which to implement the programme, and which the most important components were, in order to focus their efforts on effectively implementing the programme within their setting. This therefore contributed to my interest and motivation to conduct a research study in this area.

The second reason for this choice in research study related to my employment within an EPS, and the requirement that my research correspond with the service priorities. I proposed three different areas of research that were of interest to me, and the Principal Educational Psychologist agreed to SEAL because it was in line with the service priorities. At this time the EPS were involved in the Strategic Group for delivery of the SEAL programme across the County, and were therefore engaged in disseminating, monitoring, and evaluating SEAL, and supporting schools in their delivery of the programme.

1.2 My identity as a researcher

As outlined above, my identity as a researcher is rooted in my experiences as a practitioner in the field of educational psychology for four years, and prior to this working at 'grass roots' level with children, young people and young adults with a

range of social and emotional difficulties. I am coming from a standpoint where I am not just interested in 'what works' from a practitioner's point of view, but in 'how' it works and 'why' it works, in order that I can implement it successfully, (and in my current role, support others to implement it successfully). My motivations are very much in line with the idea that evaluation of programme should deal with real life settings, and that evaluation should be of use to practitioners in the field.

My own epistemological beliefs hold that the subjective and the way in which others make meaning and interpret what is happening around them is important, and has a significant impact upon how programmes are implemented in educational settings. However, I also believe that even when the unobservable thought processes, attitudes and beliefs of participants are taken into consideration in research, that it is still possible to build theory that takes these into account and can be tested out, and in this way can contribute to scientific knowledge and understanding of phenomena. My own beliefs are therefore in line with a realist approach to research.

1.3 Overview of Volume 1

The first part of this volume (Chapter 2) reviews the research literature which examines the construct of SEL, the effectiveness of SEL programmes, the important components within SEL programmes, and factors that are important in implementing SEL and other programmes in schools targeting children and young people.

The second part of this volume (Chapter 3) then proceeds to examine the epistemological position of this research study, and outlines the Realistic Evaluation approach which this study adopts as its framework. This chapter then describes the methodological approaches and specific research methods employed, and the ethical considerations that were taken into account.

The third part of this volume (Chapters 4 and 5) describes the findings of the research in the form of a Programme Specification for the SEAL programme in a case study school, and relates the findings to previous research studies and identifies the limitations of this study and the practical and theoretical implications. Finally, Chapter 6 allows me to reflect upon the research process and upon my own learning throughout this experience.

CHAPTER 2:
THE SEAL PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION:
A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the social and political context of the development of the

SEAL programme and other social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes. The

SEAL programme is then described in more detail, and the research that led to the

development of SEAL is explored. Difficulties identifying and measuring the concept

of social and emotional skills are discussed, and definitions of these skills are

considered. Research that has been conducted since the SEAL programme began

is then reviewed, and the chapter focuses particularly on studies which have

investigated the factors affecting the implementation of SEL programmes in schools.

Due to the scarcity of robust studies investigating the implementation of SEL

programmes specifically, research which has examined the wider implementation of

prevention and promotion programmes for children and adolescents is then

considered in order to inform this Realistic Evaluation exploring the implementation

specifically of the SEAL programme. Finally, the evidence supporting SEL

programmes is critiqued and the criticisms that have been put forward relating to the

underlying principles and content of the SEAL programme are explored.

2.2   The social and political context of the development of
programmes in schools promoting social and emotional skills

Within the UK there is some evidence that children's emotional well-being may be a

concern. UNICEF's report (2007) on children's well-being indicated that the UK fell

within the bottom third of 21 industrialised countries for children's rankings of material, educational and subjective well-being, family and peer relationships and behaviour and risks (five of the six dimensions reviewed). Indeed, the UK ranked at the bottom of all 21 countries when the average ranking position across all six dimensions of wellbeing measured was calculated.

Green et al (2004) undertook a large scale survey involving 7997 children and young people, and found that 10% of children and young people had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder. Research in socially deprived areas has suggested that this level could be even higher (Davis et al, 2000; Melzer et al, 2000). Davis et al (2000) suggest on the basis of their findings that the level of need far exceeded the resources available to these young people.

It is a matter of debate on how best to address the mental health needs of young people, and it has been argued that the degree of mental health need calls for a preventative macro-systemic approach (Albee and Gullotta, 1997; Prilleltensky and Nelson, 2000). Recent legislation in the UK supports a move towards promoting children's positive mental health and well-being with messages that mental health is *"everybody's business"* (DoH, 2004, p. 7). Government reports and guidelines for funding have also emphasised the need for early and targeted intervention to promote health and social care of children and young people across sectors and disciplines (DfES, 2003; Pettitt, 2003; Children Act, 2004; DoH, 2004).

There has been an increasing recognition of the importance of 'Tier 1 staff' in identifying and supporting children with mental health difficulties (Aggett et al, 2006). Tier 1 staff operate at the primary level of care and include teachers as well as staff from social care and health, such as family GPs and health visitors. The view is increasingly being put forward that schools are in an ideal position to intervene to support children with mental health needs (Greig, 2007; Graham, 2005; Rait et al, 2010; Stallard; 2002).

The focus upon promoting emotional health and well-being in schools has been further embedded as part of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children agenda (DfES, 2003), the National Healthy Schools programme (DfEE,1999), and more recently; the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidelines (NICE, 2008), and the review of the primary curriculum (Rose, 2009). A major national strategy has been rolled out across primary and secondary education settings focused upon developing these skills; the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme (DfES, 2005; DCSF, 2007). However, the extent to which the new government will continue to support these initiatives in unknown at this time.

2.3 The SEAL programme

The SEAL programme originated from the Primary Behaviour and Attendance Pilot government initiative which took place from 2003 to 2005, and formed one component of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children agenda (DfES, 2003). One strand of this pilot initiative involved curriculum work focused upon the social

and emotional aspects of learning (the curriculum materials, or SEAL strand) which culminated in the development of the SEAL programme (DfES, 2005). The SEAL materials are designed to be incorporated into the whole-school curriculum and aim to promote five aspects of social and emotional skills: self-awareness; managing feelings; motivation; empathy; and social skills (as proposed in Goleman's model of emotional intelligence, 1996). Definitions of these five aspects are given in Table 1 (DCSF, 2007).

Humphrey et al (2010) report that SEAL is currently being used in approximately 90% of primary schools and 70% of secondary schools nationally. The overall aims of the programme are to promote positive behaviour, attendance, learning and well-being (DCSF, 2007).

Table 1. Definitions of the five social and emotional skills promoted through SEAL (taken from DCSF, 2007; p.5-6).

Skill	Definition
Self-awareness	Knowing and valuing myself and understanding how I think and feel. When we can identify and describe our beliefs, values, and feelings, and feel good about ourselves, our strengths and our limitations, we can learn more effectively and engage in positive interactions with others.
Self-regulation (managing feelings)	Managing how we express emotions, coping with and changing difficult and uncomfortable feelings, and increasing and enhancing positive and pleasant feelings. When we have strategies for expressing our feelings in a positive way and for helping us to cope with difficult feelings and feel more positive and comfortable, we can concentrate better, behave more appropriately, make better relationships, and work more cooperatively and productively with those around us.
Motivation	Working towards goals, and being more persistent, resilient and optimistic. When we can set ourselves goals, work out effective strategies for reaching those goals, and respond effectively to setbacks and difficulties, we can approach learning situations in a positive way and maximize our ability to achieve our potential.
Empathy	Understanding others' thoughts and feelings and valuing and supporting others. When we can understand, respect, and value other people's beliefs, values, and feelings, we can be more effective in making relationships, working with, and learning from, people from diverse backgrounds.
Social skills	Building and maintaining relationships and solving problems, including interpersonal ones. When we have strategies for forming and maintaining relationships, and for solving problems and conflicts with other people, we have the skills that can help us achieve all of these learning outcomes, for example by reducing negative feelings and distraction while in learning situations, and using our interactions with others as an important way of improving our learning experience.

The SEAL programme is delivered in three 'waves' of intervention: whole-school

intervention; small group intervention; and individual intervention, as based upon the

National Strategies model represented in Figure 1 below (DfES, 2005).

Figure 1:   National Strategies waves of intervention model
(taken from DfES, 2005, p.13).
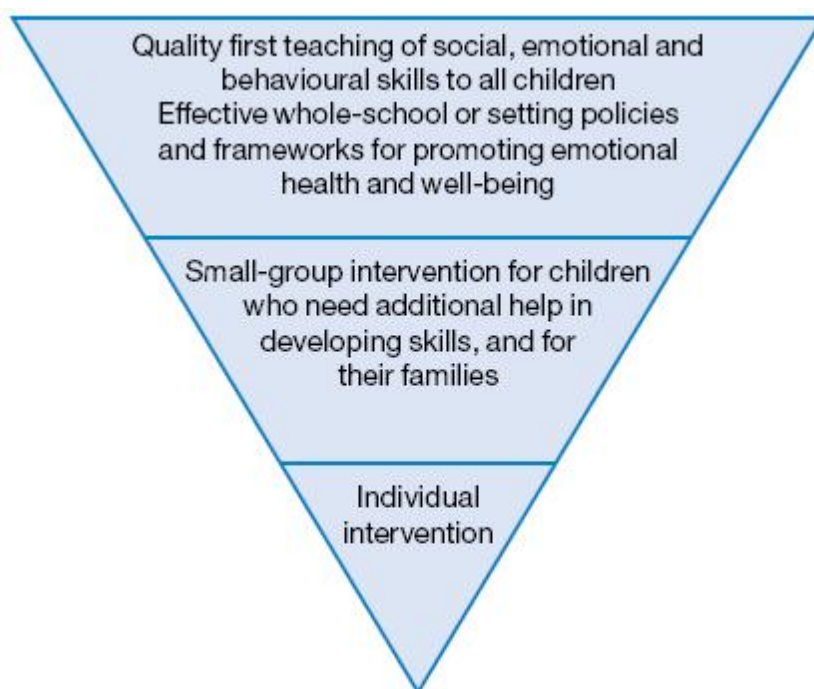
SEAL is a structured framework across the whole curriculum for developing social,

emotional and behavioural skills for all pupils. The SEAL materials are organised

according to seven themes: *New Beginnings*; *Getting On and Falling Out; Say No to

Bullying; Going for Goals; Good to Be Me*; and *Relationships and Changes*. The

programme involves a spiral curriculum which revisits each of the seven themes (and

associated skills) each school year.

There are activities for staff development linked to each of the seven themes, and

also ideas for involving parents or carers, and for family activities that can be

undertaken at home. There are also differentiated resources for children needing additional help to develop social, emotional and behavioural skills within a small-group context (Wave 2 intervention). The package aims to enable a shared understanding of strategies to be reached across the school, home and community settings around the child.

The SEAL guidance encourages schools to consider alternative approaches to implementing the programme so that it can be more tailored to their own priorities for school improvement, and their particular context. Humphrey et al (2010) explain that the underlying aim of this was to avoid a prescribed approach as has been adopted in the USA, and to encourage ownership and sustainability of SEAL programmes.

2.4 The research and theory upon which SEAL was based

The SEAL materials place emphasis upon Goleman's (1996) model of emotional intelligence. Goleman (1996) describes the benefit of emotional literacy courses for children's emotional and social competence, their ability to learn, and their behaviour both within and outside of the classroom.

Weare (2010) explained that whilst Goleman's work increased focus upon measuring emotional intelligence, and has provoked further work upon analysing whether the construct itself can be recognised, it has also led to much controversy and some hostility due to the scientific connotations and expectations associated with the term 'intelligence.' The academic rigor of Goleman's work has been questioned, and it

has been debated as to whether there is such a construct as emotional intelligence, and whether this ability is innate or learnt (Ciarrochi et al, 2001).

Mayer and Cobbs (2000) criticise the move towards basing educational policy on social and emotional learning, claiming that policy makers were more informed by journalistic accounts of the science, than by the developing literature on emotional intelligence. They described the way in which the formal definition of emotional intelligence began to be discussed in the scientific literature around 1990 (Salovey and Mayer, 1990) and just five years later the concept became popularised in Goleman's bestselling book *Emotional Intelligence*, and featured on the front cover of TIME magazine (Gibbs, 1995).

Goleman's book claimed that scientists had found a link between emotional intelligence and prosocial behaviour, and that emotional intelligence can be more powerful than IQ in predicting life success. Daniel Goleman's claim that emotional intelligence can be virtually all learned contributed to references in policy to fostering and enhancing emotional intelligence (Duhon-Haynes et al, 1996). The research into emotional intelligence was understood to be underlying the work into social and emotional learning, and these two domains became closely identified, with more than 22 programmes of social and emotional learning being tested in schools by 1997 (Elias et al, 1997).

The development of SEAL was also based upon research by Weare and Gray (2003) who were commissioned by the DfES to investigate ways that children's emotional

and social competence and wellbeing could most effectively be developed at national and local level. Weare and Gray (2003) conducted a review of the literature, interviews with experts in the field, and case studies with five good practice LAs. This report highlighted the importance of taking a holistic approach across the whole-school, and which is aimed at all pupils. They promoted a long-term developmental approach to initiatives, with problems being targeted early in a low-key, flexible and non-labelling way as part of a whole-school approach. Their evidence showed that creating an environment which fosters warm relationships, participation, pupil and teacher autonomy, and clarity regarding expectations, rules and boundaries, would promote emotional competence and wellbeing. They also recommended explicit teaching and learning programmes to promote emotional and social competence, a focus upon teachers' emotional and social needs, and continuing professional development opportunities for teachers regarding emotional and social competence. These recommendations, as well as many others, formed the foundation of the SEAL programme.

2.5 The concept of social and emotional skills

The professional and academic literature contains many different terms to describe these '*social and emotional skills'* including '*social and emotional learning'* (SEL) in the US (CASEL, 2009); *'emotional literacy'* (EL) (Antidote, 2003; Park et al, 2003); *'social and emotional competence'* (Elias et al, 1997); and *'social and emotional intelligence'* (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

Some researchers in this field assert that it is necessary to differentiate between these concepts (Weare and Gray, 2003), but Wigelsworth et al (2007) suggest that the terms are largely interchangeable due to the similarity in definitions of the terms, the domains assessed through available measures of these concepts, and also the common theoretical roots upon which they are based. However, some researchers have pointed out the broad nature of these definitions (Petrides and Furnham, 2001), leading to a lack of conceptual meaning and therefore an unobtainable exact scientific construct (Matthews et al, 2004; Zeidner et al, 2002). Wigelsworth et al (2010) point out that there is also inconsistency and disagreement surrounding the measurement and definition of social and emotional skills. It has been questioned as to whether measurement has indeed succeeded in measuring anything except basic personality traits (Humphrey et al, 2009).

Programmes said to be promoting social and emotional learning interventions can also be very heterogeneous in terms of the content of the intervention, the expected outcomes, and the target audience. For example; Catalano et al (2004) conducted an influential review and included programmes seeking to achieve any one or more of 15 objectives (for example; promoting resilience, and social competence).

Denham (2005) attempted to unify the domains identified by major theoretical models (Rose-Krasnor, 1997; Payton et al, 2000) in his framework of social and emotional competence, represented below in Figure 2. However, Wigelsworth et al (2010) highlight the difficulty in that there are limited tools available that can accurately assess the different domains represented within this framework, although it does

provide a unifying construct bringing together a number of different competing

models.

Figure 2: Denham's (2005) framework of social and emotional competence

(taken from Wigelsworth, 2010; p.177)

Emotional competence skills	Self-awareness	Understanding self emotions
	Self-management	Emotional and behavioural regulation
	Social awareness	Understanding emotions Empathy/sympathy
Relational/pro-social skills	Social problem solving	
	Relationship skills	Cooperation Listening skills Turn-taking Seeking help

A definition of social and emotional learning (SEL) provided by the Collaborative for

Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) comprises;

> *"The process through which children and adults acquire the*
>
> *knowledge, attitudes and skills to recognise and manage their*
>
> *emotions, set and achieve positive goals, demonstrate caring and*
>
> *concern for others, establish and maintain positive relationships,*
>
> *make responsible decisions, [and] handle interpersonal situations*
>
> *effectively"* (Payton et al, 2008; p.5-6).

This definition incorporates both social and emotional domains of competency which is consistent with other definitions which are widely accepted (for example; Zins et al, 2004). This definition will be utilised in this report to refer to learning programmes such as SEAL which aim to develop children's social and emotional skills, with Denham's (2005) model of social and emotional competence also borne in mind when considering the specific skills and behaviours that SEL programmes are aiming to promote.

2.6   The research evidence supporting social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes in education

Durlak et al (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of 213 universal school-based SEL programmes for children aged 5-18 years (only including studies which had used a control group). Durlak et al (2011) found significant positive effects of SEL programmes on targeted social-emotional competencies as well as pupils' attitudes towards themselves, others and school. Increases in prosocial behaviours, reductions in conduct and internalising problems, and improvements in academic performance (by 11 percentile points) were also found. In those studies measuring longer term outcomes; effects remained statistically significant for at least six months.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidance in 2008 relating to promoting children's social and emotional well being, based upon a review of the research in this area. The evidence statements issued pointed to the value of multi-component programmes, which include training for teachers,

development and support for parents, and a curriculum for social skills development. The statements also indicated the value of changes to the school environment and ethos, incorporating ways of behaving, and the promotion of positive social values into every aspect of school. In addition cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) based approaches were indicated as of value, to be delivered for example with individual and small groups of children to help reduce anxiety or depression.

The guidance endorsed a comprehensive whole-school approach, and universal programmes for the integration of social and emotional wellbeing into all subject areas. The guidance also pointed to support for parents, the identification and assessment of children showing the early signs of social and emotional difficulties, and the provision of targeted approaches for these children. The NICE guidance stated that it should be considered in the context of the SEAL programme (DfES, 2005), the Healthy Schools programme (DfES, 2005), and related community initiatives.

There are the beginnings of supporting evidence from brain studies which is suggesting that developing better cognitive-affect regulation in the prefrontal regions of the cortex through SEL programmes might affect central executive cognitive functions (Greenberg, 2006). As well as within-child explanations for why SEL programmes promote positive outcomes and change in behaviour, research has also suggested that environmental, instructional and interpersonal support can also promote school performance (Durlak et al, 2011). Figure 3 describes the ways in which this support can lead to behaviour change.

Figure 3: Environmental, instructional and interpersonal support (adapted from Durlak et al, 2011; p. 418)

Peer and adult norms that convey high expectations and support for academic success

Interpersonal, instructional, and environmental supports produce better school performance through:

Safe and orderly environments that encourage and reinforce positive classroom behaviour

Caring teacher–student relationships that foster commitment and bonding to school

Engaging teaching approaches such as proactive classroom management and cooperative learning

2.7   Evaluations of the SEAL programme

This section will examine key research studies which have investigated the effectiveness of the SEAL programme. As part of their evaluation of the Behaviour and Attendance Pilot, Hallam et al (2006) undertook some qualitative research through interviews and questionnaires with Local Authority (LA) co-ordinators, staff in schools, parents and pupils in 16 good practice schools to investigate the impact of the SEAL programme. Hallam et al (2006) found that children showed improvements in social skills, relationships and awareness of emotion in others after the SEAL programme had been implemented, but they suggested that increasing age could have also contributed to these improvements. In the absence of a control group it is not clear whether other factors may have also impacted upon these findings.

However, children in Key Stage 2 were found to show less positive attitudes towards school and towards their relationships with teachers, and also had less positive perceptions of academic work after the SEAL programme had been implemented. Hallam et al (2006) question whether the increasing age of the children might have been underlying this change in attitude rather than the SEAL programme, because they found age-related differences generally with pupils becoming more negative in their attitude with age. They also found that girls showed more positive responses than boys in most of the measures.

Hallam et al (2006) also found that the SEAL programme had helped staff to understand their pupils, led to a better understanding of the importance of social,

emotional and behavioural skills for children, and therefore changed the way in which staff members dealt with incidents and listened to pupils. Their findings suggested that the programme had changed staffs' behaviour (such as becoming more aware that they are role models for pupils), and had improved feelings of confidence in managing behavioural difficulties in pupils. For example, approaching issues in a calmer and a more positive manner, and raising the profile of staff members dealing with these issues such as teaching assistants (TAs) and lunchtime supervisors who were viewed as part of the team. Staff members felt that there had been a positive impact upon children's behaviour and wellbeing, and that classrooms and playgrounds were calmer.

However, some schools experienced difficulties convincing staff that the programme would work, and understanding of social, emotional and behavioural skills was found to be lacking in some instances. There were also some children with more significant needs and difficult home circumstances that had not benefitted from the programme and in some cases had 'rebelled' against SEAL, for example by making a name for themselves as the school 'bully.'

Hallam et al's (2006) study has been criticised for its lack of a control group, and potential bias in selection of teaching staff as the criteria are largely unspecified as to how the teachers were selected (Craig, 2009). The finding that pupils' attitudes were less positive after the intervention, particularly for boys, does not support the success of the intervention. In the absence of a control group it is impossible to clarify whether this is, as Hallam et al (2006) suggest, due to developmental issues. Craig

(2009) argues therefore that this study did not provide sufficient evidence to justify the roll-out of SEAL nationally.

Hallam et al's (2006) evaluation of the Primary Behaviour and Attendance Pilot also highlighted that there was a high degree of variability in the way in which SEAL was being implemented in the 16 good practice schools in which they conducted the evaluation. For example; in some schools the SEAL programme was being delivered with particular year groups, whereas in other schools SEAL was delivered across the whole school. The degree to which SEAL was incorporated into the existing curriculum, or given a specific focus within the school, and the frequency with which SEAL was being taught also differed significantly across schools. These kinds of variations in the implementation of SEAL make evaluating the programme across settings very difficult.

From analysis of this data, Hallam et al (2006) were able to identify factors which were perceived to be contributing to the success of the SEAL programme. These are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Factors contributing to the success of the SEAL programme

Factors identified which contribute to the success of the SEAL Programme (Hallam et al, 2006)
1. The commitment of the senior management team.
2. Allowing sufficient time for quality staff training, and for staff to plan how SEAL is to be implemented.
3. Appointing a designated coordinator in school.
4. Funding to enable staff to visit other schools where SEAL is working well and to pay for support from the LA in the initial stages of implementation.
4. The focus on topics over a period of time such as a term or half term within a spiral curriculum so that children could really engage with the issues.
5. The adoption of a whole-school approach, everyone in the school working together (all staff, not just the teachers), consistency in language and approach to behaviour, and everyone in the school doing the same thing so that they can all relate to the issue being discussed.
6. The importance of Assemblies in reinforcing work in the classroom, motivating children, engaging parents, and showing the commitment and participation of head teachers.
7. Building on and integrating SEAL with existing work (for example, fitting in with existing PHSE work or Circle Time, and linking with national policies and frameworks).
8. Involvement of parents in SEAL.
9. Signposting staff to other services to meet their own emotional needs as well as children's emotional needs (the SEAL programme may highlight the emotional and social problems of some children that need additional support).

Humphrey et al (2009) highlighted the dearth of research investigating the practices,

processes and the factors which are characteristic of the SEAL small-group

interventions (Wave 2 interventions). Through case studies in five primary schools

identified as 'lead practice' by their Local Authorities, Humphrey et al (2009) were

able to develop a tentative model summarising the processes which are involved in the implementation of primary SEAL group interventions (represented in Figure 4). The model proposes linear and recursive processes involved in implementation of the small groups. For example; ground work and staff involvement are identified as important foundations which need to be in place in order for schools to be ready to implement the intervention. However, effective implementation and delivery processes such as the experience and skills of the group facilitator, and the provision of rewards and reinforcement, can support the forming of robust foundations for future interventions.

Research conducted since SEAL programmes have been rolled-out across the country has tended to examine whether or not the desired outcomes have been achieved by taking measures before and after SEAL is introduced. Research has not been engaged to the same extent in investigating whether the important elements recommended by researchers such as Weare and Gray (2003) have actually been put into practise as part of the SEAL programme, and if so *how*.

Figure 4: An implementation process model for primary SEAL small group work (Humphrey et al, 2009; p. 225).
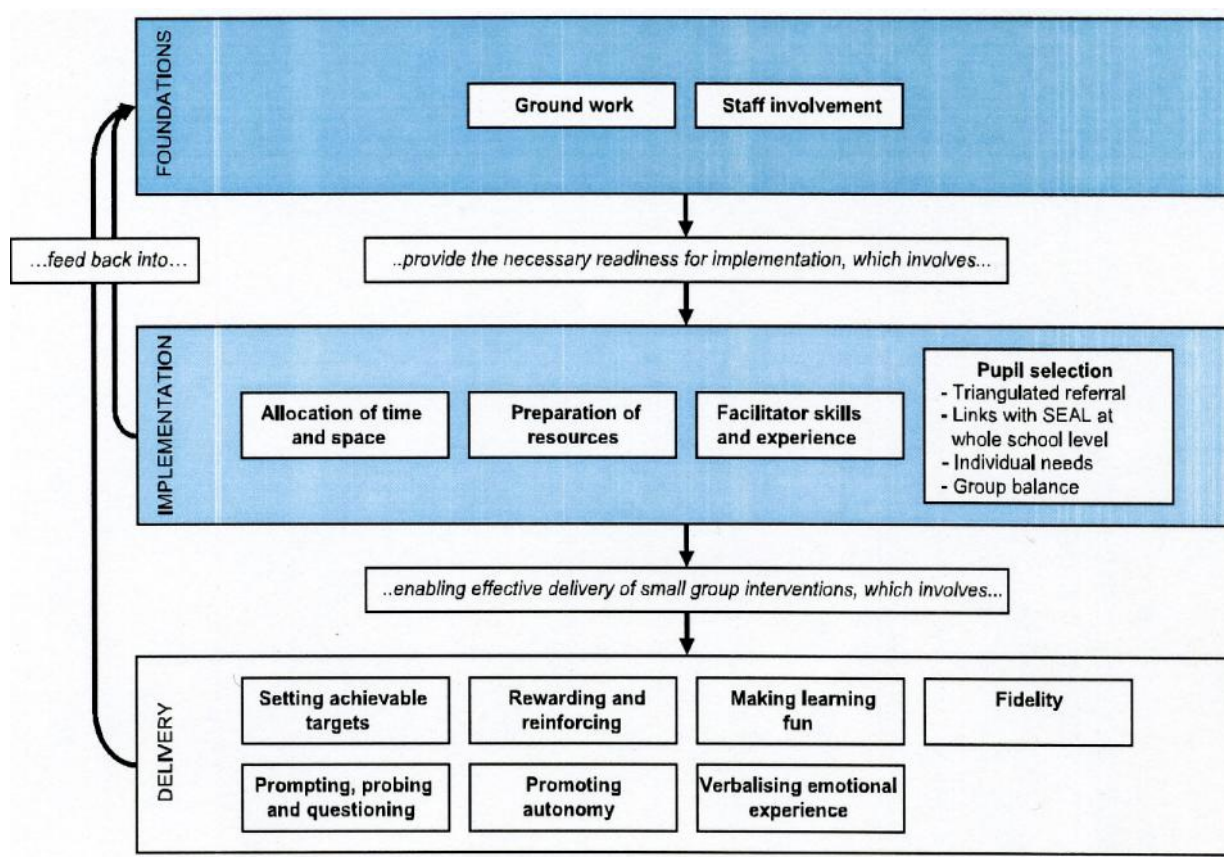
Research in the area of SEL interventions has primarily focused upon quantifiable outcomes, and whether the intervention leads to improved social skills or reductions in difficult behaviours (Humphrey et al, 2009; Shucksmith et al, 2007). Humphrey et al (2009) emphasise the importance of this kind of research in establishing whether or not the intervention is scientifically credible, in order for educators to be able to make evidence-based decisions about whether or not the desired outcomes are likely to be achieved through particular interventions. For example; the recently published Targeted Mental Health in Schools Project (2008) offers evidence about 'what works' for schools to decide upon interventions in response to a range of mental health needs. However, what is often missed in these studies is an exploration of what it is

about the intervention, the context in which it takes place and how the intervention is delivered in a real-life context, that leads to the outcomes measured.

Hallam et al (2006) have provided a fruitful starting point for theory development but have not attempted to develop the theory base further regarding the processes and mechanisms involved and how these interact in implementation in the same way as Humphrey et al (2009) have succeeded in doing with their analysis of small-group implementation processes. The Wave 1 intervention of SEAL involves far more complex processes than those analysed by Humphrey et al at Wave 2, which all interact at different organisational levels within a whole-school system, and across a range of individuals and contexts. As recognised by Hallam et al (2006), there are a range of differing models of implementation of SEAL, and it is unclear what it is about these models that is contributing to the outcomes measured. It is of limited use knowing that SEAL is effective if it is not known *why* it is effective, and what the mechanisms are that schools are using in order to effectively implement SEAL. The next section will describe research which has investigated more generally the factors impacting upon implementation of programmes targeting social and emotional skills, which therefore might also be relevant in the implementation of SEAL.

2.8 Important components of school-based programmes aiming to promote social and emotional skills

Green et al (2005) investigated the effectiveness of interventions for primary school children which aim to improve social and emotional well-being, through examining

eight reviews investigating the effectiveness of interventions including data from 322 primary studies. They concluded that interventions focusing upon promoting mental health, self esteem and coping outcomes within the broader school climate were most effective.

Wells et al (2003) reviewed seventeen studies which evaluated a universal approach to promoting mental health. They concluded that there was positive evidence for the effectiveness of whole-school programmes involving changes to the school climate, as opposed to brief class-based programmes aiming to prevent mental illness.

Specific factors which have been identified to be important features of the process of implementation of school-based mental health programmes (Rones and Hoagwood, 2000), have included:

- programme implementation which is consistent;
- including peers, parents and teachers;
- using multiple modalities such as programmes focusing upon cognitive processes, emotions, behaviour and the environment;
- integrating the content of the programme into the general classroom curriculum; and
- adopting programme components that are developmentally appropriate.

Adi et al (2007) also reviewed thirty-one studies that investigated universal school-based interventions to promote mental wellbeing in primary aged children. They also found that the highest quality evidence was related to programmes which were multi-

component and addressed the school environment, classroom curricula and included programmes for parents. They found that training and ongoing supervision for teachers was an important component, and that parent components tended to address parenting skills and parent-child relationships. Adi et al (2007) also found that multi-component programmes such as these were typically long-term programmes delivered for over a year. However, they pointed out that many of the programmes reviewed were researched in the US rather than the UK, and that whereas similar programmes are being implemented in the UK, these have not been subject to the same robust trials.

These review studies suggest that implementation of school-based programmes to promote social and emotional well-being should be universal and impact upon the whole-school climate, should modify the school environment, should address cognitive and behaviour strategies, and should involve parents.

Durlak et al (2010) found that outcomes of after-school programmes seeking to improve children and adolescents' personal and social skills were moderated by four features of the programmes; being *sequenced, active, focused* and *explicit*. These features are described in Table 3 below. Durlak et al (2010) viewed these components of programmes to be important in combination rather than in isolation. The meta-analysis of Durlak et al (2011) also found that these four features moderated outcomes of universal SEL school-based programmes.

Table 3: SAFE programme features

SAFE acronym	Recommended practice for effective skill training. Durlak et al (2010), p.295
Sequenced	***a) Does the program use a connected and coordinated set of activities to achieve their objectives relative to skill development?*** Research has suggested that staff will be more effective if a sequenced step-by-step approach to skills training is utilised.
Active	***b) Does the program use active forms of learning to help youth learn new skills?*** Research has shown that active learning that allows practice of skills promotes effective skills training.
Focused	***c) Does the program have at least one component devoted to developing personal or social skills?*** The programme should focus specific time and attention on training of the target skill.
Explicit	***d) Does the program target specific SEL skills rather than targeting skills or positive development in general terms?*** Training should clearly define goals.

The next section looks more broadly at the literature investigating implementation factors of prevention and promotion programmes targeting children and young people. The same depth of analysis of implementation factors is not yet developed to this stage within the area of SEL, and therefore the broader literature is explored in order to inform this research study.

2.9   Research investigating the implementation of prevention and promotion programmes for children and young people

'Implementation' can be defined as;

> *"…what a program consists of when it is delivered in a particular setting"*
>
> (Durlak and Dupree, 2008, p. 329).

Durlak and Dupree (2008) examined 483 quantitative studies investigating the implementation of prevention and health promotion programmes for children and adolescents. They found strong evidence that effective implementation was related to better outcomes of intervention programmes. They investigated a further 59 studies that had assessed different aspects of implementation, and found that higher levels of implementation were related to positive outcomes particularly where the studies had assessed *fidelity* (how much the intervention adheres to or replicates the originally intended programme) and *dosage* (the extent to which the original programme has been administered; the quantity or the strength which with the intervention has been delivered).

Although very few studies assessed *adaptation* of programmes (referring to programmes that changed, modified or reinvented aspects of the original programme); Durlak and Dupree (2008) noted that all three of these studies had found a positive effect of adaptation on the outcomes of the programme (Blakely et al, 1987; Kerr et al, 1985; McGraw et al, 1996). Studies that had indicated that higher fidelity related to better outcomes did not reach 100% fidelity, therefore providing some leeway for adaptations to occur. Ringwalt et al (2003) looked at

school-based programmes and concluded that some degree of adaptation is inevitable, and that opposing any adaptation at all would be futile. Therefore, Durlak and Dupree (2008) propose that future research should seek to identify the components of interventions that are theoretically important and to emphasise fidelity of these components, whilst allowing alterations of less central aspects of the programme to obtain a good ecological fit with the setting.

Durlak and Dupree (2008) argued that an ecological perspective is important to understand effective implementation of programmes, and they identified a number of factors affecting the implementation process based upon the research studies they had analysed. These included:

♦ factors relating to the **community** context such as policy and funding;

♦ factors relating to the **providers** of the programme such as perceptions about the need for the programme and the possible benefits of the programme, as well as feelings of self-efficacy and skills proficiency;

♦ factors relating to the **programme delivery** itself such as adaptability in implementation (being able to modify the programme to fit the needs of the context), and compatibility of the programme with the organisation's existing practices and priorities;

♦ factors relating to **organisational capacity** such as effective leadership, existence of 'programme champions' to help to orchestrate the programme, and shared decision-making; and

♦ factors relating to **training and technical assistance**; training should enable the providers to develop their sense of mastery with regard to specific intervention

skills, to develop their self-efficacy and their motivation. Technical assistance
relates to the resources that are available following the start of the intervention in
order to improve skills, support problem-solving and to maintain motivation and
commitment to the intervention.

Many of Durlak and Dupree's (2008) findings have also been identified in previous
studies conducted by Greenhalgh et al (2005), Fixsen et al (2000) and Stith et al
(2006), suggesting good convergent validity of the findings. Durlak and Dupree
(2008) conclude that it is crucial that evaluations of programmes include assessment
of the implementation of the programme, stating that;

> *"Without data on implementation, research cannot document precisely*
> *what program was conducted, or how outcome data should be*
> *interpreted"* (p.340).

They also conclude that contextual factors must be taken into account when
implementing interventions in real world settings. Factors identified that influence
implementation of programmes have therefore included both aspects of the
programme itself, and aspects of the context within which the programme takes
place.

Greenberg et al's (2005) work (Center for Mental Health Services, US) involved
proposing a new conceptual model to inform the development of a 'program theory'
and an examination of the implementation of prevention and promotion programmes

in schools. Greenberg et al's (2005) model comprised two stages; the first being the development of a causative theory (whether the programme theory can explain the programme effects), and the second being the development of a prescriptive theory (whether the programme theory is able to describe the way in which the programme should actually be implemented; the 'how-to' of the programme; Chen, 1998). The prescriptive theory first describes how the programme should be delivered including the programme model, quality of delivery of the programme, target audience and participants' responsiveness. It then describes how the programme should be supported. The support system should include five dimensions relating to pre-planning, quality of materials, technical support available, the quality of the technical support, and implementer readiness. This elaborates on Durlak and Dupree's (2008) identified factors relating to the 'Prevention Support System' and 'Provider Characteristics'.

Greenberg et al's (2005) model also addresses the quality of the environment in which the programme takes place which will impact upon implementation. This provides more detail than Durlak and Dupree's (2008) identified Community Level Factors, and also includes environmental factors more relevant to the school context. The model includes: factors at the level of the district such as district goals and communication with schools; factors at the level of the community such as school-community relations, school-family relations, and community support/readiness; factors at the level of the school such as administrative leadership and support, awareness of students' needs, school goals and school climate; and factors at the

level of the classroom such as characteristics and behaviours of the implementer of the programme, classroom climate and peer relations.

On the basis of their model, the key questions detailed in Table 4 can be asked to ascertain whether the strategies that facilitate most effective programme delivery are in place: (a) at the stage when a programme is being considered (pre-adoption phase); (b) during the phase when the programme is being conducted (delivery phase) and (c) and to sustain the outcomes of the programme, and support monitoring and evaluation (post-delivery phase).

Durlak and Dupree (2008) and Greenberg et al (2005) have begun to develop further the evidence base investigating implementation factors in preventative interventions for children and young people, which is particularly relevant to this study which will seek to investigate the contexts and mechanisms important for implementation of the SEAL programme within a 'good practice' school.

Table 4: Greenberg et al's (2005) recommendations

Strategies to Facilitate Effective Programme Delivery:
Key Questions for Practitioners and School Personnel
(Adapted from Greenberg et al, 2005, p. 45-47)

(a) Pre-Adoption Phase
- Were key stakeholders involved in the decision-making process? Was there a collaborative approach with programme evaluators?
- Were all individuals involved in implementation of the programme fully informed and did they have sufficient background knowledge to make informed decisions?
- Does the programme have a good 'fit' with the school community and capacity?
- Does the programme 'fit' with the beliefs, values and philosophy of the school or district?
- Are there sufficient resources to sustain the programme with fidelity?
- Is there a project coordinator to ensure successful implementation and evaluation?
- Do implementers receive appropriate training, enabling sufficient knowledge, skills and confidence in their ability to deliver the programme effectively?
- Is there an established supportive problem-solving process and organisational climate that promotes discussion and resolution of difficulties relating to implementation?
- Have the critical inviolable elements of the programme been identified, and those elements that can be adapted to fit local needs and resources?
- Is the school atmosphere conducive to prevention and promotion efforts, is relevant training incorporated into staff development?

(b) Delivery Phase
- Are implementers' skills and satisfaction assessed on an ongoing basis?
- Is emotional and practical support provided for implementers?
- Does the school atmosphere promote open communication, exchanging of ideas and professional growth?
- Is the intervention evaluated with measures based upon a comprehensive, theoretically based programme model?
- Is implementation quality monitored?
- Are parents informed and involved? Can they support the skills their children are learning at school?

(c) Post-Delivery Phase
- Is information about implementation used to make decisions about the programme and about ways to maintain and improve quality?
- Is the programme integrated into the existing school structure?
- Are there plans to make the programme a permanent part of the school curriculum, including lesson planning?
- Are the programme's SES used as part of staff development?
- Is there a realistic timeline for long-term implementation and when outcomes should be expected? (E.g. 18 months – 3 years).
- Are there a range of dissemination strategies in place to inform the community about the programme findings?
- Is feedback given to programme developers?

2.10 Criticisms of programmes promoting social and emotional skills in children and young people

This section will explore more general criticisms of the research evidence supporting SEL, and the content and principles underlying SEL programmes.

2.10.1 The evidence from research

The NICE guidelines issued relating to social and emotional wellbeing (2008) reviewed the research in this area and highlighted clear gaps in the evidence base. Firstly, there is a lack of valid methods available in order to measure emotional and social wellbeing of primary schoolchildren. Catalano et al (2004) highlight the need for consensus on standard measures in order to understand whether the findings of programmes are replicable or not.

There is a lack of evidence relating to the cost effectiveness of interventions promoting social and emotional wellbeing of primary aged children; particularly of multi-component programmes, and of the long-term effects of these interventions (NICE, 2008). Catalano et al's review (2004) of both published and unpublished youth development programmes highlighted that many evaluations did not complete follow-up assessments, and that in two instances where long term outcomes were reported, the initial positive findings were not sustained.

Evidence relating to interventions to promote the wellbeing of vulnerable children is lacking, and also relating to ways to involve parents and carers particularly from disadvantaged backgrounds (NICE, 2008). The lack of robust trials from the UK to support the effectiveness of multi-component programmes was also highlighted. The subject of appropriate levels of training and support for teachers was also raised as an issue.   Furthermore, NICE (2008) pointed out the need to clarify the optimal length and content of programmes.

As described above in section 2.3; SEAL encourages schools to adapt the programme to suit their own individual context. However, Humphrey et al (2010) also point out the difficulties this produces in terms of evaluating programmes in a quasi-experimental sense because there is no homogeneity in the programmes each school are implementing. Weare (2010) notes that schools implementing SEAL are, "…*encouraged to take from it what they wish''* (p.10)*,* although she cautions that dilution and confusion could be caused if there is too much tailoring to local needs and circumstances.

The tendency towards 'publication bias' is also a difficulty in this area of research, meaning that studies which have not found positive effects are less likely to be published (Craig, 2009), although some reviews such as that of Catalano et al (2004) also considered unpublished findings.

2.10.2 Criticisms of the underlying principles and content of universal school-based SEL programmes

Key critics in this field are Kathryn Ecclestone and Dennis Hayes. A recent and controversial publication *The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education* (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009) has articulated the view that throughout the 1990s in Britain there has been a *"popularisation of emotional vulnerability"* (p.3) and a corresponding therapeutic turn in politics and culture. The authors view therapeutic education as any focus upon emotional difficulties aiming to establish more emotionally engaging educational content and learning processes. Furedi (2003) is also concerned with the development of a 'therapy culture' seen to be cultivating vulnerability and leading to harmful over-control.

This therapeutic turn in education is understood to contribute to a view of ourselves as suffering from negative emotional effects created by life events and circumstances, and to contribute towards a concept of a 'diminished self,' and of ourselves being 'emotionally fragile' (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009). It is argued that these populist orthodoxies are reinforcing a view that children are at-risk and vulnerable through intrusive interventions that assess and elicit emotions, rather than promoting the view that children can be resilient, possess potential and have a capacity for autonomy. It is also being increasingly suggested that there should be a greater focus upon resiliency factors in order to counter a tendency towards self-indulgence, narcissism and emotional floppiness that the other social and emotional

skills can encourage (Craig, 2009). Terms such as 'persistence' and 'grit' are becoming more commonplace in the literature (Dweck, 2000; Roberts, 2009).

The view promoted by SEAL that expressing emotions is a beneficial practice has also been questioned. Sommers and Satel (2005) suggest that reticence and suppressing of emotions can be an adaptive and healthy practice, and that for some, too much introspection and self-disclosure can be depressing. They suggest that a helping culture is eroding self-reliance, which is in some ways reminiscent of the argument expressed above that resilience and 'grit' are more beneficial skills to be promoting in children. For example; Rose et al (2007) found that for girls excessively discussing problems (known as 'co-rumination') predicted anxiety and depressive symptoms and increased positive friendship quality. This in turn contributed to more co-rumination. (In boys co-rumination was not found to predict anxiety or depressive symptoms however). Weare (2004) acknowledged this problem but explained that this can be avoided by the social and emotional competencies balancing each other. However, Craig (2009) points out that this is a highly sophisticated approach for teachers working with whole classes of pupils. Craig highlights that consideration of dosage is therefore important in SEAL (for example; how much disclosure is beneficial?).

Other specific aspects of the SEAL programme have also been criticised, such as the emphasis on calming techniques which can lead to 'ironic effects' by inducing anxiety in some children and young people (Wegner, 1994; Wegner et al, 1997). The emphasis on praise, self-esteem and happiness within SEAL has also been

questioned due to the complexity of these constructs, the theory and research surrounding which is somewhat diluted in SEAL leading to the potential for adverse side-effects if these aspects are promoted in the wrong way (Craig, 2009). The bias towards girls suggested by Hallam et al's (2006) evaluation has also led to some critics claiming that SEAL threatens *"Boys, and their right to be boys…"* (Craig, 2009; p.18).

The criticisms of the SEAL programme discussed here will be borne in mind during this research study, and caution will be exercised in interpreting the findings taking into consideration the limitations of the research findings thus far, and the potential difficulties raised relating to specific aspects of the SEAL programme and its impact.

2.11 Conclusion

There is a developing evidence base supporting the positive impact of SEL programmes for social and emotional skills, prosocial behaviour, and academic skills. However, there are significant limitations to this research associated with a lack of consensus regarding the concept of social and emotional skills, and the measurement of these skills. There are also methodological limitations due to a lack of control groups, and a lack of rigorous research investigating SEL programmes in the UK.

Research studies have begun to investigate implementation factors that are important in SEL programmes, but have generally not succeeded in an analysis

beyond identifying key factors that seem to be important. The wider literature investigating implementation of prevention and promotion programmes in schools has identified that both aspects of the programme itself and aspects of the context are crucial to implementation success, with issues such as fidelity, adaptation and dosage being highly important. However, these issues have not been addressed in relation to SEL programmes, and more specifically have not been addressed in the SEAL programme. This may relate to the lack of theoretical consensus in this field regarding the theoretical underpinnings of SEL programmes. Therefore, there is a need for research to focus further upon the mechanisms and processes important in SEL programmes, to ascertain which aspects are vital and which are peripheral, and how these link together and interact in order to deliver SEL most effectively. For example, which contextual factors need to be in place in order for which mechanisms to operate, to lead to the outcomes produced in those schools where SEL programmes are working well?

2.12 Context of this study

This study aims to further the research investigating implementation processes relating to the delivery of the SEAL programme, and to contribute to the development of theory relating to programme implementation. It is hoped that this research study will begin a process of developing an understanding of the most effective way to implement SEAL in schools. In order to be able to analyse the implementation of SEAL in sufficient detail within the limits of this piece of research, I decided to focus in on one school context in order to reach a depth of understanding of the complex

processes involved in implementing SEAL in order to begin to develop theory. The aim would be for further studies to be able to then further my research and to develop my theory further by investigating SEAL in other school settings.

My research questions which formed the focus of this study are described below:

Main research question:

What are the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes of the SEAL programme within a 'good practice' school?

Sub-questions:

(a) How is the SEAL programme being organised and delivered within a successful SEAL school?

(b) How has the SEAL programme been embedded effectively across this whole-school context?

(c) What are important aspects of this school's culture and ethos which enable the SEAL programme to be delivered effectively?

(d) What kinds of teacher beliefs and attitudes are viewed as important within this particular context in order to facilitate the SEAL programme?

(e) What has been the impact of SEAL on pupils, parents and members of staff?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 explains my epistemological position and describes a realist view of science; specifically Pawson and Tilley's (1997) Realistic Evaluation orientation to research is outlined and defined in relation to this research study. A case study approach is delineated, and the procedure and the particular research methods I employed are explored, and related ethical issues considered. Finally, the process of thematic analysis I undertook is outlined.

3.2 Epistemology

This study adopts a realist philosophy of science, which can be identified in the writings of philosophers such as Roy Bhaskar (1975) and Rom Harré (1972). A realist approach to research allows one to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions, within the 'field' rather than a laboratory, in uncontrolled, open situations (Robson, 2011).

3.2.1 A comparison with interpretive and positivist epistemologies

Realism offers an alternative to approaches seeking to find a "*law-finding science of society*" based upon a positivist epistemology, and interpretivist approaches which reduce social science to the interpretation of meaning (Sayer, 2000; p.2). Realism does recognise however the necessity of seeking an "*interpretive understanding of*

meaning in social life'' but this is combined with a modified naturalism and an interest in seeking causal explanation (Sayer, 2000; p.3).

Critics of a realist approach have pointed to the claims being made about the unobservable world which go beyond that which can be established through observation (Chalmers, 1999). This anti-realist position views enduring science as that based upon observation and experiment, and views theories as;

> *"…mere scaffolding which can be dispensed with once they have outlived their usefulness"* (Chalmers, 1999; p. 227).

Realists are interested in 'the real', which is whatever exists (physical or social), whether or not an understanding of this phenomena is fully developed (Sayer, 2000).

3.2.2 A generative view of causation

Harré (1972) differentiated between 'successionist' and 'generative' theories of science which both seek to investigate why action 'x' might lead to an outcome 'y'. The successionist view focuses on the events themselves and upon using controls and measures with the aim of finding a consistent relationship between 'x' and 'y'. The generative view instead seeks to identify a mechanism which explains why 'x' is causing 'y' to occur. The generative realist approach can be understood to be positioned between the traditional positivist and the constructivist approaches to science, and to be concerned with finding out about the mechanisms that underlie patterns of events, rather than aiming to predict events that follow one another

(Matthews, 2003). Mechanisms are investigated as they occur in the world in the complex and open systems within which they function; as opposed to in closed and artificial systems that experimentalists tend to create to aid investigation (Matthews, 2003).   Matthews (2003) summarises the assumptions of the generative realist paradigm in Table 5 below.

Table 5: A description of the generative realist paradigm.
Taken from Matthews (2003; p. 63).

Paradigm	Generative realist
View of reality	Produces a series of theories that correspond to the underlying processes that cause people to behave in regular ways.
How knowledge is created	Identifies causal processes by investigating the different circumstances in which they are produced reliably.
Methodology	Uses the method that best allows a process to be reliably activated and the identified hypotheses to be selected or rejected.
Intervention	A programme that creates a cultural, social and personal context in which a process is activated that leads to particular patterns of outcomes being sustained, developed or blocked.
Progress	The development of interrelated theories so that imaginary hypotheses are rejected and real ones confirmed.

3.3   Realist inquiry

Understanding what it is that works in social programmes involves a quest to find causal relationships,which is at the heart of a realist inquiry (Pawson et al, 2004). Pawson and Tilley (1997) describe a model of generative causation which

emphasises that causality is concerned with the internal potential of a system or a substance which is activated within the correct conditions. For example; internal features that form part of an explanation of causality such as the chemical composition of gunpowder which determines whether or not an external cause such as a spark will successfully ignite the gunpowder. In order to understand the causal mechanisms underlying social programmes, internal potential may involve participants' characteristics and circumstances. For example; whether a training programme is successful in reducing employment will depend upon internal features such as the skills and motivation of the trainees, and whether there are employment opportunities or local skills shortages.

Pawson and Tilley (1997) explain that a realist explanation considers both the *mechanism* (for example; the chemical composition of the gunpowder which enables the reaction to take place, or the change in trainees' skill levels as a result of training), and the *context* (for example the spark, or the existence of employment opportunities). The *outcome* (the spark causing the explosion, or the securing of jobs) would therefore follow from the *mechanisms* acting in *contexts.* This is represented diagrammatically in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Generative causation (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; p. 58)

Context

Mechanis

An action ▶ is only casual if….

Outcome

...its outcome is triggered by a mechanism acting in context
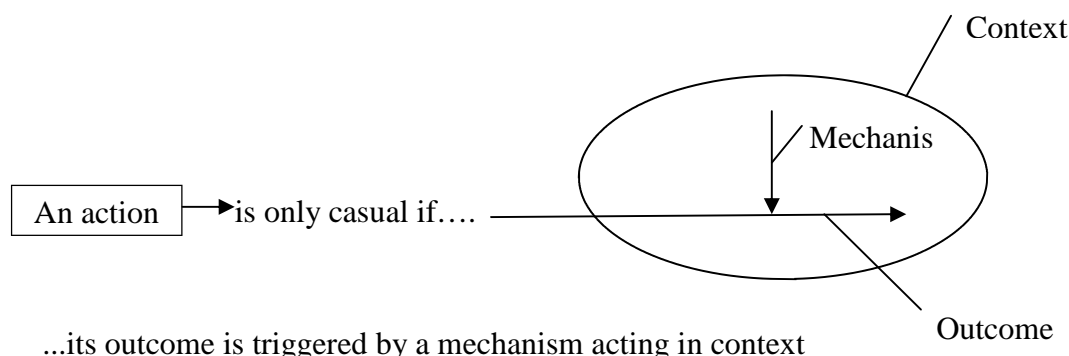
This generative realist approach can be applied to the process of evaluation within the field of social sciences, and specifically to social programmes (Pawson and Tilley, 1997).

Pawson et al (2004), articulate seven fundamental realist claims about interventions (or programmes); described in Box 1.

Box 1: Fundamental realist claims about interventions (Pawson et al, 2004, p.4-8).

Seven Fundamental realist claims about interventions:

1. ''*Interventions are theories*''. A hypothesis underlies each intervention that ''*If we deliver a programme in this way or we manage services like so, then this will bring about some improved outcome.*'' In this study; theories describe the way in which SEAL is implemented in order to achieve the outcomes.

2. ''*Interventions are active*''. Interventions generally lead to impact via the active input of individuals. This means that interventions are only able to work though the reasoning and knowledge of stakeholders. In this study, the intervention is active because it depends upon the reasoning of members of staff in implementing the programme effectively, and also the reasoning of pupils in response to the intervention.

3. ''*Intervention chains are long and thickly populated*'' with many different groups being part of the implementation process. For example; in this study there is involvement of Senior Management, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, parents and pupils.

4. "*Intervention chains are non-linear and sometimes go into reve*rse". For example; some interventions operate in a bottom-up as well as a top-down manner. In this study, this could involve members of staff feeding back to the Senior Management Team which impacts upon implementation of SEAL, or the children themselves having an input on the content of the programme.

5. "*Interventions are embedded in multiple social systems.*" Behaviours and social conditions are affected through the workings of whole systems of social relationships. Therefore, a realist inquiry must take into account the layers of social reality comprising and surrounding interventions. Whether or not a programme is successful depends upon the context and setting. For example; a sex education programme will be received very differently in a progressive suburban arts college, or a single-sex Catholic boarding school. Pawson et al (2004) propose that the following four contextual factors should be considered (represented diagrammatically in Figure 6):
- individual capacities of the key actors and stakeholders (for example; attitude or capability of the staff);
- interpersonal relationships needed to support the intervention (for example; lines of communication or management support);
- institutional setting (for example; culture, ethos, supportive leadership); and
- the wider infra-structural and welfare system (for example; political support, funding resources).

Figure 6: The intervention as a product of its context. Taken from Pawson et al (2004); p.8.
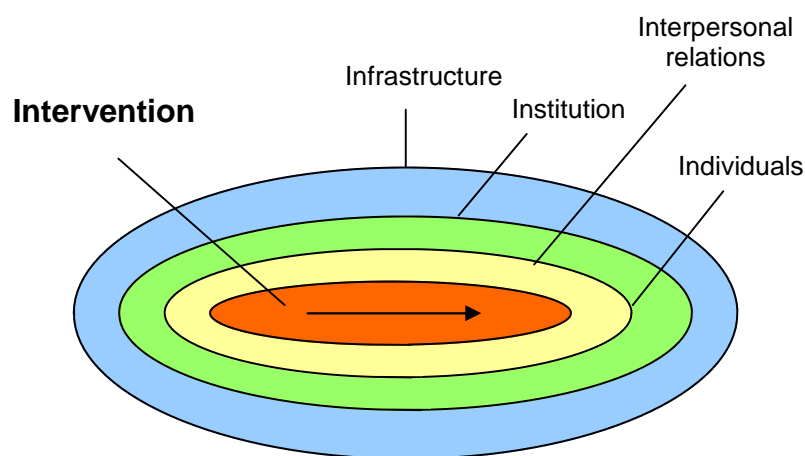
6. "*Interventions are leaky and prone to be borrowed*"; the intervention itself tends to change as the inquiry is taking place, and therefore the outcomes are affected by adaptation to local circumstances, reinvention and refinement.

7. "*Interventions are open systems that feed back on themselves*"; as interventions take place over time, learning occurs that then alters the conditions in which the intervention is taking place.

A successionist view of causation would not be capable of explaining these complex phenomena as this approach views causation as merely a relationship between discrete events ('x' leads to 'y'). In line with these assumptions, the programme mechanisms identified should reflect the three principles in Box 2.

Box 2: 3 identifiers of a programme mechanism.

(Taken from Pawson and Tilley, 1997; p.66).

Programme mechanisms should:

   i)   reflect the embeddedness of the programme within the stratified nature of social reality;

   ii)   take the form of propositions which will provide an account of how both macro and micro processes constitute the programme; and

   iii)   demonstrate how programme outputs follow from the stakeholders' choices (reasoning) and their capacity (resources) to put these into practice.

A mechanism is therefore a description of the behaviour and interrelationships of the processes which are responsible for 'regularity' of the outcomes, and can be thus described as a 'theory' (Pawson and Tilley, 1997; p.68).

Pawson and Tilley (1997) explain that the objective of a realist inquiry is to provide an explanation for social 'regularities,' 'outcomes,' 'rates,' 'associations' or 'patterns.' Realist explanations should therefore comprise the three components; *context* (C); *mechanism* (M) and *outcome* (O), which are termed *context-mechanism-outcome configurations* or *CMO configurations*. A realist evaluation must identify, articulate,

test and refine proposed CMO configurations. The fundamental question in realist inquiry is, instead of *"what works?", "what is it about this programme that works for who in what circumstances?"* (Pawson et al, 2005, p. 1:22).

3.4 Rationale for adopting a generative realist inquiry

This study seeks to understand the mechanisms involved in the implementation of the SEAL programme, and the contextual factors that are important within this particular school context for ensuring that SEAL is successfully implemented and sustained. The aims of this study are not to be able to predict events or to generalise across other settings or populations, and therefore a positivist approach would not be appropriate in seeking to develop an understanding of the 'mechanics of explanation' within this particular context. In my position as a researcher I view the implementation of SEAL as happening independently to my perception of it, and I seek to develop theories that incorporate both observable and unobservable aspects of the implementation of SEAL. For example; I am interested in aspects I will observe such as the interactions occurring between teachers and pupils, but I am also interested in unobservable aspects such as the school ethos and culture, and teachers' beliefs and values.

This study seeks to understand the complex social processes occurring within a social system, and to identify causal factors that reside within social relationships and organisational structures. Therefore, a generative view of causation rather than a

successionist view is needed in order to venture beyond looking for relationships between discrete events.

This study also seeks to develop theory and understanding relating to the successful implementation of the SEAL programme in first schools. An explanation is therefore sought regarding the factors underlying the achievement of successful SEAL outcomes, and this explanation needs to consider the ways in which the SEAL approach is delivered and embedded within the school context, as well as the social and cultural conditions that are necessary for the programme to be delivered effectively in order to produce the outcomes. A realist evaluation approach involving the formulation of explanations including contexts, mechanisms and outcomes, and the testing and refining of these explanations, will therefore meet the aims of this study. The nature of the CMO propositions therefore frames the research strategies needed in order to seek the relevant evidence to support or refute the propositions.

3.5 A case study approach

A number of methodologies can be used within a Realistic Evaluation framework, and Pawson and Tilley (1997) promote a consideration of the methodologies that will enable to researcher to either support or refute the CMO configurations formulated from the Initial Programme Specification (in this case, based upon the literature review, included in Appendix F, page 201). An in-depth case study approach across a single school context is most appropriate in seeking to answer the research questions in this particular study because this approach enables the researcher to

find out *how* and *why* a social phenomenon works, and to investigate a contemporary set of circumstances over which it is not possible for the researcher to have control (Yin, 2009). Research in this area has been focused in the main upon investigating whether or not SEAL is effective in promoting positive outcomes for young people. However, there is little in the literature investigating how or why the intervention works. A case study will enable the researcher to explain what it is that is working; the mechanism by which SEAL works to produce effective outcomes, which is too complex a task for experimental or survey strategies. This approach will also allow the phenomenon to be described in the real-life context in which it is occurring particularly when the boundaries differentiating the phenomenon from its contextual conditions are blurred, making it a phenomenon more difficult to study in any other way.

As Yin (2009) highlights; case study approaches can take into account situations where there are many different variables of interest to the researcher, and many different sources of evidence including artefacts, documents, observations and interviews. This is particularly relevant in this study where all of these sources will be investigated, and the researcher will be open to discover a range of variables in action, and will not be attempting to control any of these conditions but rather to notice and record these variables in action within their natural environment.

Case study approaches have been criticised on the basis that the findings cannot be generalised to other contexts in which the intervention occurs. However, Yin (2009) argues that although case studies do not represent a 'sample' and therefore are not

generalisable to populations; they can be generalisable to theoretical propositions. The aim being to expand upon and generalise theories through analytic generalisation rather than to enumerate frequencies through a process of statistical generalisation. In this study I aim to develop a greater understanding of the phenomenon, and to contribute to theory about the processes and mechanisms involved in implementing SEAL, and the ways in which these interact.

Yin (2009) claims that a good case study will seek to use as many sources of evidence as possible as sources are complementary and can corroborate and augment evidence from each other. He promotes the use of triangulation of multiple sources of evidence in order to address a broad range of behavioural and historical issues, and to enable converging lines of inquiry to be established.

3.6 Designing a realistic evaluation in a case study first school

Research designs for research studies using realistic evaluation follow a logic of inquiry represented in the realist evaluation cycle (Figure 7). Firstly theories which are framed in terms of CMO configurations lead to hypotheses, which are tested through the collection of evidence. Pawson and Tilley (1997) view themselves as pluralists and therefore promote use of a range of quantitative and qualitative methods which are tailored to the hypotheses. The aim is for the findings to inform the development of a 'programme specification' in order to establish the objective of identifying what works, for whom, in a particular set of circumstances.

Figure 7: The realist evaluation cycle. Taken from Pawson and Tilley (1997); p. 85.

Mechanisms   *(M)*
Contexts   *(C)*
Outcomes   *(O)*

Theory

What works for
whom in what
circumstances

Program Specification

Hypotheses

What might
work for whom
in what
circumstances

Observations

Multi-method data
collection and
analysis on *M, C, O*
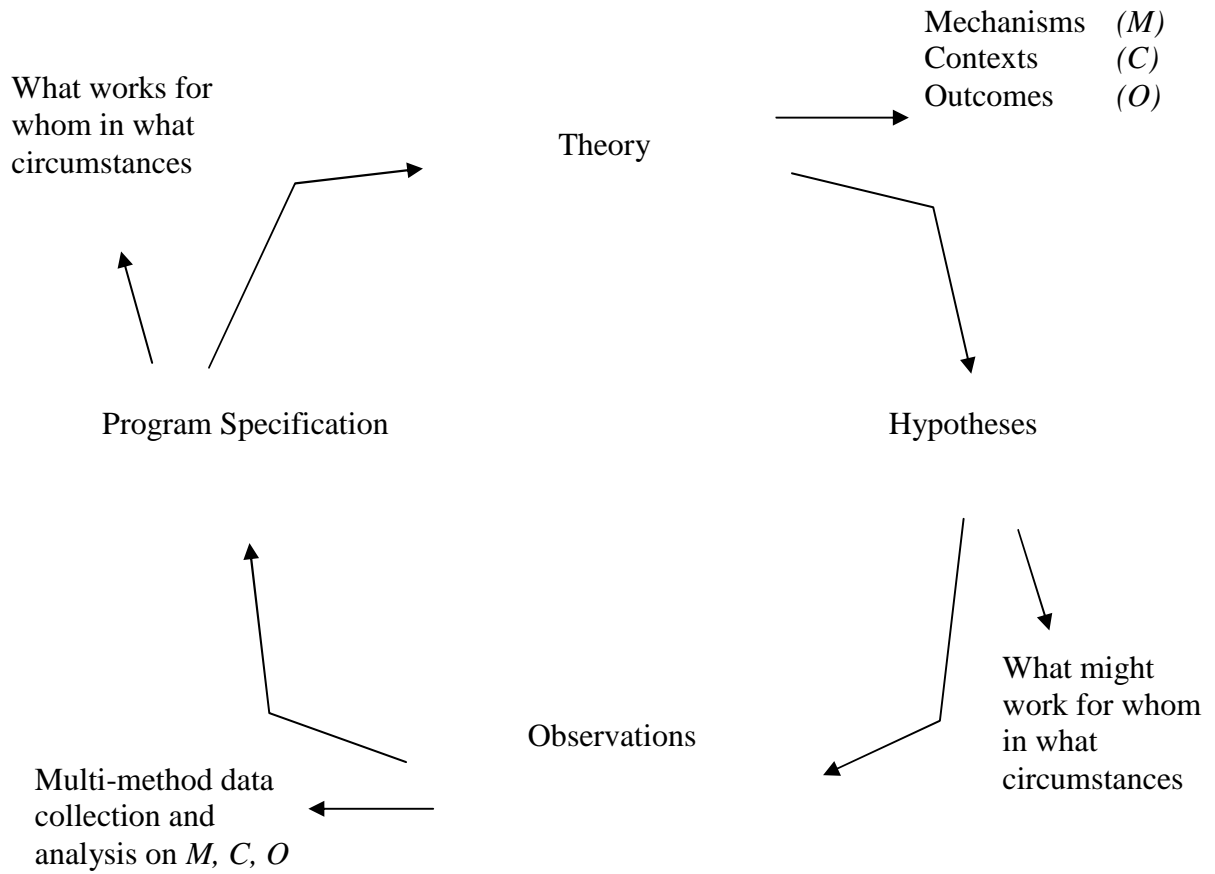
Timmins and Miller (2007) suggest that realistic evaluation may be a useful

framework to apply to assessment of innovations in education. Their interpretation of

Pawson and Tilley's (1997) model involves taking the five steps described in Table 6.

Table 6: Five steps in a Realistic Evaluation approach

Features of a Realistic Evaluation approach. Taken from Timmins and Miller (2007), p. 10.	
1	Construction of a Programme Theory based on a review of relevant research literature and expert/practitioner knowledge.
2	Construction of an initial Programme Specification derived from Programme Theory, which maps the programme in terms of assumed Cs, Ms and Os.
3	Construction of hypotheses derived from the initial Programme Specification.
4	Construction of an evaluation design and associated data gathering approaches, as suggested by the hypotheses, to help check whether the programme is working as anticipated.
5	Construction of findings that highlight how the programme might be modified or inform replications in other settings (generalisation). This would lead to a clearer and more effective Programme Specification.

3.7 Procedure

The procedure I adopted followed that suggested by Timmins and Miller (2007). The

six stages of this study are represented in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8: The Realistic Evaluation procedure adopted in this study.

1
Conducting a literature review and deriving from this a series of programme theories consisting of Contexts, Mechanisms and Outcomes (CMO's).   (Appendix F)

2
-Selecting the research methods which would allow most effective collection of information relating to the CMO's.
-Considering which members of the school community would be best placed in order to be able to provide insights on the working of these CMOs in their school.
-Considering ways to triangulate evidence.

3
Collecting the data through conducting observations throughout the school, interviewing key members of staff, interviewing parents, conducting a focus group with pupils, and gathering relevant documents relating to SEAL.

4
Analysing the information collected and identifying the CMOs important for the implementation of SEAL. Forming an initial Programme Specification.

5
Using the realistic interview format to 'check out' the Programme Specification with the key members of staff who had been interviewed.
Meeting again with the focus group of pupils and asking them to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the information I had gathered specifically from their group.

6
Refining the CMOs in response to the feedback from teachers and pupils, to form a programme specification for SEAL.

3.8 Finding a case study school

A 'good practice' school was sought in collaboration with the County's Strategic Group for SEAL, and the Educational Psychology Service. The criteria were that:

- the school would have been a pilot school for SEAL and therefore SEAL would have been in place for at least 6 years;

- SEAL was being delivered in a whole-school manner;

- SEAL was being delivered effectively and leading to positive outcomes;

- there had been no recent changes to the senior management team; and

- the school would be within my area of the County if possible to facilitate regular visits to the school.

Data which had been collected by the SEAL Strategic Group was utilised, two previous Ofsted Inspection Reports (2004, 2007; not referenced in order to protect the anonymity of the case study school), and an account by the school's educational psychologist. The school was suggested to the SEAL Strategic Group, and my reasons for choosing the school were given. The Strategic Group then discussed this at a meeting of the group, and agreed my request. I then telephoned the school to discuss this with the Head Teacher, and I wrote a letter describing the study (please refer to Appendix A, page 173). The Head Teacher discussed the research with her staff team and sought their agreement, and then I was able to arrange a meeting with the Head Teacher in school to begin the process of negotiating the research study.

The case study school is broadly of an average size with 209 pupils on the school roll, aged between 3-9 years. Most pupils are of White British origins with a very small minority comprising ethnic minority groups. There are a broadly average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (Ofsted report, March 2011). The number of children in the school who are eligible for free school meals is higher than average (Ofsted report, March 2011). There is a Children's Centre on the same site as the school, and also an after school club.

3.9 Research methods

Following the Realistic Evaluation approach, research methods were chosen in order to allow the collecting of information needed to inform a Programme Specification for

the implementation of the SEAL programme. I was also influenced by the advice of

Yin (2009) with regards to choosing methods that allow triangulation of data in case

studies. The methods I chose were interviews, a focus group, observations, and

documentary analysis. Table 7 details the period of time over which I conducted the

research and when each method was employed.

Table 7: Research activity over time.

Date	Research Activity
6th December 2010	Completed Day 1 of observations Collected documentation and reports
4th February 2011	Completed Day 2 of observations Began Interview 1 (Deputy Head Teacher) Began Interview 2 (Head Teacher)
16th February 2011	Completed Interview 3 (Teacher)
18th February 2011	Continued Interview 1 (Deputy Head Teacher) Completed Interview 2 (Head Teacher) Completed Interview 4 (Family Support Worker) Completed Day 3 of observations Met with pupils to seek consent for a Focus Group
17th March 2011	Completed Interview 1 (Deputy Head Teacher) Completed Interview 5 (SEAL Coordinator) Completed first Focus Group with pupils
18th March 2011	Completed Interview 6 (Parents)
21st March 2011	Completed Interview 7 (Parent)
26th April 2011	Completed Realist Interviews with staff Completed second Focus Group with pupils

3.9.1 Interviews

In this study I sought as many perspectives regarding the school's approach to children's social and emotional development as possible, in order to seek greater validity in the findings. A letter was sent out to all staff, parents and also staff working in the school from other agencies, informing them of the study and requesting volunteers (included in Appendix B, page 174). There was a reply slip on the letter which respondents were asked to return to the school should they wish to take part in an interview or focus group. The Head Teacher arranged for the letters to be sent out, and collected in the response slips, because she felt that the response would be more positive if the letter was sent from school rather than from the Educational Psychology Service.

I had three replies from members of teaching staff, a Family Support Worker (FSW), and two parents. It had been previously agreed that the Head Teacher would take part in an interview when the school agreed to take part in the research study. Due to only two parents volunteering, I decided to interview the parents instead of conducting a parent focus group. I therefore telephoned the parents, sought their agreement, and arranged times to meet with them giving them the option of an interview at home, at school, or at the adjacent Children's Centre. I interviewed one mother and father together at home, and one mother at the school. I spoke to members of staff individually and arranged times to interview them. Due to staffs' time commitments, one of these interviews took place over 2 sessions, and one of the interviews took place over 3 sessions. The other interviews were one session

only. I asked staff members at the interview if they would be willing to meet again for me to 'check back' my theories with them, being explicit about the Realistic Evaluation process. All the staff agreed, and so I arranged a time to return with the 'theories' or 'Programme Specifications' to conduct the realistic interviews. Of those interviewed, all but two participants agreed to be audio-recorded. In the two cases where there was no agreement to audio-record, I relied on note-taking and asked the interviewee for their patience in order that I could ensure that all of the important information was recorded, including quotes where appropriate.

3.9.1.1 Phase 1 of the interviews

A semi-structured interviewing format was employed, with a guide in the form of questions and prompts. The interview schedule for staff was carefully constructed and piloted with a Nursery Nurse using SEAL in her school (a separate school to this case study school), and amendments made to the wording of questions accordingly (interview schedules are included in Appendix D, page 186). The schedules were constructed in line with a Realistic Evaluation approach, in order to abstract the information needed to develop the Programme Specification. The questions I used were open-ended in order for greater depth of information to be sought, and for lesser restrictions to be placed on participants' responses. I followed the advice of Robson (2011) in avoiding questions which were long, double-barrelled, leading, biased or containing jargon that could be unknown to participants.

This interviewing approach was appropriate because, depending on what I perceived to be important or of relevance to the Programme Specification in the interviewing

situation, the question wording and order could be changed, and questions omitted or added (Robson, 2002). The semi-structured approach also enabled the interviewee to take more of a leading role in the interview, and encouraged them to share insights and ideas about the topic in question, whilst maintaining some structure in order to ensure that the relevant information was still gathered in order to enable the research questions to be answered.

3.9.1.2 Phase 2 of the interviews: The realist interview

Pawson and Tilley (1997) propose that the aim of the data collection in Realistic Evaluation is to capture those elements of the participant's understanding, which are relevant to the researcher's theory. Therefore, the task of the interview is not to capture the *"descriptively infinite"* ideas, hopes, aspirations and beliefs of the interviewee about the programme, but rather to capture which aspects of participants' beliefs are relevant to the context-mechanism-outcome configurations being tested (p.168). Pawson and Tilley (1997) propose a realist interview (represented in Figure 9) involving two features of data collection; the ''*teacher-learner function*'' and the ''*conceptual refinement process*'' (p. 165).

Figure 9: Basic structure of the realist interview.

Adapted from Pawson and Tilley (1997), p. 165.
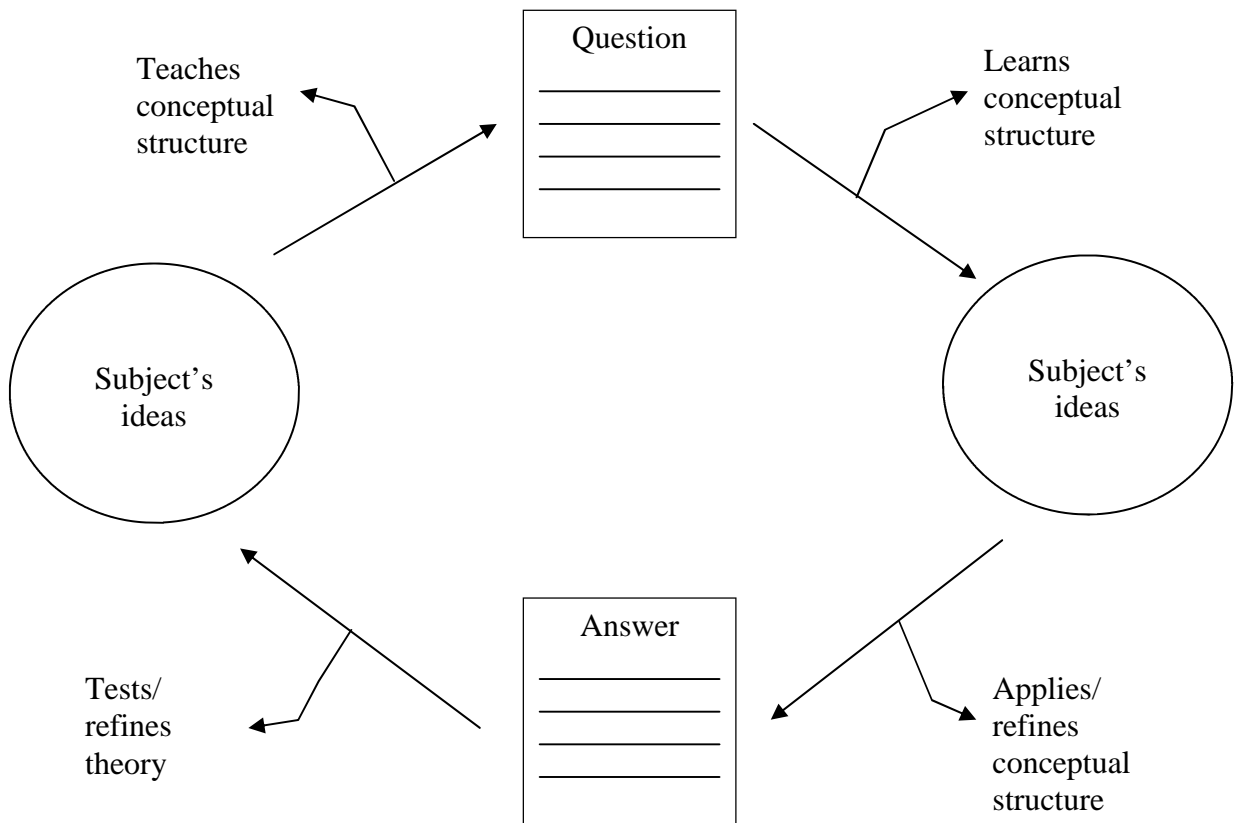
Firstly, Pawson and Tilley (1997) suggest that the interviewer should play an active

role in teaching the conceptual structure of the investigation to the interviewee (the

Programme Specification is taught to the interviewee). Secondly, the interviewees'

thoughts about the Programme Specification are sought. Therefore, interviewees are

given an opportunity to give a formal description of their thoughts and views, which is

followed by the chance to further clarify and explain their thinking. This carefully

contextualises the domain within which participants are asked to reflect upon their

thoughts and beliefs, in order for a mutual understanding of the issues to be achieved

by the interviewer and interviewee. Pawson and Tilley (1997) describe the key

aspect of the realist interview as creating a situation whereby the theories of the

researcher (in this case, the Programme Specification) can be open to inspection by

the interviewee so that they may make an informed and critical contribution to the

development of these theories.

The processes involved in a realist interview are summarised in Table 8, and the way

in which these processes were conducted in this research study are described.

Table 8: Teacher-learner processes in a realist interview.

'Teacher-learner processes' in a realist interview. Taken from Pawson and Tilley (1997), p. 218.	How this study conducted the realist interview.
1.Learning the stakeholders' theories	I interviewed participants in Phase 1 in order to seek out the information I needed to formulate a Programme Specification. I also conducted observations in the school, a focus group with pupils, and analysed documentation and reports.
2.Formalising these theories	This information was analysed using thematic analysis, and a series of Programme Specifications were formulated based upon the themes identified.
3.'Teaching' these theories back to the stakeholder	I took copies of the Programme Specifications (contexts, mechanisms and outcomes) and gave one copy to the interviewee and kept one copy in front of me. I talked through each Programme Specification with the interviewee, explaining its purpose.
4.Allowing the stakeholder the opportunity to comment upon, clarify and further refine key ideas.	I then asked the interviewee which parts they agreed with, disagreed with, or would change or amend. I wrote down on my page what the interviewee's suggestions were. I only wrote down the aspects that they were unhappy with, wanted to change or add to, or new contexts,

	mechanisms or outcomes identified. Examples of this process are included in Appendix H, page 211.

The interviewees who were invited to take part in the realist interview were the four members of staff in the school. Due to time limitations, these participants were prioritised because I felt that they were the most knowledgeable about SEAL implementation.

3.9.2 Observations

My role was as an 'observer-as-participant' (Robson, 2011) because I did not take part in school activities and my status as a researcher was made clear to all participants before the study began. Robson (2011) promotes the use of observations for;

> *"…getting at 'real life' in the real world"*, p.316.

This method is therefore very much in line with a Realistic Evaluation approach. The purpose of the observations was to corroborate or converge with findings from my interviews, focus group, and documentary analysis. Also, in this study I sought to further develop my understanding of what the interviewees were discussing with me, and to ensure that my interpretation was appropriate given an understanding of the context in which they were operating, which I gleaned through the observations.

The process I undertook through my observations involved a process of analytic induction because I had an initial explanation in the form of a Programme

Specification, for which I was looking to seek evidence to support or refute. My observations took on a qualitative style, rooted in the work of anthropologists, and often used in designs following an ethnographic approach (Robson, 2011). My observations aimed to be unobtrusive, non-participatory, and to avoid 'reactivity' of the participants. The information I sought tended to be unstructured and complex in nature and I therefore chose to use an informal approach to allow me freedom in the information gathered and recorded through note-taking. I did not want to restrict the aspects I could attend to during the observations through using a more structured approach, and wished to be able to utilise the 'theoretical sensitivity' I had developed in my Initial Programme Specification to drive the aspects of the environment I was attending to, in order to support or refute the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes I had identified.

In order to avoid a bias towards a particular age group or teacher, I sought to observe as equally as possible in a range of different classes. However, it was not always possible to carry out the planned class observation due to other factors such as the class not being in the school during that particular lesson, playtime schedules, or rehearsals for the Christmas Play. I also planned to complete half-hour observations in each class, and then to move onto the next. In general, this was possible, although a few observations were only 15 minutes. Table 9 below represents the overall amount of time spent observing each class or whole-school activity. This varied from half an hour spent in the Nursery and Year 2 classes, to an hour and a half spent in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class.

Table 9: Overall percentage of observation time spent observing each class or whole-school activity.

Classroom or Whole-School Activity	Percentage of Overall Observation Time Spent Observing
Nursery	6%
Reception	14%
Year 1	11%
Year 2	6%
Year 3	9%
Year 3 and 4 (mixed class)	17%
Year 4	14%
Assemblies (2 in total, 20 minutes each)	11%
Lunchtimes (2 in total, 30 minutes each)	11%

3.9.3 Pupil focus group

The focus group interviewing format was employed because there are certain advantages over individual interviews in terms of the kind of information gained (for example; a wider data bank, stimulation through group discussion, and the security of the group situation encouraging candid responses; Hess, 1968). This approach also allowed a greater range of participant views to be collected.

Vaughn et al (1996) advise conducting focus groups only with children over 6 years of age in order for them to have adequate language levels to engage effectively. A

smaller group of around five or six children is recommended, and a shorter focus group session of 45 minutes for children under 10 years. An age difference of no more than two years is also recommended due to developmental differences. Therefore, I invited children from Year 3 and Year 4 classes, aged 7-9 years, to take part. In discussion with the Head Teacher, my initial sampling plans (requesting volunteers from Year 3 and 4 classes) were decided against in order to ensure that the children in the group would be able to take part, and would 'gel' together.

Seven pupils were asked if they would like to take part from different classes; three boys and four girls. I conducted a session first with the pupils talking about what would be involved in the group and why it was taking place, the advantages and disadvantages of taking part, and gave the children a child-friendly consent form to complete privately and return to me (please refer to Appendix C, page 176). All the children indicated that they wished to take part, and were given an information sheet and consent form to take home to their parents. The parents returned the forms in six cases, and one of the girls was absent from school on the day of the first focus group, resulting in a group of five pupils (three boys and two girls).

Vaughn et al (1996) also recommend ensuring that the content be made as concrete as possible, illustrations provided, and that a greater amount of stimulation in the environment and interaction is provided than in an adult focus group. Concrete activities such as drawing, role playing and writing are suggested to maintain children's attention. I took this advice into consideration and devised a session which was made more concrete and engaging by using an alien character called 'Zizzi'

who was visiting from the planet Zog, and wanted to take back ideas about PHSE to his planet to help the children there. I was careful to clarify terms at the beginning of the session and to use the children's own language (hence PHSE was the lesson in which SEAL took place). The session comprised a mixture of discussion questions and activities designed to elicit the children's views such as making a postcard, drawing, and writing. I also incorporated taking photographs around the school with clear rules about protecting anonymity of people around the school (with ideas taken from The Mosaic Approach; Clark and Moss, 2001).

My focus group could be categorised as a 'creative-drama' approach (McDonald and Topper, 1988) with myself the facilitator acting similarly to a teacher and facilitating game-like activities which allowed children to use their creativity. The focus group plan is included in Appendix E (page 193), with photographs of some of the activities children took part in.

There was a second follow-up focus group meeting in order to 'check back' with children my interpretation of the findings. This second group meeting also served a 'member check' function (recommended by Vaughn et al, 1996), in checking for individuals' consensus with regards to the key issues discussed. This was particularly important in order for the method to be in line with a Realistic Evaluation approach, and I felt that this was the most appropriate child-friendly alternative to the realist interview that could be achieved with this age group. I therefore presented some of the summaries I had made of the discussion, and also presented photographs of the areas they photographed, and in child-friendly terms presented my interpretation of

the photographs (based upon the discussion and questioning with children that had

taken place during the previous session during this activity). The children then

'voted' on these interpretations and summaries depending on whether they agreed

with the interpretation or not, using a green sticky dot if they agreed, a yellow sticky

dot if they were not sure, and a red sticky dot if they did not agree. Thus, the session

followed Pawson and Tilley's (1997) suggested 'teacher-learner' function by

explaining in an explicit way how I had interpreted their contributions (what my

theories were), and then the 'conceptual refinement' function by asking the children

to express their thoughts about the theories. In line with Vaughn et al's (1996)

suggestions, I again sought to make the session as concrete as possible with

illustrations, and with activities involved to engage the children.

3.9.4 Documents gathered

The documentation gathered for inclusion in the analysis consisted of:

- an Ofsted report relating to an inspection which had taken part during the course

  of my research study (March 2011, this is not referenced in order to protect the

  anonymity of the case study school);

- the school's behaviour policy;

- the school's PHSE/Citizenship/sex and relationships/drugs policy; and

- SEAL organising documentation such as timetables, Assembly plans, and

  children's record booklets.

The Ofsted report was sought out independently, and policy documentation was

provided by the Head Teacher when requested. The SEAL Coordinator also

provided me with some documentation relating to SEAL organisation when she discussed aspects of this documentation in our interview and offered to provide me with copies.

3.10 Ethical considerations

The British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009), the British Educational Research Association's Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004) and the University of Birmingham's Research Code of Practice (2009) were strictly adhered to in this study. No deception was involved. All data collected is kept confidential and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998).

3.10.1 Consent

A letter was sent out to all parents, teaching and non-teaching staff describing the study and what it would involve containing my details and my supervisor's details for individuals to contact if they had any questions or concerns. A two-week time period was given for individuals to have the opportunity to voice any concerns about the research study before it began. There were no concerns voiced to either myself or my supervisor. The letters had a tear-off slip for individuals to indicate if they were interested in either taking part in a focus group or an interview (which those who were interviewed returned to the Head Teacher). The Head Teacher also introduced me to the children and the staff during an Assembly before the research began, and explained that the research would be taking place.

Informed consent was obtained through the use of an information sheet and a signed consent form for those participants who volunteering to take part in an interview or a focus group. For the pupil focus group, the signed consent of both the pupil and also their parents was obtained. All letters, consent forms and information sheets are attached in Appendix C (page 176).

3.10.2 Protecting participants from harm

The only foreseeable situation whereby harm could have come to participants was possible negative experiences within an interview or focus group situation due to power imbalances and possible conflicts, bullying or critical comments that could occur particularly in the focus group situation. There was also the possibility that a child could make a disclosure during the focus group. At the beginning of the focus group it was explained that information would be kept confidential and anonymous unless the children were to discuss anything that could be potentially harmful to them or to others, in which case other adults will need to be informed.

Ground rules were established with the group at the start where confidentiality and respect were emphasised, as well as participants' right to leave the group at any time should they wish, without explanation needed. I intervened at times during the focus group to ensure that all participants had opportunities to speak. Vaughn et al's (1996) *Moderator's Guide* was followed closely in order to ensure that a safe and supportive environment was maintained.

In the individual interviews I attempted to redress any possible power imbalance by actively seeking to empower the participant, value their points of view, demonstrate active listening, and enable them to lead the discussions. I was particularly careful in the focus group to ensure that the group did not take place within children's playtimes, and that the pupils were rewarded for their time through certificates thanking them for their involvement and their ideas.

3.10.3 Participant feedback

A full research report will be made available to the University, the Head Teacher at the case study school, and the SEAL Strategic Group. A summary of the findings will be made available to members of school staff, parents, and to educational psychologists (EPs) within my service. A child-friendly summary will be made available to pupils. Feedback will be given at a staff meeting and a school Assembly.

3.11 Data analysis

Miles and Huberman (1994) estimate that approximately two to five times as much time is needed to process and order qualitative data, as the time that was needed to collect it. They explain that the best defence against data 'overload' is to have a conceptual framework and research questions in order for the analysis to be a selective process. It is also recommended that the researcher remains alert to the purposes of the research and the:

> *"…conceptual lenses you are training on it"* (Miles and Huberman,
>
> 1994, p.56).

However, the researcher must also remain receptive to unexpected information.

In this study, my 'conceptual lenses' were made very explicit by the process of formulating an Initial Programme Specification based upon the literature review, as part of a Realistic Evaluation approach. Indeed, a template analysis of the data was initially considered, so specific was the evidence I was seeking. However, as Miles and Huberman (1994) highlight, I wished to remain open to new and unexpected contexts, mechanisms and outcomes that the data presented, rather than to impose on the data a set of already identified categories (although I did have the 'templates' of contexts, mechanisms and outcomes in mind). I therefore decided to use thematic analysis to offer a framework and a guide to my analysis of the data, with the 'conceptual lenses' of the Initial Programme Specification kept in mind and contributing to a 'theoretical sensitivity' to the meanings within the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). I therefore looked for themes that were contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes, and coded these within the data.

This thematic analysis can be described as 'theoretical' thematic analysis because it is driven by my theoretical interest in the research area, rather than being an 'inductive' or 'bottom up' analysis which is data-driven (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This kind of thematic analysis is more 'analyst-driven' and in my case involved coding for specific research questions which mapped onto a theoretical approach.

I decided that for the purposes of thematic analysis I needed all of the data to be in written form in order to be coded, but I did not feel that formal transcription of the audio data was needed. I therefore transcribed the data in an informal way which was fit for purpose, and did not use any transcription conventions because discourse analysis of the data was not needed. In the two interviews where there had not been consent to audio-record, I used my written records of the interviews and coded these directly. The observation data was in the form of 'field notes' and the field notes were coded directly, rather than being written up. I did not feel this was necessary, and also found that the way in which I had written my field notes also offered me clues regarding the context in which I had written them, and the order in which I had noticed aspects of the environment. Examples of coded data are included in Appendix I (page 214).

Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that coding involves differentiating and combining the data, and making reflections on it by assigning labels to units of meaning in the data. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommend condensation and analysis after each wave of data collection, so that a process of iterative reflection is ongoing throughout the data collection process. This process of iterative reflection is very much in line with the Realistic Evaluation approach. I took this advice, and after each phase of the research, I began to code interesting aspects of the data. For example; the initial set of contexts, mechanisms and outcomes that I identified after a first attempt at coding Day 1 of observations is included in Appendix G (page 205).

As my analysis progressed, and I became more knowledgeable about the school and the stakeholders, the codes were further developed, more interpretation was involved, and patterns in the data began to emerge and to be noticed and recorded. It was at this stage that the codes began to represent 'themes'. As Braun and Clarke (2006) explain:

> *"A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some kind of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (p.10).*

However, Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that the greater the number of instances of the code within the data set do not necessarily indicate that the theme is more crucial, and that therefore *"researcher judgement"* is needed to decide upon themes (p.82). This can be driven by the particular analytic question that the researcher begins with, or in Miles and Huberman's (1994) words, the 'conceptual lenses' the researcher is wearing.

I decided to give an indication of the source of the themes, and the prevalence of the themes in my reporting of the data, in line with the practice of Humphrey et al (2009). However, this was not provided in order to give a quantitative indicator of the relevance of each theme, but rather to increase the transparency of my analytical procedure, and to improve the validity and credibility of the findings through demonstrating that triangulation of evidence had occurred (as Yin, 2009, recommended in case study research). I am in agreement with Braun and Clarke

(2006), that the occurrence of a theme does not necessarily demonstrate its importance.

The process of thematic analysis that I followed is described by Braun and Clarke (2006) in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Phases of thematic analysis. Taken from Braun and Clarke, 2006; p. 87.

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the whole data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that thematic analysis involves a;

> *"…constant moving back and forward between the data set, the coded extracts of data that you are analysing, and the analysis of data that you are producing" (p.15).*

This is very relevant to my analysis, which involved an ongoing state of to-ing and fro-ing from the themes to the data, as the data set increased, and the depth of analysis progressed. It is also emphasised that there is a recursive process involved within these 6 phases of thematic analysis, and there is movement between phases. This was certainly the case within my research which took place over a 6 month period, and therefore involved a constant re-familiarisation with the data, reviewing and re-defining of the themes. There was also a re-generation of codes following the realist interviews, which added new information and led to a redefinition of some of the themes. An example of the feedback given in a realist interview is given in Appendix H (page 211).

3.12 Forming the Programme Specifications from the data set

The overarching Programme Specification developed describing the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes relating to the implementation of the SEAL programme within this particular school setting, is detailed in Programme Specification 1. Aspects of this Programme Specification which were found to be particularly pertinent are then further elaborated upon in 'mini' Programme Specifications

labelled 2-11. A summary of these Programme Specifications is given below in

Table 11, and the full description is included in Appendix J (page 234).

Table 11: An overview of the 11 Programme Specifications developed

Programme Specification	Summary of the Programme Specification
1. Implementation of SEAL	Contexts important for SEAL implementation include: staff with specific characteristics and beliefs who are able to be consistent in their approach; a high level of quality interaction; a calm and open physical environment; leadership commitment; ground work by managers; a supportive ethos and approach to behaviour management; clear structure and full integration of the SEAL programme; access to outside support; and close links with families. These contexts all contribute to enabling the mechanisms of support for staff, planning, and integration across all school activities to be effective. These contexts and mechanisms enable staff to feel supported and able to deliver SEAL, in order that pupils can make good progress in their social and emotional development, academic skills, and can sustain positive behaviour.
2. Interaction and Relationships	A high level of social interaction and nurturing of meaningful relationships, supported by modelling of social skills, value placed upon socialising, and use of humour; promotes good rapport, a close staff team, positive relationships and interactions, and effective social skills.
3. Physical Environment	The layout and the physical environment of the school, with a flow of people through the classrooms, and use of open areas; enables opportunities for communication, better monitoring, reinforcement of SEAL, and an organised and calm atmosphere.
4. Ethos	An ethos promoting a sense of community, mutual respect, trust and belief in others, which is actively promoted, modelled and monitored by staff; leads to a positive, productive and valuing school community.
5. No-Shouting Policy	A 'no-shouting' policy implemented by softly spoken teachers using a calm approach towards pupils, leads to a calm school atmosphere.
6. Behaviour Management	A clear behaviour policy and procedures, shared high expectations, a focus on positive behaviour, and consistency in approach; enable the mechanisms of high praise and reward, clearly communicated expectations, and appropriate challenge to take effect. This contributes to maintaining children's positive behaviour and motivating them to achieve well.

7. **Promoting Pupil Wellbeing**	A nurturing, child-centred, safe school which is interested in pupils' wellbeing and promotes positive wellbeing; leads to pupils who feel safe, are confident in their learning, are proud of themselves and are able to behave positively towards others.
8. **Pupil Responsibility**	A school that promotes children's independence, a sense of responsibility and ownership, and equal opportunities for all, with pupils given high levels of responsibility in aspects of school life including their learning; leads to children behaving in a trustworthy manner, feeling that they belong and are valued, and being well prepared for their future.
9. **Home-School Links**	A strong home-school link and good engagement of parents, with opportunities for parents to be involved in school, to have a high level of contact with staff, to access information about their child and about school life, and to recognise the achievements of their child; facilitates good rapport with parents, an awareness of social and emotional issues, parents being supported by each other, and children able to manage their behaviour.
10. **Sustaining SEAL**	In order for SEAL to be sustained and to remain a school priority, SEAL must become personalised to the school context and to individual staff, and should be continually enhanced. This happens through support from the Head Teacher, through SEAL being an embedded part of planning, and through continuing the 'bread and butter' SEAL lessons and other activities as well as re-visiting topics when needed.
11. **Outside Agency Support**	Positive relationships with outside agencies enables close collaboration, use of available support, implementation of more specialist strategies, and reinforcement of SEAL in other contexts; in order to ensure that children do not 'fall through the gap,' and are able to access greater opportunities, with some eventually having less need for specialist support.

Each element of the Programme Specifications can be conceptualised as a key 'theme' which emerged from the data as important in the implementation of SEAL through a thematic analysis procedure. The process through which the final refined themes were identified in the data sets is described in the next section.

3.13 Worked examples of the data analysis process

This section will provide a worked example from each of the main methods of data collection (interviews, observations, pupil focus group, and collection of documents)

which aim to demonstrate the 'thread' from data collection, through to analysis and

coding. An extract is provided from each of these four data sets, and the coding

process for each extract is demonstrated. Examples of coded data in their raw data

format (for example; handwritten field notes, typed interview transcripts, and pieces

of documentation) are also provided in Appendix I (page 214).

3.13.1   Interview extract

Table 12 below contains an extract from an interview, the codes which were applied

to this extract of the data, and the themes which these particular codes relate to

(Appendix I1; page 214, contains a list of the themes relating to all of the codes

identified through the final refined coding process).

Table 12: Example of the coding process for an interview

Extract from the data set: Interview with Head Teacher	Coding applied	The theme which each code relates to	Is the theme a context, mechanism or outcome?
Question 11: How do you think this work is perceived by people that come into the school? *"I think with staff most of the time we actually forget we're doing it because it's so embedded that it's only when someone like you comes along. It's so part of our culture it's normal however we acknowledge that that's here and not necessarily elsewhere."*	1vv	Teaching social and emotional skills becomes automatic/second nature to staff and becomes a part of all their practice.	Outcome
	4n	Key principles embedded in school culture.	Outcome

This extract from the Head Teacher's interview has been coded as an example of two of the themes identified. The first theme is an outcome which forms part of Programme Specification 1 (code 1vv). This Programme Specification describes the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes identified relating to the implementation of the SEAL programme. Code 1vv refers to the teaching of social and emotional skills becoming second nature to staff and a part of all their practice, which is referred to in the quote by the words: *"we actually forget we're doing it"; "embedded";* and *"normal".*

The second theme (coded 4n) is also an outcome which forms part of Programme Specification 4 which describes the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes relating to aspects of the school ethos which facilitate the SEAL programme. Code 4n describes an outcome of SEAL being the embedding of the principles of SEAL within the school's culture. This is referred to in the quote by the words *"embedded"* and *"part of our culture".*

3.13.2   Observation extract

Table 13 below contains an extract from an observation, the codes which were applied to this extract of the data, and the themes which these particular codes relate to.

Table 13: Example of the coding process for an observation

Extract from the observation field notes taken in a Reception Class Free Play session on the 4th February between 10.30am-11.15am.	Coding applied	The theme which each code relates to	Is the theme a context, mechanism or outcome?
"T [teacher] sees a child playing on his own with play dough, sits next to him and talks to him, asks abt [about] what he's making."	1h	A high level of quality interaction (described in more detail in Programme Specification 2).	Context
	2a	A high level of interaction.	Context
	2k	Staff seeking out interaction with children for social purposes, allowing child-led interactions, and using skilled questioning, repeating and elaborating of children's utterances.	Mechanism

This extract from my observation field notes has been coded as an example of three of the themes identified. The first theme identified (1h) is a context which forms part of Programme Specification 1 relating to the implementation of SEAL. This theme refers generally to the high level of quality interaction occurring across the school which I understood to be a key aspect of the case study school context which enabled to SEAL programme to be effectively implemented. This extract from a classroom observation demonstrates an example of the kinds of interactions I observed.

This theme was further elaborated in Programme Specification 2 which focused particularly upon interaction and relationships within the case study school which

facilitated the delivery of SEAL. Therefore, the themes coded 2a and 2k were also applied to this extract which described the degree of interaction occurring and the kind of interactions that were happening. This extract and many others demonstrated that the interactions were frequent as part of normal lesson delivery (code 2a) and also that the interaction had a social purpose and used skilled questioning and elaboration (code 2k), as demonstrated in this extract.

3.13.3 Pupil focus group extracts

The focus group activities are described fully in Appendix E (page 193). Two extracts from this data set are given below to demonstrate the breadth of the kinds of data collected. The first extract given in Table 14 is from the questionnaire pupils completed at the end of the focus group where they were asked to complete sentences (in this case the pupils were given the sentence starter 'My school has helped me to feel glad to be me by…' and were asked to complete the sentence).

This extract of the pupils' responses was coded with five themes in total. The first theme (coded 1q) related to a context identified in Programme Specification 1 which was 'a supportive ethos'. This is elaborated upon further in Programme Specification 4 which describes in more detail those aspects of the school ethos which facilitate SEAL. Themes 4d, 4m and 4t from Programme Specification 4 were identified in this extract which relate to aspects of the school ethos concerning the acceptance of others and self which was being explicitly taught within the school, and as evidenced here, children were themselves able to articulate this philosophy.

Table 14: Example of the coding process for the pupil focus group data
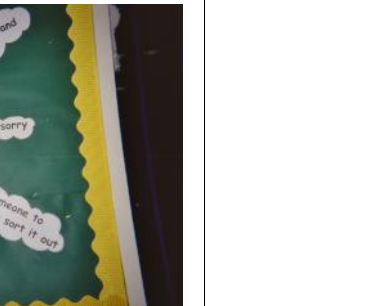
Extract from the pupil questionnaire	Coding applied	The theme which each code relates to.	Is the theme a context, mechanism or outcome?
My school has helped me to feel glad to be me by… *"Saying that everyone is different and has different personalities."*	1q	A supportive ethos and a 'no shouting policy'.	Context
	4d	Acceptance of others and self	Context
	4m	Teaching these school values explicitly (e.g. empathy for others, valuing of differences).	Mechanism
	4t	Pupils are aware of and able to articulate the school's philosophy.	Outcome
	7g	Encouraging children to be proud of who they are, giving children opportunities to show their personalities and raising self-esteem.	Mechanism

The fifth theme identified in this extract formed part of Programme Specification 7 which related to the promotion of pupil wellbeing. Theme 7g was identified as a mechanism within this Programme Specification describing the way in which this school was encouraging children to be proud of who they are and to show their personalities, which this particular extract supported.

The second extract from the pupil focus group data set given in Table 15 below is taken from one of the activities where pupils were asked to take photographs of PHSE things around their school, where they do PHSE activities and where they use their PHSE skills. I then interpreted the photographs taken based upon my discussion and questioning with children during the activity, and 'checked-back' my

interpretation with the pupils at the second focus group meeting. An example of a

pupil photograph and my interpretation is included in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Example of the coding process for the pupil focus group data

Extract from the pupil focus group activities	Coding applied	The theme which each code relates to	Is the theme a context, mechanism or outcome?
Photograph taken by pupils: 	1aa	Weekly SEAL themes introduced and reinforced via 3 SEAL Assemblies a week, linking into class-based work, with related wall displays in the Hall and planning documents displayed in the staff room.	Mechanism
Researcher interpretation of the photographs discussed with pupils at the second follow-up focus group session: *"Our Assemblies and posters remind us about what we are learning in PHSE."*	3d	Visual reminders of SEAL themes and reminders of strategies working on that week.	Context

The first code (1aa) applied to this extract refers to a mechanism identified in

Programme Specification 1 relating to weekly SEAL themes reinforced through SEAL

Assemblies and wall displays in the Hall, an example of which is photographed here.

The second code applied (3d) also refers to visual reminders of SEAL themes and

strategies pupils are working on in SEAL. This theme is a context identified within

Programme Specification 3 which focuses upon aspects of the physical environment

of the case study school that promote SEAL.

3.13.4 Documentation extract

Table 16 below contains an extract from the case study school's Ofsted Report, the

codes which were applied to this extract of the data, and the themes which these

particular codes relate to.

Table 16: Example of the coding process for the documentary data

Extract from the documentary information collected; the Ofsted Report	Coding applied	The theme which each code relates to	Is the theme a context, mechanism or outcome?
"They [the pupils] *work exceptionally well together and in teams and play a keen part in contributing to the work of the school. This also helps them to be well prepared for the future."*	1aaa	Able to work and play collaboratively and in teams, and develop friendships.	Outcome
	8p	Children are able to participate in activities and contribute to the work of the school.	Outcome
	8r	Children are well prepared for the future.	Outcome

The documents were analysed in the same way as the other data collected and the

same coding process applied to the information gathered. This extract from the

Ofsted Report has been coded with the theme 1aaa from the overarching

Programme Specification1 which was an outcome of SEAL implementation, and also

two outcomes identified within Programme Specification 8 which elaborated upon the

ways in which the school promoted pupil independence and responsibility.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Programme Specification 1 will be presented in this section, and the supporting

evidence will be summarised. Each element of the Programme Specifications can be

conceptualised as a key 'theme' which emerged from the data as important in the

implementation of SEAL through a thematic analysis procedure. Discussion of the

findings will therefore summarise the evidence from the data which contributed to the

development of these key themes.

The method of reporting findings will follow that of Humphrey et al (2009), who also

undertook a qualitative analysis of small group SEAL interventions using a range of

sources of evidence including interviews, observations and documents. This

involves indicating the number of sources of evidence the theme was coded within,

and the number of references (the number of times this theme was coded within the

data set).

The sources of data included: (a) teacher interviews (counted as one source even if

the theme was coded within several different interviews); (b) parent interviews; (c)

Family Support Worker (FSW) interview; (c) field notes from my observations; (d)

pupil focus group; (e) Ofsted report; or (f) other documentation (behaviour policy,

PHSE/citizenship/sex and relationships/drugs policy, or SEAL documentation;

counted as one source even if the theme was coded within several different

documents). Within the pupil focus groups, the number of references reported relates to the number of times the particular theme occurred within the data collected during the focus group. This data included records of the discussion, photographs taken by pupils, and the questionnaires completed during the session (examples included in Appendix E (page 193). The number of times a particular theme was 'voted' for by pupils is also reported where appropriate because this gave an indication of whether the theme was also agreed with by the other pupils present, as well as the pupil who indicated the theme originally (a 'member check' as described by Vaughn et al, 1996).

The aim of providing a quantitative indication of the number of sources and references that support a particular theme is to: (a) increase the transparency of my analysis of themes; (b) demonstrate triangulation of evidence; and (c) to increase the validity and credibility of my findings. This aim is not to provide a quantitative indicator relating to the relevance of a particular theme.

4.2 Programme Specification 1: Implementation of SEAL

Programme Specification 1 aims to bring together the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes important within this particular setting for the SEAL programme to be implemented effectively.

Programme Specification 1: Implementation of SEAL

A school context which has in place…

- Members of staff who:
-believe that teaching social and emotional skills is a part of their natural teacher philosophy;
-have the determination and desire to help children; and
-are receptive to change and have a positive attitude towards implementation.
- Consistency in approach to behaviour, and in promoting social and emotional development across all staff including Dinner Supervisors, and supply staff;
- A high level of quality interaction;
- A physical environment that offers opportunities for communication and interaction, allows close monitoring of classrooms, and promotes a calm and organised atmosphere;
- Leadership team involvement and commitment to SEAL;
- Ground work by managers, including:
-space to reflect;
-establishing a clear structure to SEAL; and
-establishing the SEAL curriculum.
- Structured, graduated and integrated introduction of SEAL themes across the school;
- Teaching of social and emotional skills incorporated across the whole school curriculum;
- A supportive ethos and a 'no shouting' policy;
- A clear behaviour policy and procedures, shared high expectations, and a focus on positive behaviour;
- A nurturing, child-centred, safe school environment which promotes positive wellbeing;
- Active promotion of pupils' independence, responsibility and ownership;
- Access to a monthly support group accessed by the SEAL Coordinator, also enabling access to additional funding and resources as well as peer support from other Coordinators; and
- Strong home-school links.

With the following mechanisms in operation…

- SEAL Coordinator providing support to staff through a collaborative approach to planning, regular meetings, and summary sheets for staff of schemes of work and learning objectives for each theme;
- Staff supporting each other and sharing ideas;
- The SEAL programme delivered over two years rather than one year to cover topics thoroughly;
- Advance planning of SEAL themes by at least one term, and group planning taking place within Key Stages;
- Weekly SEAL themes introduced and reinforced via three SEAL Assemblies a week, linking into class-based work, with related wall displays in the Hall and planning documents displayed in the Staff Room;
- SEAL as a core element of the school curriculum, with weekly timetabled lessons, and regular Circle Time sessions. SEAL work also incorporated into other small group interventions happening in the school, including Silver Set SEAL groups. Specific SEAL input involves use of:
-group work, paired work, collaborative work, and peer appraisal;
-a range of engaging media (for example: visual resources; You Tube clips; puppets; role-play; and real life examples);
-music and dance;

-explicit teaching of prosocial behaviour; and
-children monitoring their own progress in social and emotional skills through individual SEAL record booklets, and self-reflection activities and discussion.

- Firmer structure and fidelity at the beginning of the SEAL programme with greater personalisation, enhancement and flexibility introduced over time;
- Playtimes utilised as a key time to promote social and emotional skills through use of:

-Structured games carefully planned to promote social and emotional skills;
-Teaching Assistants (TAs) supporting children to play collaboratively; and
-Friendship Stops made by the children, and regularly reintroduced.

- Teachers promoting friendship development and conflict resolution through ad-hoc, active support and discussion when children need it;
- Teachers mobilising the peer group to support particular children that need additional support (for example: promoting understanding of children's behaviour; and encouraging use of the Friendship Stop);
- Reinforcement of SEAL skills through specific SEAL rewards and positive recognition of SEAL skills by adults; and
- Additional 1:1 support for children with social and emotional needs from trained adults (for example, through Key Adult support). SEAL lessons are sometimes tailored to those children with particular needs when appropriate (for example, in cases of bereavement). Close collaboration with outside agencies is in place in order to appropriately support these children who need additional support beyond the SEAL programme.

Leads to the following outcomes for staff:

- Staff feel that there is a very clear focus for their SEAL work;
- Staff work collaboratively;
- Staff delivering Wave 1 and Wave 2 SEAL feel supported;
- SEAL Coordinator feels supported and able to help staff;
- Staff are able to plan and deliver SEAL;
- Teaching social and emotional skills becomes automatic/second-nature to staff and becomes a part of all their practice;
- Staff experience the positive results of SEAL; and
- Staff enjoy being on duty at playtimes.

Leads to the following outcomes for pupils:

- Receiving the same messages from all staff and therefore regular reinforcement of skills occurring;
- Making good progress in their personal development;
- Able to work and play collaboratively and in teams, and to develop friendships;
- Having basic emotional literacy skills;
- Able to talk about ways to resolve conflict and manage their feelings;
- Making good progress in their academic development;
- Are engaged and enjoy lessons;
- Know what positive behaviour is, and the limits and boundaries of behaviour;
- Are aware of the impact of behaviour on learning;
- Are able to sustain positive behaviour (while they are in this setting), and some can sustain this at Middle School;
- Have far fewer behaviour difficulties; and
- View teaching of social and emotional skills as part of their teachers' role.

4.2.1. Contexts

Four kinds of contextual factors were considered in line with Pawson et al's (2004) recommendations; individual capacities, interpersonal relationships, institutional setting; and the wider infra-structural and welfare system.   Figure 10 represents these identified contextual factors diagrammatically.

The individual capacities of staff members which have been identified originated from the interviews with members of staff. Being *receptive to change and having a positive attitude towards implementation* was a particularly strong theme which was referred to in all four interviews with members of staff, and also in the interview with a Family Support Worker (FSW) working within the school (2 sources of evidence, 9 references overall). For example,

> *"It's got to be the people hasn't it…people prepared to change, a determination to get things in place".*

Three of the four members of staff interviewed referred to a fundamental belief that teaching of social and emotional skills fitted with their own teaching philosophy (1 source, 5 references). For example;

> *"Social and emotional skills are the backbone of teaching, naturally part of good practice [sic]".*

Figure 10: Contextual factors identified

INFRASTRUCTURE

Strong home-school link

Monthly support group

INSTITUTION

Leadership team involvement and commitment to SEAL

Ground work by managers

A supportive ethos and 'no shouting' policy

A supportive physical environment

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Teaching of social and emotional skills across whole school curriculum

Space to reflect

A high level of quality interaction

INDIVIDUALS

All staff promoting SEAL

Receptive to change

SEAL PROGRAMME

A child-centred, safe school environment, which promotes positive wellbeing

Establishing a clear structure to SEAL

Desire to help Children

Teaching social and emotional skills part of natural teacher philosophy

Shared high expectations

Establishing the SEAL curriculum

A clear behaviour policy, and a focus on positive behaviour

Consistency in approach to behaviour and social and emotional development

Structured and integrated introduction of SEAL

Active promotion of children's independence, responsibility and ownership

Three members of staff and the FSW also referred to an underlying determination to put strategies in place and to find things that worked for the children they were supporting (2 sources, 6 references). The disadvantaged background of many of the children they were supporting also seemed to impact upon this desire to find an approach that worked for these children. This highlights the uniqueness of the localised context which had contributed to staff having the beliefs and attitudes that they have towards SEAL. For example:

> "…ideally we'd all like to be well-balanced and to know how to deal with our feelings and emotions and as far as possible we've got to give the children the tools to be able to do that [sic]".

When asked about what had contributed to her values and beliefs, one member of staff explained that:

> "I became conscious of it…I became conscious of what I really wanted to do and what I believed I could do with children and it was deliberately with children from very difficult backgrounds…I realised I was able to deal with them basically…it became very clear what I wanted to do, it was just that I think it's helping families that everyone else had given up on…and I still hear it now people say to me how can you possibly bear to work in X?… and I say well don't those children deserve the same as everyone else? It's kind of evolved once I was here, it then evolved into what I'm doing now [sic]".

This quote highlights the emotiveness and the strength of feelings amongst staff members that appears to underpin their willingness to engage with SEAL. The FSW also commented that the strength of the Head Teacher's desire to make SEAL work also impacted on staff's attitudes:

> "…Head Teacher is really positive about it, she carries other people with her own enthusiasm [sic]".

The commitment and involvement of the Leadership Team in SEAL was identified as an important context in its own right and was a particularly strong theme in the FSW interview (3 sources, 5 references). Related to this theme, the necessity of ground work was also a context that all four members of staff referred to (1 source, 5 references). The allowance of space and time to reflect, in order to develop the structure and curriculum of SEAL was viewed as crucial to its effectiveness:

> *"A lot of determination, planning, decision-making… Where do we want to take these children? What do we want to do? How will it affect their learning?' [sic]"; and*

> *"Ground work had to come first, discussion; 'How are we going to get this behaviour improved? How are we going to do this? All got to start doing the same thing.' That was in place we then layered it…started with simple things… [sic]".*

This quote exemplifies the way that at an institutional level SEAL was gradually introduced, beginning with a higher level of structure and focusing on simple behaviours, and then becoming increasingly integrated across the whole school and taking its place as a solid component of the school curriculum. Three members of school staff referred to this graduated introduction, and three members of staff also discussed the way in which SEAL became "*absorbed*" into all aspects of the curriculum (1 source, 3 references). For example:

> *"SEAL, it crosses all boundaries doesn't it? We're trying to involve it wherever possible [sic]".*

School policy documents also highlighted that SEAL was integrated across many different areas of the school curriculum.

This integration of SEAL across the curriculum was also noted in a variety of situations during my observations (7 references, field notes). For example, in a Religious Education lesson, children were asked to reflect upon how they would feel if they were one of the characters being discussed, and drew upon this in discussion and in role-playing the characters. In a Physical Education lesson, the teacher encouraged the children to recognise the feelings they were experiencing during the activities.

Contextual factors identified at an institutional level which facilitated this integration of SEAL included: (a) a supportive ethos and a 'no-shouting' policy; (b) a clear behaviour policy; (c) a nurturing, child centred and safe school environment; and (d) a physical environment supporting communication and interaction, a high level of monitoring, and a calm and organised atmosphere. These institutional factors are complex processes in themselves and each have separate mechanisms through which they are promoted. These institutional factors are therefore described in more depth in Programme Specifications 2-11.

The way in which SEAL became integrated within activities across the school was also evidenced through the interpersonal contextual factors identified. In particular, the consistent approach to promoting social and emotional skills and positive behaviour across all members of staff, including Dinner Supervisors, across all elements of the school day, and through the high level of quality interaction occurring. Two members of staff discussed this in their interviews (1 source, 5 references). For example:

> *"Staff are now all on board with pushing the same thing at the same time";*
>
> *"Seems to touch everything even through to lunchtimes. Dinner Supervisors aware of themes and how we approach things, if children have problems at playtime/lunchtimes their approach is very much the way our approach would be* [*sic*]*"; and*
>
> *"We always plan for the supply teachers…it's quite important, it's consistency once children are into their routines and into their good habits you want them to be able to sustain that all the time* [*sic*]*".*

Infra-structural contextual factors identified related to a monthly support group attended for over a year by the SEAL Coordinator, as well as the strong home-school links. The monthly support group was discussed only by the SEAL Coordinator herself, who had attended these meetings with staff from eight or nine other schools (4 references, teacher interview). The SEAL Coordinator had found these of immense value and importance in setting up SEAL, and these experiences allowed her to develop the ground work aspects already discussed. The gradual, structured and integrated introduction of SEAL appears to be connected to the Coordinator's experience at these meetings trialling different things, going through the materials, accessing and developing resources, and reflecting and sharing on experiences implementing SEAL. For example:

> *''…started as a little drip feed, I could go to meetings; discuss, come back and say 'this unit, here are some ideas;' we worked our way through it together, but I'd got that extra bit of input coming from the hub meetings which was so valuable…don't honestly think it would have worked as well without that bit of extra support* [*sic*]*".*

The meetings also appeared to serve as peer support, with the Coordinator explaining that:

"…just knowing I'll go back and see if anyone has any ideas how to do it, how they approached it...to be honest I think it would be very difficult to set it up without that, I wouldn't have liked to be the one in charge of introducing it without that support in place [*sic*]*".*

4.2.2 Mechanisms

The contextual factors identified above enable the mechanisms to be put into operation successfully in order to produce the outcomes of SEAL. The mechanisms identified in the main relate to the processes involved in the practical implementation of the programme such as organisation and pedagogy. However, the nature of the support provided for staff, and the support they gave to each other in implementing SEAL was also identified as crucial for effective SEAL implementation by three members of staff (1 source, 9 references). The SEAL Coordinator explained that this involved:

"First of all making sure that all staff on board with it …we had staff meeting times to talk about how it's going so that little problems could be ironed out".

Through these planning meetings, staff also developed the SEAL resources:

"The actual SEAL resources; we're finding they're a bit dated and we're trying to enhance those in our planning meetings".

The SEAL Coordinator also discussed the support she had given to the Teaching Assistant (TA) running the SEAL small groups for children with additional social and emotional needs. She attended the training sessions with the TA and supported her to set up and run the groups.

Staff interviewed tended to feel that the most useful support had come from other staff within the school including the SEAL Coordinator, and that external support had not been found to be valuable. For example:

> *"I think the support comes from within, the strength of it is planning in teams, that's my view anyway".*

As mentioned in this quote, the collaborative planning taking place was also viewed as a supportive and essential mechanism in being able to deliver SEAL consistently across the school (1 source, 2 references). For example, one teacher discussed the way in which the themes being addressed in the classroom are:

> *"… generally in line with the themes we're carrying out in the school, again; everyone knows that because of the group planning".*

The SEAL programme is delivered across two years in order to cover topics thoroughly, with weekly themes introduced through a Monday Assembly, with two further SEAL-based Assemblies each week. Reminders of these themes are represented visually by a display in the Hall (an example of a display is given below in Figure 11, as photographed by the pupils in the focus group), and also by planning documents on display in the Staff Room. These themes provide the focus for class-based work so that there is a consistent approach across the school towards reinforcing a particular theme or area of skill. As one teacher explained:

> *"The way we start in morning Assembly…sets it all in motion…there in the music, the story; it's what we're looking for…that focus…can be talking to children after, and can reflect on it* [*sic*]*".*

Figure 11: Photographs relating to displays and reminders relating to SEAL
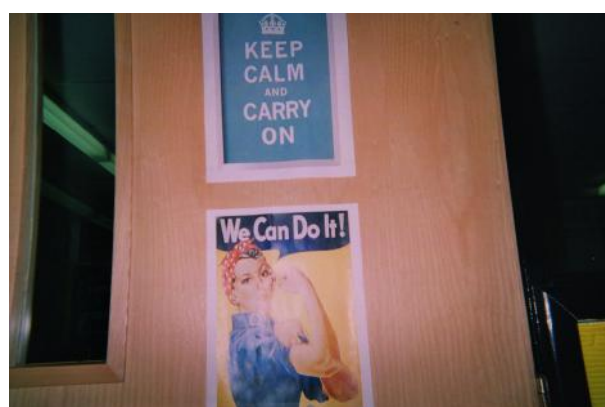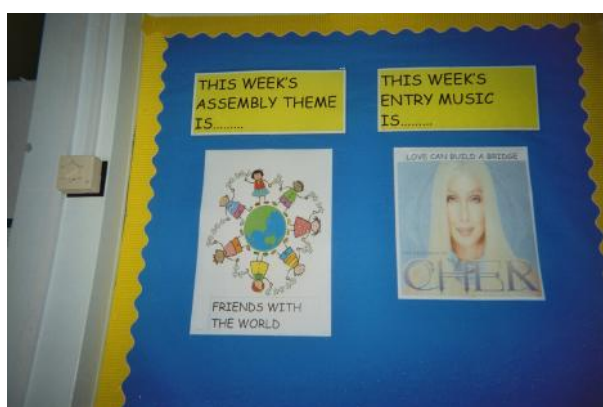
This reinforcement of SEAL skills by all staff was mentioned by one of the teachers, and was noted during my observations (2 sources, 11 references). For example, during a Celebration Assembly children were rewarded and given a certificate for skills such as "*working together to*…" as well as for academic achievements. The Head Teacher focuses on a particular SEAL skill each week and asks teachers to be looking out for children demonstrating this skill, with a Head Teacher Award at the

end of the week being given to children doing particularly well in this skill. For

example, one week I was observing this reward was for:

> *"Someone who stays calm and deals with their anger and frustration;*
> *stays calm in a crisis* [*sic*]*".*

There are weekly timetabled SEAL lessons and Circle Times, and small groups for

children needing additional support, all following the same themes at the same time

(1 source, 8 references). This structure appears to be important in ensuring that

SEAL is viewed as a core element of the curriculum, with one teacher commenting:

> *"Now a few years ago that didn't happen, it was very ad hoc; if you*
> *had time; 'oh we'd better do a bit of PHSE'*[*sic*]*".*

There were some clear messages in the data about the importance of engaging the

young people in their learning of social and emotional skills, and making the

experience enjoyable through the use of very practical, visual and current up-to-date

resources (4 sources, 33 references). Three members of staff discussed the

importance of using engaging resources such as YouTube, films and the Internet in

SEAL lessons. The children referred to the use of a range of activities that they felt

had helped them to learn social and emotional skills, and took photographs of some

of the activities. For example, use of puppets (pictured below).

Figure 12: Photograph of the puppets children use in role-play

There were also a very high number of references to use of group, paired or collaborative work in order to teach social and emotional skills, and use of peer appraisal across the curriculum (5 sources, 12 references). The children referred to: *"people working together"; "discussing things with each other';'* and *"sharing ideas."* The Ofsted report (March, 2011) also made particular reference to the importance of group work, stating that pupils ''*work productively together''*.

One member of staff discussed the way in which children are encouraged to work with others outside of their friendship groups in order to develop their skills in collaborative working. She also explained how self-reflection in the development of these skills is supported through discussion with children afterwards;

> *"…'How well did you get on? Did you share ideas? Did one person try and dominate?...How did you get on with working with so and so?'* [*sic*]*"*.

I observed this teacher encouraging self-reflection throughout learning activities. Individual record books have also been developed which encourage children to reflect on their social and emotional skills development as they move up through the school.

Music, singing and dance were also methods highlighted as important in reinforcing SEAL messages (4 sources, 9 references). As one teacher explained:

> *"The children engage with it and that's the whole point, and it's very very carefully chosen to follow the theme, the music has a message* [*sic*]*"*.

Another mechanism used to deliver SEAL is to teach prosocial behaviours explicitly (2 sources, 10 references), which relates closely to Programme Specification 6 which describes the way in which teaching staff make behavioural expectations very clear to pupils. For example, in one lesson the teacher took photographs of children during Physical Education and then the children reflected on their behaviour during the activities afterwards through looking at the photographs. In several PHSE/SEAL lessons children would role-play appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in groups which were filmed, and then the class would watch the clips and discuss.

Playtimes were used as a key time to develop social and emotional skills (2 sources, 9 references) through carefully planned and structured games (2 sources, 3 references), and use of TA support to encourage children to play collaboratively (1

source, 1 reference). Friendship Stops were also used to promote friendship development (3 sources, 8 references). A photograph of a Friendship Stop taken by the children in the focus group is shown in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13: Photograph taken by pupils of a Friendship Stop

Another mechanism identified related to the ad-hoc support and discussion provided by teachers, to support children to resolve conflict and to manage their relationships (3 sources, 7 references). One child's parents discussed the way in which their child's teacher:

> '' *…purposefully put them in the same group because they identified that they got on well…helped him to develop friendship".*

The children also referred to this kind of 'ad-hoc' support from teachers (4 references, pupil focus group). For example:

> ''*Teachers help when I fall out with somebody*''.

Two teachers made reference to supporting particular children experiencing social and emotional difficulties through mobilising their peer group to support them (1 source, 2 references). For example:

> "*Other children being helped to understand…'so and so has a problem and we all need to look out for them and see how we can help, I'll be looking for children who are good examples'…mobilises the peer group to help the child* [*sic*]".

Where children such as these are experiencing significant social and emotional needs, additional support is provided and training for staff is sought (6 sources of evidence, 11 references). Close collaboration with outside agencies is also in place to support these children (3 sources, 6 references).

4.2.3 Outcomes for staff

The way that SEAL is delivered leads to the outcome of a very clear focus for staff, which all four members of staff interviewed referred to (5 references, teacher interviews). For example:

> "*…we've become more aware of where those opportunities are within the curriculum which we might not have been quite so aware before*[*sic*]*; it does highlight very specific themes*".

All four staff also felt that teaching social and emotional skills had become second nature to them through this integrated and focused approach, and it had become a part of all their practice (3 sources, 10 references). For example:

> "*I think with staff most of the time we actually forget we're doing it because it's so embedded… it's so part of our culture it's normal*".

The Family Support Worker also noted that:

> *"I feel it has become a natural way the school works"*.

Two members of staff explained that experiencing the positive outcomes of SEAL had contributed to staff commitment to SEAL (1 source, 2 references). Teachers explained that:

> *"I can remember when it first came in, felt different about it then; lot of work, massive amount of stuff to take on board but now see it works* [*sic*]*, everyone is very positive"*; and

> *"…playtimes are very enjoyable when you're on duty these days whereas it used to be 'Oh My God who's going to hit who, do what?' but hardly ever happens* [*sic*]*"*.

One teacher also explained that:

> *"It helps you know how to deal with situations with the children"*.

4.2.4 Outcomes for pupils

The pupils themselves discussed learning about ways to manage their feelings, and strategies such as counting to 10 and taking deep breaths to feel calmer (2 sources, 12 references). One teacher also referred to pupils:

> *"Knowing how to deal with emotions and feelings"*.

The FSW also explained that:

> *"When I work with students from here, they already have the basics with regards to emotional literacy, so I can build on that"*.

The Ofsted report (March, 2011) also made three references to pupils making progress in their personal development.

Another outcome identified related to children learning how to make friends, and to play and work collaboratively (3 sources, 10 references). For example, during my observations I noted children playing collaboratively in Nursery, children negotiating their roles in a role-play game in Year 1, and children in Year 3 playing games together and helping each other to pack games away (9 references, field notes). The school's Ofsted report (March, 2011) also made references to children's skills in this area, for example:

"They work exceptionally well together and in teams".

It was implicit in my discussion with children in the focus group that they perceived teaching social and emotional skills as very much part of their teachers' role, and there were six references to teachers helping the children in different areas of social and emotional skills.

Many of the children's comments about what they had learned in PHSE indicated an awareness of what constitutes positive behaviour, and an understanding about what the boundaries and limits of behaviour are (5 references, pupil focus group). For example: listening; looking; concentrating; and avoiding aggressive behaviours. Two members of staff interviewed commented particularly upon improvements in behaviour since SEAL had been implemented; one staff member discussed the improvement in behaviour at playtimes, and improved manners and politeness;

another discussed a significant reduction in vandalism. They also commented on children's awareness of their own behaviour.

During my observations I noted similar polite and well-mannered behaviours such as children holding doors open for me and saying "*excuse me*" when they needed to get past. One member of staff also mentioned that visitors tend to comment on children's positive behaviour as they walk through the school. For example:

> *"That was noted by Ofsted the way that children stood back at doors, that was just natural they said that was unusual; for us its not unusual* [*sic*]*".*

The Ofsted report (March, 2011) noted that pupils behave well, and rated pupil behaviour as "*good*".

Two members of staff referred to the positive behaviour that pupils can maintain whilst they are in this school setting, but there was less certainty about whether pupils would be able to maintain it when they move out of this setting. The ability for children to make improvements in their social and emotional skills and behaviour within this school environment was attributed to: a) the occurrence of high levels of reinforcement; and b) the consistency of reinforcement by all staff at the same time. As one teacher explained:

> *"Children are getting it from every member of staff they go to, whichever teacher they go to is pushing it all the way through* [*sic*]*".*

Another outcome identified related to pupils' engagement and enjoyment of SEAL lessons. One of the children in the focus group explained that:

"The lessons like PHSE and the teachers teaching me things I really like these so it helps me to feel happy (And proud) [sic]".

Although there were no other references to pupil engagement in SEAL lessons specifically, there were many other references to pupil engagement in lessons generally. For example, Ofsted (March 2011) commented on pupil engagement and enjoyment in their report, and made a link between pupils' engagement in lessons and their positive behaviour (1 source, 6 references). For example:

"Lessons are well organised to hold pupils' interest and this is one reason why behaviour is usually at least good and sometimes outstanding".

Ofsted also noted that academic progress of pupils overall was *"good"*, and that although the children's skills are below national expectations on entry to school, by the time they leave at the end of Year 4 their attainment is;

"…broadly in line with national averages and they have achieved well."

4.3 Summary

A summary of the findings is represented in Figure 14. The four kinds of contextual factors identified (in line with Pawson et al's recommendations; 2004) surround the mechanisms and outcomes to represent the all-encompassing nature of the contextual factors which need to be in place in the environment in order for the mechanisms to operate, and the outcomes to be achieved.

INFRASTRUCTURE & WELFARE SYSTEM

INSTITUTIONAL SETTING

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

INDIVIDUAL CAPACITIES

MECHANISMS

Leadership team involvement and commitment to SEAL

Ground work by managers

Monthly support group with other schools, access to additional funding and resources

A supportive ethos and 'no shouting policy'

Space to reflect

A clear behaviour policy, and a focus on positive behaviour

Establishing a clear structure to SEAL

A nurturing, child-centred, safe school environment, which promotes positive wellbeing

A high level of quality interaction

Teaching social and emotional skills part of natural teacher philosophy

Consistency in approach to behaviour

Structured, graduated and integrated introduction of SEAL

Coordinator support and regular meetings

Ad-hoc support in friendship development and conflict resolution

2 year programme Weekly themes SEAL Assemblies

SEAL input:
-Collaborative work
-Engaging media
-Music and dance
-Explicit teaching of prosocial behaviour
-Self-reflection

Within-staff support and sharing of ideas, collaborative planning in Key Stages

Mobilise peer group

Reinforcement of SEAL skills

-Core component of curriculum
-Weekly lessons and Circle Times
-Incorporation with small group work

Promoting social and emotional skills at Playtime:
-Structured games
-Support to play collaboratively
-Friendship Stops

Additional support for children with social and emotional needs, tailored SEAL lessons, collaboration with outside agencies

Personalisation and enhancement over time

STAFF

Clear focus for SEAL work

Able to plan and deliver SEAL

Feel supported

Experience positive results

SEAL becomes second nature and embedded in all practice

Enjoy playtimes

Work collaboratively

PUPILS

Regular reinforcement of SEAL skills

Good progress in personal and academic development

Able to work and play collaboratively

Basic emotional literacy skills, able to talk about ways to resolve conflict and manage feelings

Engaged and enjoy PHSE/SEAL

Improved behaviour
Can sustain behaviour
Know boundaries/limits

Motivated

OUTCOMES

Receptive to change

Teaching of social and emotional skills incorporated across whole school curriculum

Shared high expectations

Determination and desire to help children

A supportive physical environment

Positive attitude towards implementation

Establishing the SEAL curriculum

Consistency in approach to social and emotional development

Strong home-school links

Active promotion of children's independence, responsibility and ownership

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This section of Volume 1 aims to discuss the research findings in the context of the wider research literature in this area, and then to discuss the limitations of this study, and the theoretical and practical applications.

This study aimed to identify the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes of the SEAL programme within a 'good practice' school. In particular, the study aimed to consider the ways in which SEAL is organised and delivered, how it has been embedded across the whole-school context, aspects of the school's culture and ethos which enable the SEAL programme to be delivered effectively, teacher beliefs and attitudes that are viewed as important, and the impact of SEAL on pupils, parents and members of staff. The study has used the Realistic Evaluation framework in order to formulate a Programme Specification for the implementation of SEAL within this particular school setting, and has expanded upon particularly pertinent aspects of this Programme Specification to identify a further 10 'mini' Programme Specifications. These pertinent aspects included:

- a high level of social interaction;
- a strong ethos promoting mutual respect, a sense of community, and belief in others;
- a no-shouting policy;

- a nurturing and child-centred environment;

- promotion of pupil independence and responsibility;

- the continual enhancement of the SEAL programme;

- a physical environment that allows opportunities for interaction, close monitoring, and leads to a calm and organised atmosphere;

- a clear behaviour policy and procedures, high expectations, and a focus upon positive behaviour;

- strong home-school links; and

- close collaboration with outside agencies.

Following the lead of Humphrey et al (2009) in their implementation process model for small group SEAL interventions, an attempt has been made to create a model summarising the contexts, mechanisms and outcomes identified in this study as important in the implementation of SEAL across a whole-school context (represented in Figure 14).

5.2 Findings in relation to the wider research literature

The findings of this case study will be discussed in relation to the research literature pertaining to the implementation of SEAL, and the broader literature which has identified implementation factors important for prevention and promotion programmes targeting children and young people. The relevant contexts, mechanisms and outcomes identified will each be discussed in turn.

5.2.1 Contexts

This study identified contexts relating to the four kinds of contextual factors as suggested by Pawson et al (2004); individual capacities of key actors and stakeholders, interpersonal relationships, institutional setting, and the wider infra-structural and welfare system. These identified contexts will be discussed in relation to the wider literature.

5.2.2 Individual capacity

A perceived need for the programme, and perceived benefits were identified as particularly important in this study in changing staff attitudes towards SEAL in order for staff to be 'positive' and 'on board' with the programme. A receptiveness to change was also found to be important. These findings are in agreement with those of Durlak and Dupree (2008), who also indicated that 'collective norms' which are pro-change are beneficial.

The skilled interactions of members of staff were noted particularly in my observations, as well as staff consciously modelling appropriate social skills and facilitating interactions between the children. This is supported by Humphrey et al's (2009) findings that facilitator skills, ability to act as role models, and ability to build up a relationship and rapport with the children, were important in delivering small group SEAL interventions. Humphrey et al (2009) also refer to use of 'prompting, probing and questioning' by staff, which is very much in line with the 'questioning,

repeating and elaborating' detailed in Programme Specification 2. Although I did not

observe small group interventions due to the school policy on protecting the privacy

of these sessions, it appears that the elements noted by Humphrey et al (2009) in

small groups, are also applicable across the whole-school context in this school

setting.

However, a characteristic which was not identified in other studies investigating

individuals' characteristics and capacities, but was identified as a particularly

important theme in this study, related to staff beliefs that teaching social and

emotional skills is part of their 'natural' teacher role.

5.2.3 Interpersonal relations

A key theme identified relating to interpersonal relations was consistency in approach

to social and emotional skills and pupil behaviour across all staff, and in Programme

Specification 4 a key context identified was also an 'All in it Together' ethos. These

findings are supported by previous studies which have found that all staff (including

non-teaching staff) being involved in the programme and working together,

consistency in language and approach to behaviour, and consistency in

implementation, all contribute towards effective programme delivery (Hallam et al,

2006; Humphrey et al, 2009; Rones and Hoagwood, 2000).

Open communication has also been identified by Durlak and Dupree (2008) and

Greenberg et al (2005) as an important aspect of the programme context, which is

supported by the evidence in Programme Specification 2 relating to the interactions occurring within the school, and the opportunities available for staff to talk about issues and concerns. Collaborative decision making was also identified in both of these implementation studies, which is supported by the 'democratic' approach identified in Programme Specification 2. However, Greenberg et al (2005) particularly highlight the importance of involvement of key stakeholders such as parents and members of the community in decision-making, which was not noted in this study. The parents I interviewed did not seem to have much awareness about the SEAL programme or its implementation.

5.2.4 Institutional setting

Five particularly relevant aspects of the institutional setting will be discussed in relation to the research literature: staff knowledge and support; programme implementation; ethos; behaviour management; and provision of a nurturing environment promoting pupil wellbeing and independence.

5.2.4.1 Staff knowledge and support

Commitment and involvement of the senior leadership team in managing implementation was an important contextual factor identified which is supported by other studies (Durlak and Dupree, 2008; Hallam et al, 2006). The existence of a designated coordinator has also been identified in other studies as an important factor in successful implementation (Greenberg et al, 2005; Hallam et al, 2006).

Durlak and Dupree (2008) also refer to support by management and supervisors as important in programme delivery. In this study, the support that was most valued appeared to be collaborative support from each other, and staff were very much perceived as a 'team' supporting each other in a non-hierarchical manner. The collaborative planning and sharing of ideas was an important mechanism identified, and is in line with Greenberg et al's findings (2005).

Hallam et al (2006) discuss the importance of staff having sufficient time to develop their understanding of the conceptual basis of the programme, and to plan how SEAL should be implemented. Humphrey et al (2009) also refer to the importance of ground work and preparation of resources for SEAL small group interventions. In this study, these factors were particularly relevant for the managers in this study, for whom 'space to reflect' and time to establish a clear structure and curriculum for SEAL were important.

5.2.4.2 Programme implementation

This school adopted a universal and holistic whole-school approach to implementing SEAL, which is an approach supported by many other research studies (Hallam et al, 2006; NICE, 2008; Weare and Gray, 2003; Wells et al, 2003). A long-term developmental approach was taken, with a focus on SEAL topics over a period of time such as a term, within a spiral curriculum so that children can fully engage with the issues. This model is also supported by evidence from studies investigating

programmes promoting positive mental health and social and emotional skills (Adi et al, 2007; Hallam et al, 2006; Weare and Gray, 2003).

Integration of a curriculum for the development of social and emotional skills across the whole school curriculum (cross-curricular integration) has also been supported by review studies (NICE, 2008; Rones and Hoagwood, 2000). In this case study school, emphasis was placed upon SEAL Assemblies to introduce and reinforce themes, which is supported by Hallam et al's (2006) research which found that Assemblies reinforced the SEAL classroom work and showed the commitment and participation of senior staff.

5.2.4.3 Ethos

Compatibility or 'fit' of the programme with the organisation's values and ethos was identified as an important facilitating factor by Durlak and Dupree (2008) and Greenberg et al (2005). This is in agreement with the findings of this study; particularly Programme Specifications 3 and 5; which describe aspects of the ethos such as respect, trust, acceptance and nurture which were viewed as key to facilitating SEAL work. Durlak and Dupree (2008) also indicated that a 'shared vision' is important in order for members of the organisation to be united in values and purpose. There was triangulation of evidence in this study across many of the aspects of ethos identified including: mutual respect; acceptance of others and self; shared high expectations; a focus on positive behaviour; and promotion of pupil independence, suggesting that there was a united vision across the school.

The importance of integration of new programmes into existing practices of the school has been highlighted by a number of implementation review studies (Durlak and Dupree, 2008; Greenberg et al, 2005), as well as studies more specific to SEAL (Hallam et al, 2006; Humphrey et al, 2009). The full integration of SEAL was identified in Programme Specification 1 as an important contextual factor, but in this study some interviewees' responses suggested that their practices had been adapted to suit SEAL, rather than the other way around.

5.2.4.4 Behaviour management

The reinforcement of positive behaviours and SEAL skills across the school context was identified as particularly important in this study, which is supported by many other studies investigating promotion of positive mental health and social and emotional wellbeing (Hallam et al, 2006; Humphrey et al, 2009; NICE, 2008), and the benefits for generalisation of skills have also been noted in other studies (Durlak et al, 2011). Clarity regarding expectations, rules and boundaries was also a particular strength noted, which was also identified by Weare and Gray (2003) as important in SEL programmes. A key aspect of this school's ethos was also the high expectations of pupil behaviour and learning, which is supported by the research of Durlak et al (2011) who refer to 'norms' that convey high expectations.

5.2.4.5 Nurturing environment promoting pupil wellbeing and independence

This study found that a nurturing environment where staff were interested in children's wellbeing, and had a high level of interaction and rapport with children, contributed to the successful delivery of SEAL. This is supported by Durlak et al (2011) and Weare and Gray (2003), who pointed to the value of warm and caring relationships in the school environment to promote these skills. Staff in this setting also felt that it was important to provide opportunities for children to express themselves and to talk about their worries. This is also in agreement with Humphrey et al (2009), who also found that verbalising emotional experiences, and inviting children to talk about their worries, was an important component of small group SEAL.

Finally; active promotion of pupils' independence, responsibility and participation in school life were identified as key components of this school's practices, which are supported by other studies investigating the promotion of social and emotional skills (Hallam et al, 2006; Humphrey et al, 2009; Weare and Gray, 2003).

5.2.5 Infrastructural support

Durlak and Dupree (2008) also discuss the importance of 'technical assistance' in programme implementation in the form of resources, training, emotional support and mechanisms for problem-solving (also discussed by Greenberg et al, 2005). The support group with other schools accessed by the SEAL Coordinator enabled her to

access this kind of technical assistance, and she was then able to support school staff with each of these aspects through regular meetings, of which problem-solving formed a key part.

The importance of involving parents has been discussed in previous studies, in order for parents to be able to support the skills their children are learning at school (Adi et al, 2007; Greenberg et al, 2005; Hallam et al, 2006; NICE, 2008). Clear themes emerged in this study relating to parents being informed about their child's progress, involved and supported with their child's learning, and having a high level of contact and collaboration with school staff. However, these themes did not specifically relate to SEAL, and this school had chosen not to use the SEAL resources for parents relating to each theme.

5.2.6 Mechanisms

This programme follows the recommended *sequenced, active, focused* and *explicit* (SAFE) features recommended by Durlak et al (2010) for effective skills training. Many of Greenberg et al's (2005) strategies for effective programme delivery were also apparent within this school context (an audit is included in Appendix K, page 244).

Key mechanisms through which SEAL lessons are delivered in this school include: (a) explicit teaching of prosocial behaviour; (b) collaborative learning; and (c) use of a range of engaging media which are tailored to the group of children being taught.

These mechanisms have each been supported by previous research studies (Durlak et al, 2011; Humphrey et al, 2009; Rones and Hoagwood, 2000; Weare and Gray, 2003).

Durlak and Dupree (2008) discussed the issue of fidelity and suggested that some adaptation, whilst maintaining fidelity of the programme's core components, could be beneficial in obtaining a good ecological fit with the setting. As discussed in Programme Specification 7, in this school flexibility and adaptation to meet the needs of the pupils and the styles of the teachers was felt to be highly important in the success and sustainability of SEAL.

5.2.7 Outcomes

This study is supported by previous studies suggesting that SEL programmes can lead to: increases in prosocial behaviours (particularly at playtimes); calmer classrooms and playgrounds; and improvements in social and emotional skills, pupil wellbeing, and academic performance (Durlak et al, 2011; Hallam et al, 2006).

Hallam et al (2006) found that staff were more aware of their responsibility as role models for pupils, were more confident in dealing with behavioural difficulties, and approached issues in a calmer and more positive manner. This study would support the finding that staff delivering SEAL are highly conscious of their role in modelling social and emotional skills for pupils, and one member of staff also indicated that she felt more able to deal with behavioural difficulties.

5.2.8 Summary

Overall, the findings of this case study are in line with findings of previous research studies. There was insufficient information collected in this study regarding the involvement of parents in SEAL, evaluation mechanisms in place, continued professional development opportunities for staff, and the process of decision-making (including which stakeholders were involved in this), to be able to draw conclusions regarding their role in the success of SEAL in this school, although these factors have been identified in other studies to be important.

There were some aspects identified in this study which had not been drawn out of the research literature, suggesting that these aspects need to be the subject of future research studies. For example, the way in which staff viewed teaching social and emotional skills as part of their natural teacher role, and felt that this work had become 'automatic' and 'second nature' to them, and a part of all their teaching practice. Opportunities to integrate teaching of social and emotional skills into all aspects of the curriculum, and to promote reinforcement and generalisation of these skills were therefore maximised in this setting. The collaborative approach to planning, with embedded mechanisms for staff to support each other with difficulties, to share ideas, and to further develop and update SEAL activities and resources, was particularly important in this study. This has also not been identified specifically in other SEL studies. The 'no-shouting' policy, the promotion of opportunities for 'social time' with staff, and the aspects of the physical environment identified which

promoted interaction, are also key factors identified which had not been highlighted particularly within the SEL literature.

One issue identified which needs to be further clarified through research is the degree of fidelity that is important in order for SEAL to promote the best outcomes for children and young people. The crucial components of SEAL which must be delivered with fidelity need to be clearly identified, and therefore the degree of adaptation and personalisation to the school context that can be facilitated.

Another issue which needs to be further clarified through research is the degree to which the school must be prepared to adapt and change its existing practices and structures in order to facilitate SEAL, because this may also be a key factor in determining the success of the programme.

5.3 Limitations of this study

Limitations will be discussed relating to the case study approach that was adopted, the observer-as-participant role I took in my observations, the research methods I employed, the way in which I analysed the data, the selection of participants, and the gaps that are apparent in the data collected.

5.3.1 A case study approach

This case study followed Yin's (2009) advice in using as many sources of evidence as possible in order to seek corroboration and to establish converging lines of enquiry. Triangulation of multiple sources of evidence was possible in this study to establish concurrent validity of the findings. However, this was still a case study and therefore does not represent a 'sample' and is not generalisable to populations. The aim was rather to be able to use analytic generalisation to expand upon theory relating to the implementation of SEAL. As Pawson and Tilley (1997) describe, in Realistic Evaluation a general theory is formulated, which can then be applied to another case, and then another, and so on. The aim being to develop a body of theory in order to provide an organising framework which abstracts a particular set of conditions from a programme (in this case, SEAL), which can then be applied to new programmes, and the theory further developed. Through this process, a progressive understanding can be developed, and transferable knowledge achieved.

In this study, a Programme Specification (or 'theory') relating to SEAL implementation has been developed, and summarised in a tentative model (Figure 14). This theory is a first step towards understanding the implementation processes involved in SEAL. The aim is for this Programme Specification to be applied to SEAL implementation in a range of other schools in different areas of the country, in order for the theory to be further developed.

5.3.2 The role of observer-as-participant

In this case study, as a researcher I sought to 'construe' rather than to 'construct' what was happening in the social world of the case study school. However, there is a chance that my presence within the school, and the knowledge of all the stakeholders that I was conducting research about SEAL, could have impacted upon the practices happening within the school (a phenomenon commonly referred to as 'reactivity'; Robson, 2011).

When conducting the observations, I was aware of a range of observational biases that could have been occurring. Firstly, 'selective attention' could have occurred whereby my expectations, experience and interests could have affected those aspects I attended to in my surroundings (Robson, 2011). This was particularly relevant because my observations were unstructured, and I did not place any restrictions upon the aspects I could observe. This compromises the reliability and validity of my observation findings, and another observer would have been unlikely to record exactly the same aspects as I did. However, I chose to embrace the theoretical sensitivity (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) I had developed and to use this to direct my attention towards particular aspects of the environment identified in my context-mechanism-outcome configurations, in order to support or refute these theories. A more structured observation would have afforded greater reliability and validity, but would have led to a loss in the complexity and completeness of my observations (Robson, 2011), and would have severely restricted the aspects of the environment that I could attend to.

Therefore, as Robson (2011) suggests, I made a conscious effort as an observer to distribute my attention evenly and widely. I attempted to, where possible, conduct a half-hour observation in each class, to avoid my own interest leading to increased observations in some classes, which would have created increased observer bias in my observations. I also attempted to observe all classes for as equal amount of time as possible overall, so as not to create a bias towards a particular teacher or class. It was not always possible to plan which classes I would observe during my visits as it often depended on what was convenient at the time and which classes were in school when I was there. However, the minimum amount of time spent with a class was half an hour (6% of the overall time) in Nursery and Year 2, and the maximum time I spent with a class was an hour and a half, in a mixed Year 3 and 4 class (which was 17% of the overall time).

Robson (2011) also warns of 'selective memory' that can occur when a period of time elapses before the account of the data is begun, threatening accuracy and completeness and making the interpretation potentially more "*in line with your pre-existing schemas and expectations*" (Robson, 2011, p.328). In line with a Realistic Evaluation approach, I therefore began to code the observations (and the interviews) as soon afterwards as possible, most often the same week, and to develop the Initial Programme Specification after my visits. An example of an Initial Programme Specification begun after my first day of observations is included in Appendix G, page 205).

5.3.3 Use of semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews recognise my role as interviewer within the social context of the interviewing situation, and the interaction between my belief system and perceptions, and those of the participants. A difficulty with this interaction between my belief system and that of the participant is that when analysing the interview notes I am in some ways transforming the data, and am therefore implicated in the production of the knowledge (Burman and Parker, 1993). This also applies during the interview itself where decisions are made regarding which lines of discussion to continue and follow-up, and which information to record in my notes (where audio recordings were not possible).

Stenner (1993) argues that the researcher's interpretation of the transcript or notes cannot capture the range of meanings that the person speaking could have had.   I feel that being able to spend time within the school setting observing and speaking with members of staff and pupils, enabled me to develop sufficient understanding of the context to enable me to interpret the interview transcripts with a higher degree of sensitivity to the possible meanings that the person might have had. If an independent researcher had been tasked with the system of coding the transcripts that I had developed, I feel that they would have been likely to misinterpret responses without the knowledge of the context in which it was said. I also 'checked back' my findings with participants, and gave them the opportunity to indicate if I had misinterpreted information. Some amendments and additions were made at this

stage in line with participants' suggestions (please refer to Appendix H, page 211).

Another related criticism that can be levelled at the semi-structured interview method from the positivist domain is that of potential demand characteristics occurring. There is a strong possibility that the interviewees could have shared the information which they thought I wanted to hear. Conversely, the building of this relationship, and the obvious lack of anonymity, could have also led to the interviewees being cautious with some of their responses.

5.3.4 Use of a pupil focus group

There are limitations associated with the purposive sampling of this group, in that the group may have been particularly knowledgeable about social and emotional skills. They may also have been more likely to be positive about PHSE/SEAL, and more likely to agree with adults' views about SEAL. Different information could have been gathered if the group had included children who had experienced particular social or emotional difficulties for example. The nature of the consent form for parents (which had to be amended in order to include all the information requested of the ethical review board) was perceived by the Head Teacher to form a barrier to parents, and the Head Teacher is generally very careful with all her written communication to retain an informal and non-threatening approach (which had in fact been noted positively by one of the parents I interviewed). However, I did not feel that the biased nature of the group severely limited the usefulness or validity of the findings (bearing

in mind that I aimed to seek out the elements of 'good practice' in delivery of SEAL),
but there would have been increased validity in the findings had the group been more
representative of the general school population.

The main disadvantage of a focus group is that it limits the degree to which the
individual's views can be sought, and there is a threat that there will be a bias
towards the group agreeing with a dominant few individuals' views. I was able to
constantly 'check back' with the children as to whether my interpretations were
correct, and was also able to complete some interpretation of the data collected and
to present this back to the children at the second meeting in order to 'check' I had
interpreted their views correctly. I also sought to overcome the difficulty of less
confident children being more reticent in sharing their views, and also the difficultly of
achieving a group consensus rather than individual views, through having a second
focus group meeting to ensure that the spread of views was obtained through 'voting'
upon the findings. I also incorporated a questionnaire in order to ensure that I
gauged individuals' views, which children completed at the end of the focus group
session.

5.3.5 Data analysis

I heeded Braun and Clarke's (2006) warning that thematic analysis should not consist
of simply a collection of extracts with little narrative, rather than conducting analytic
work across the data set to identify themes. I followed their six steps and reviewed
the themes as I developed the Programme Specifications at least three times during
my analysis, each time formulating super-ordinate themes. However, I was also

keen to remain transparent and to use the language that members of the school community were using to describe particular concepts, rather than to impose my own interpretation by changing the wording, particularly where the concepts were abstract. Examples of this are: "*natural teacher philosophy*"; "*social time*"; "*emotional investment*"; "*banter*"; "*all in it together*"; "*unconditional belief*"; and "*feel the atmosphere*".

My own values, experiences and 'sensitivities' would have also impacted upon the way I recorded information, and the way in which I coded it. This places significant restrictions upon the interpretation of the findings, which have been interpreted from a highly subjective standpoint. This also places significant limitations on the value of the quantitative information provided. As asserted earlier, the quantitative information aims to increase transparency in the analytical procedure I conducted, and to increase the credibility and validity of the findings by indicating where information has been triangulated across different sources of evidence. The quantitative information is not intended to provide an indicator of the relevance of each theme.

I decided not to seek inter-rater reliability in this case because I felt that it would not be appropriate. This was because I recognised that my developing knowledge of the context in which the study took place, and my theoretical sensitivity to relevant themes and information, had a significant influence over my interpretation of notes and transcripts. Indeed, I sought to code my notes as soon after the event as possible in order that the contextual information was still fresh in my memory. This

was particularly relevant to my observation notes, where I would automatically code something according to my memory of the event and my knowledge of the context without necessarily being conscious of this, whereas another rater would not have this underpinning knowledge and would be likely to code the information differently. I therefore recognise the subjectivity of my research findings. The study would be improved by having a team of researchers conducting the study who would each develop knowledge and understanding of the context, and then would therefore be able to inter-rate each others notes and collaboratively develop the Programme Specifications.

Another difficulty I experienced with the data analysis was the time it took to code the data, and the seemingly endless and overwhelming list of themes and therefore Programme Specifications that the data generated. I needed to re-visit the data many times over block periods of time in order for sufficient conceptual analysis to take place, in order to develop super-ordinate themes. It was then necessary to go back through all the data again to establish the occurrence of the superordinate themes. I still feel that there is a need for further more detailed analysis to take place in order to make the theories more succinct and focused, with greater superordinate themes. However, this would risk losing the depth and complexity of the current Programme Specifications. I have learned that there is a careful balance to be found between representing sufficient detail to describe the complexity of the data in a meaningful manner, and representing the information in a coherent and useful way for practitioners who are likely to benefit from accessing the information.

5.3.6 Participants

The participants in the interviews were self-selecting which would have led to an inherent bias in the sample because these staff members may have been more likely to have a vested interest in SEAL, and may have been more committed to the SEAL programme. This may have impacted upon the validity of the findings. The lack of anonymity in volunteering to take part may have also impacted upon the nature of the participants, because the Head Teacher collected in the reply slips and would have therefore been aware of who was taking part. This may have also led to a bias in the selection procedure towards staff who were positive about SEAL, and also a bias in their responses during the interview because they may have been aware that their manager would know which staff had contributed towards the findings.

In an ideal study, interviews would have taken place with a greater variety of school staff, including non-teaching staff. However, there were no volunteers who were non-teaching staff, and I did not feel it was ethically appropriate to directly approach members of staff because they would have then felt under pressure to agree even if they did not feel comfortable with this. I was also limited in terms of the time I had available to complete the study.

It would have also added to the validity of the findings if I had been able to check-back my Programme Specifications with parents and the FSW, as well as with teachers and pupils. However, time did not allow for this, and within the limitations of

this study a decision had to be made regarding which realist interviews would be most crucial to answering the research questions, and I felt that school staff and pupils would have the most insight into SEAL implementation.

5.3.7 Gaps in the data

In an ideal study if more time had been available, I would have explicitly asked staff about some of the aspects that previous studies have identified as important which did not appear to be in place within this setting. For example; involvement of parents in the programme, evaluation mechanisms, continued professional development opportunities for staff, and the process of decision-making (including which stakeholders were involved in this).

An ideal study would have also measured outcomes in a more rigorous way, rather than in a retrospective manner through staff feedback, and Ofsted reports. The evaluation would have been made far more rigorous had it been possible to have measured changes over time since the beginning of the SEAL programme.

5.4 Practical and theoretical implications

This study raises questions with regards to the balance between fidelity and adaptation in SEL programmes. One of the key principles to implementation identified in this setting was the continuously evolving nature of the programme, which served the purposes of:

1. allowing a tailoring of the programme to the context and pupils;

2. avoiding a prescriptive approach in order to engage staff and to allow them to match the programme to their teaching style;

3. ensuring that SEAL is kept up to date technologically and in terms of content;

4. enabling SEAL input to be engaging and exciting for pupils ("*zapping it up*"); and

5. keeping the teaching content fresh and new for teachers (avoiding the programme going "*stale*").

The SEAL programme encourages schools to be flexible in the way in which they implement SEAL, but this does not appear to be based upon any solid research base with regards to which the core theoretical components of the programme are that must be included, and which components can be delivered in a more flexible manner.

It is interesting that in this school context, the structure of SEAL was adhered to, and the order in which the themes are addressed. This suggests that there could be quite a high degree of flexibility in the way in which the programme is delivered as long as it is the core skills that are being addressed in a structured and a consistent manner. Further research is needed to clarify this. Indeed, this study raises the question as to whether it is the degree of consistency and reinforcement that is occurring across the whole school setting when each theme is being covered, that is in fact more important than the content of the actual activities in the weekly lessons.

The embedded nature of SEAL planning in staff teams was also viewed as important in order to facilitate this evolving nature of the programme. This collaborative

planning was also viewed as contributing to the integration of SEAL and staff consistency in approach and reinforcement of SEAL skills. The high level of monitoring enabled through this planning could also have been important in ensuring that this consistency and integration happened. This is a model that other schools could consider using (further research is needed to support that this is an important aspect of SEAL implementation however).

This study lends support to other research studies which have pointed to the importance of a supportive ethos or 'climate' in place to accommodate SEAL and to allow the programme to flourish, which needed to be consciously and purposefully promoted by senior leadership on a daily basis.

The degree to which schools need to consider fundamental work on adjusting the school climate in order to give SEAL the best chance at succeeding, is an area for further research. This study has begun to suggest characteristics of staff members that may be important for SEAL to be delivered effectively, and these characteristics could also be understood as key in allowing the process of change to occur. This suggests that a measure of staff attitudes and receptiveness to change before and during implementation of SEL programmes may be beneficial, and that as Durlak and Dupree (2008) highlight, consideration of the 'perception of need' and the 'collective norms' for change should be considered, and may need to be created before the programme can be implemented. This study also suggests that the degree to which staff view teaching social and emotional skills as part of their role may also be an important aspect of staff attitude that needs to be in place prior to implementation.

Further research in other schools is needed to establish the degree to which these attitudes are crucial for effective implementation.

This study also has implications regarding the importance of interaction within the school context, and provided an example of maximising the opportunities for development of social skills through promoting 'social time,' an informal relationship with pupils, conscious modelling of positive social skills, skilled facilitating of interactions with and between children, and a high level of interaction in the classroom as well as at other times of the school day. In this setting this appeared to contribute towards good rapport and meaningful relationships, a close staff team, social skills and positive wellbeing of staff and pupils.

Although other studies have recommended ongoing CPD opportunities and supervision for staff, this study suggests that in some schools it is most beneficial to ensure that the coordinator is appropriately trained and supported so that he or she is then able to provide ongoing support and supervision appropriate to his or her particular school context. The role of the Coordinator in supporting a collaborative approach to SEAL, and her ongoing role in problem-solving with staff appeared to be highly important to implementation. This may need to be considered in the training of SEAL Coordinators, and skills in problem-solving and group supervision could be considered in maximising the success of the support they can provide to staff.

Whilst this study supports a close and collaborative relationship with parents, it has not supported the involvement of parents in SEAL itself. Other studies have

suggested that parents' reinforcement of SEAL skills through work at home might be supportive of the development of social and emotional skills. Therefore, further research is needed to establish whether investment in this work would promote better outcomes.

Overall this study has achieved what it set out to do, in allowing an in-depth analysis of SEAL implementation within one school context, and in developing theory relating to the implementation of SEAL through the identification of the relevant contexts, mechanisms and outcomes. It is hoped that the theory developed which is represented in Figure 14, will be taken forward and applied to other school settings, in order for the theory to be developed further in accordance with the findings, so that over time knowledge and understanding relating to SEAL implementation can accumulate (in line with a Realistic Evaluation approach). The development of this kind of theoretical understanding is of vital importance in ensuring that SEAL is implemented in the most effective manner, in order to produce the best outcomes for children and young people, and to ensure cost-effectiveness.

5.5 Conclusion

This study has identified the facilitating contexts and mechanisms through which SEAL is being implemented in a 'good practice' school, in order to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people. The findings have emphasised the importance of a supportive school ethos, a high level of interaction across the school context including promotion of 'social time' for pupils and staff, integration of SEAL

across all school activities, and a high level of consistency in approach to behaviour and teaching of social and emotional skills across all staff. Specific aspects of the role of the SEAL Coordinator have been highlighted as important including access to appropriate peer support, and provision of problem-solving and collaborative planning opportunities to staff. Specific characteristics of members of staff delivering SEAL have also been highlighted as important in order to allow the mechanisms to function effectively, including a receptiveness to change, a positive attitude towards implementation and a fundamental belief that teaching social and emotional skills is part of a natural teacher role.

This study has provided support for previous research studies which have investigated the implementation of SEL programmes, and has extended this research further through developing a theoretical understanding of the contexts and mechanisms that interact in order to promote positive outcomes for children and young people. Through using a Realistic Evaluation framework for the research, it is hoped that the theory (or Programme Specification) developed will be of greater relevance and applicability to other settings, in order that understanding and knowledge about implementation can be further developed. Therefore, schools will eventually be able to access advice and recommendations about ways to implement SEAL that are based upon a solid evidence base which is of direct relevance to practice.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

This chapter will reflect upon the research process from my perspective as a Trainee Educational Psychologist, and will outline some of the challenges and the learning points experienced.

6.1 Reflections relating to the use of Realistic Evaluation (RE)

I decided to use RE because it provided an approach to research that would enable me to meet my research aims, and a structure and framework within which to plan and carry out my research. The approach also fitted with my own epistemological position and my values as a researcher because I felt that it would lead to an outcome in terms of practical and applicable theory that would be of relevance to practice.

Many alternative approaches were considered before adopting RE, not least because there are very few published applications of RE in the field of Education, which did not provide me with many examples to work from. For example, I also considered use of Activity Theory (Engeström, 1987; Engeström, 2001) because this would have also provided me with a tool to structure and focus my research, would have answered my research questions, and would have also been of direct relevance to practice. However, I felt that the social constructivist epistemological position did not

fit as exactly with my own realist perspective, and I also felt that the RE approach

gave me a clearer mechanism through which to develop theory. Upon my reading

around Activity Theory, it also appeared to have often been used as part of a process

of change and reflection in organisations, rather than as an approach to evaluation

Engeström,1999; Leadbetter, 2006).

I initially found it a challenge to decide how to apply the RE approach to the area of

research in which I was working, and it took me some time to become used to the

process of identifying contexts, mechanisms and outcomes (CMOs) (a process which

was aided by 'peer validation' and discussion of CMO configurations with

colleagues). This supported me to be able to feel confident in my application of the

approach, and I was successfully able to identify CMOs from the research literature.

RE provided me with a very clear steer in my choice of research methods, and in my

designing of interview schedules and focus group activities for example, and I found

the theory-driven rather than data-driven approach helpful in focusing the research.

RE also provided me with a clear focus in my observations (relating to the developing

Initial Programme Specification), which was supportive considering the choice to use

an unstructured approach to observation. If I had not been using RE, and did not

have my Initial Programme Specification to guide me, I would most likely have

chosen a more structured approach.

I experienced my first challenge with the RE approach after the first stage of data

collection, when I had an enormous list of CMOs which were overlapping in content

and rather overwhelming in number. I was grateful at this stage that I had also chosen to use thematic analysis within the RE approach to support me in analysing the wealth of information I had collected, and to progress in my analysis to the stage of interpretation and pattern searching in order to identify superordinate 'themes' rather than a list of seemingly neverending CMOs.

The RE literature did not guide me in terms of the data analysis technique to employ, and examples provided by Pawson and Tilley (1997) tended to be more quantitative than qualitative in nature, whereas I was keen to retain the qualitative nature of the research and the depth and complexity of the findings it would be possible to gain by using a qualitative approach. I felt that this complexity was necessary in order to be able to answer my research questions. Although at first I was not altogether clear about how thematic analysis would 'fit' with the CMO structure of RE, in practice I found this to be straightforward because the data I collected naturally fitted into CMO configurations (although there was some overlap between them). The research literature was also clearly in line with the information I was collecting, which also gave me confidence and clarity in forming the Initial Programme Specifications. I felt that using thematic analysis gave my findings increased validity and credibility, and fitted well with an RE approach. I did not find the 'template' or 'conceptual lense' created by the search for themes relating to CMOs restricting, but rather found it a useful conceptual framework to direct the data analysis process in a useful and relevant way.

In conclusion, I feel that the RE approach offers a practical and useful framework for educational research, with a clear route for future researchers to continue to develop theory further and to contribute to the development of knowledge, with clear applications to educational practice. The approach enables the processes and mechanisms to be identified which contribute to the success of programmes, which is often lacking in evaluation of educational programmes.

6.2 The nature of real world research

A number of challenges were experienced due to the 'real world' nature of this research study. The reliance on one particular school for the entire research project led to many anxieties and panic-stricken moments when things did not go to plan or were postponed. I needed to be flexible in my response to the school's priorities, and to adapt my research at times to suit their practices and routines. For example, which classes I was observing and when, who I was interviewing, and being willing to conduct interviews over several sessions to fit in with the time restrictions of members of staff. I also needed to be flexible in my response to parents and the locations and timings of interviews.

I was grateful of the care and consideration I had put into selecting the case study school, and the advice and input of Educational Psychology colleagues in this decision. Transparency with the school regarding what would be involved in the research study was of paramount importance, and careful planning with the Head Teacher about how to go about each step of the process in order to obtain the

information and results I needed. I also needed to work collaboratively with the school on parts of the research process such as letters and consent forms, and adaptations were made in line with the school's usual patterns of communication with parents and staff.

6.3 Implications for the role of the educational psychologist (EP)

I feel that there are significant implications of this research study for EPs that I will also be able to put into practice in my role. Firstly, in relation to the RE approach which I feel has been successfully utilised in this study. This approach to research is appropriate for EPs to use in practice to evaluate programmes, and to ensure that it is not only outcomes that are assessed, but also the contexts and mechanisms through which the outcomes are achieved. This is crucial to developing practice and to supporting schools to implement programmes successfully. I feel that the RE approach also offers a clear way for EPs to contribute to developing theory and evidence-based practice, by building upon one another's work in a cumulative fashion. The RE approach also fits in well with the 'scientist-practitioner' role that is being promoted in EP practice (Lane and Corrie, 2006).

Secondly, in relation to the findings of this research study I think there are several implications with regards to the support that EPs can offer to schools. A key mechanism through which staff were able to access support to deliver SEAL was through the problem-solving and collaborative support that their SEAL Coordinator

was able to give. There is a clear role for EPs in supporting SEAL Coordinators in this role. For example; by training, modelling and sharing problem-solving frameworks and group supervision models. For example; through use of Solution Circles (Falvey et al, 2006).

The support group that the SEAL Coordinator had accessed with other schools had also been of great value to her in implementing SEAL, and for her own continued professional development. There may be another secondary role for EPs in supporting SEAL Coordinators to set up a group where good practice can be shared, supporting the dissemination of up-to-date research from the field of SEL, and using the implementation research to support SEAL Coordinators to maximise the potential success of their school's implementation of SEAL.

EPs often take on a role within their 'patch' of schools as a source of advice and ongoing support regarding whole-school programmes. This research study has begun to develop theory and understanding about the factors that may facilitate and support the implementation of SEAL programmes. As the theory (or Programme Specification) for SEAL develops through further studies, it may become a useful tool in itself to support discussion with schools about ways to improve their implementation of SEL programmes (an 'audit' tool). Where there are 'gaps' or areas identified where the school may need further support, the EP may be in a position to provide support and training in that particular aspect in order to provide the most effective context in which to deliver SEAL. For example: promoting quality interactions in the classroom; supporting the development of social and emotional

skills across a whole-school environment; advising on positive behaviour management strategies; or ways to provide a nurturing environment. Eventually, there may be opportunities for training to be delivered for schools relating to the effective implementation of SEL programmes.

During the process of my research study, there has been a change of government and the status of the SEAL programme is at the current time uncertain. However, the findings from this research study will be applicable to other initiatives that promote social and emotional skills in schools, and could even be instrumental in developing an alternative to the SEAL programme in the future. There would be a significant role for EPs in drawing upon and expanding upon this research in order to inform the government's new directions with regard to SEL in schools.

6.4 Plans for dissemination of the findings, future research and application of the findings

A full research report will be made available to the University, the Head Teacher at the case study school, and the SEAL Strategic Group. A summary of the findings will be circulated to the whole school population, and to Educational Psychologists (EPs) within my service. It is also hoped that the findings will be circulated by the SEAL Strategic Group to all the schools in the County delivering SEAL.

The purposes of the reports being made available are in order to inform practice, and to promote further research. In particular, it is hoped that the findings will be helpful

to the SEAL Strategic Group and to other professionals including EPs who support

schools in implementing SEAL programmes. The findings should promote reflection

on schools' own practices, and offer ideas and stimulate thinking around ways to

deliver SEAL, and ways that SEAL can be incorporated into whole-school systems.

I plan to present the findings of the study, and to share my experiences using the RE

approach, to my Educational Psychology Service so that colleagues can draw upon

the findings, further this research, and potentially use RE in their own research areas.

The overall aim is for the research findings to be able to contribute to theory about

the processes and mechanisms through which SEAL is most effectively

implemented, and in which contexts and circumstances. Ideally to achieve this, the

findings will be reported in a high-quality peer-reviewed academic and professional

journal which professionals working in Education, Educational Psychology, and Child

and Adolescent Mental Health have access to. For example; Educational

Psychology in Practice, Educational and Child Psychology, British Journal of Clinical

Psychology, Journal of Mental Health, Educational Review, British Education

Research Journal, British Journal of Special Education, or Pastoral Care in

Education. There are also various magazines which schools in the region subscribe

to which would also be an effective means to convey the findings to teaching staff.

I plan to adapt this research report to journal specification and to submit for

publication in a selection of the journals above. I also plan to write an article with my

colleague Oonagh Davies who is also using a Realistic Evaluation approach, in order

to share our experiences in using RE, and the different ways in which it can be used. We would aim to promote use of RE within educational research and particularly within our respective areas of study, in order to support the development of theory and evidence based practice.

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APPENDICES

Dear [Head Teacher],

Your school has been selected by the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Strategic Group within the Local Authority to be invited to be the focus of a research project investigating the implementation of the SEAL programme. The research is being undertaken by the Educational Psychology Service and is linked with the University of Birmingham. Please find attached an information sheet about the research study. A number of schools are being invited to take part in the project, but only one school will be selected to be the Case Study school which will become the focus of the research study.

The researcher will provide you with detailed feedback and reports about the processes and mechanisms through which SEAL is being put into practice in your school, and also insight into the views of members of staff, parents and pupils about SEAL and how it has had an impact in your individual school setting. Summaries of the findings will also be made available to staff, parents and pupils.

If you are interested in taking part in this research study, and would be happy for the researcher to spend time in your school in the Autumn and Spring Terms 2010/2011 getting to know about how SEAL is being delivered in your school, please return the attached response form as soon as possible.

Please contact Heather Webb, Trainee Educational Psychologist on ………………..or at ………………………… if you would like any further information.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Webb
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Dear …………………

Our school has been flagged up as doing an excellent job in helping our children to develop their social and emotional skills, and we have been asked to be involved in a research project so that other schools can learn from what we are doing.

This project will involve a researcher (Heather Webb) spending some time at our school to get to know about what we do to help all our children with things like learning to work well with other children, motivating themselves, being able to cope when life is difficult, and understanding their feelings, through implementing the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Programme.

Heather will be getting to know our school by observing some of our Assemblies, our lessons and our Playtimes, and looking at our school policies and any other documents and artefacts relating to SEAL available. Heather will be interested in hearing the views of members of staff about SEAL and she would also like to talk with a group of parents and a group of children to gain their perspectives on SEAL.

If you have any questions about the project you can talk to me about this or you can call Heather on ……………………... Heather works in the Educational Psychology Service in ……………………… and she is also studying at the University of Birmingham.

Heather will be finding out about what we do at our school so that she can share ideas with other schools and other professionals who work in schools, but she has to keep everything anonymous so she won't write down the names of any of the children, parents or teachers. This means that the school and any individuals involved will not be named in research reports. Only the researchers, the Local Authority's SEAL Strategic Group, and the Administration staff from the Educational Psychology Service will know the name of the school taking part. She will also keep information about people in our school confidential.

If you would like to take part in an interview to talk to Heather about your experiences and your views about SEAL, please could you indicate so on the slip below?

Yours sincerely,
Head Teacher.

✂ ...………………………………………………………………………………………..

The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Research Project.

Name:…………………………………………………………………………………………

Role:………………………………………………………………………………………..

Class:…………………………………………………………………………………………
i would like to take part in an interview with Heather about the social and emotional aspects of learning   Yes/No *(please circle)*

Dear Parent,

Our school has been flagged up as doing an excellent job in helping our children to develop their social and emotional skills, and we have been asked to be involved in a research project so that other schools can learn from what we are doing. This project will involve a researcher (Heather Webb) spending some time at our school to get to know about what we do to help all our children with things like learning to work well with other children, motivating themselves, being able to cope when life is difficult, and understanding their feelings.

Heather will be getting to know our school by observing some of our Assemblies, our lessons and our Playtimes, looking at our school policies and at teacher's work and the children's work. She will be talking to members of staff about what they are doing, and she would also like to talk to a group of parents and a group of children to get to know what you and your children think about how the school helps children to develop these skills.

Heather will be finding out about what we do at our school so that she can tell other schools about it, but she has to keep everything anonymous so she won't write down the names of any of the children, parents or teachers. She will also keep information about people in our school confidential.

If you have any questions about the project you can come in and talk to me about it at school or call me on …………., or you can call Heather on …………….. Heather works in the Educational Psychology Service in …………………… and she is also studying at the University of Birmingham.

If you think that you might like to take part in a group with other parents to tell Heather about what you think about how our school helps children with their social and emotional skills, please could you put your name on the slip below and ask your child to give it to his or her teacher?

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

...……………………………………………………………………………………………..

The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Research Project.

Name:……………………………………………………………………………………………

Telephone number:…………………………………………………………………………….

I would like to take part in a focus group for parents about the social and emotional aspects of learning   Yes/No *(please circle)*

APPENDIX C:
Letters, information sheets and consent forms

C1. Information sheet for parents of pupils taking part in the focus group

Information about the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Research Project

What is the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme?
This school helps children to develop their social and emotional skills by helping them to learn how to work well with other children, helping them to motivate themselves and to be able to cope when life is difficult, and helping them to understand their feelings. We work on particular topics together as a whole school. For example; children from Reception class to Year 4 learn about 'New Beginnings' or 'Getting on and falling out' in our Assembles, in PHSEC lessons and sometimes in smaller groups too.

Why is this research about Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning happening?
The researcher, Heather Webb, wants to understand about how we help children to learn about these skills in our school so that she can help other schools to be able to teach children these skills too. Heather feels that it is important to make sure that the children themselves have the chance to tell her about what they think, as well as listening to the views of members of staff and also parents.

What will be involved in the focus group?
Heather will meet with a group of children to ask them about their views and ideas about learning about social and emotional skills. She will have lots of activities for the children to do so that it will be fun and exciting for them to take part, such as Art work, and making a Post-Card and an Advert for someone new to the school. Heather will write down children's ideas on a Flip Chart and she will also record the discussion using a tape recorder to make sure she does not miss anything important the children say.

Will my child have to take part?
No, children will be asked to volunteer if they would like to take part in the group to give their views about learning about social and emotional skills. They will also have a child-friendly consent form where they will be asked to tick the 'Yes' box if they want to take part and the 'No' box if they don't. Their involvement is completely voluntary at all times and children can also change their mind and choose to leave the group at any time without having to give a reason, and without any consequences. If your child chose not to take part at any point, any information collected from him/her would be taken out and would not be included in the research.

Will the information collected be kept confidential and anonymous?
Heather will keep all the information she collects about the children's views completely confidential and anonymous. This means that the school and the names of any of the children involved will not be named in any feedback or reports Heather writes. The name of the school itself will only be known to the researchers, the Local Authority's Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Strategic Group, and the Administration staff from the Educational Psychology Service. All the information she collects will be kept in a secure place where only the researcher and Administration staff from the Educational Psychology Service will have access to it in order to look at the information. After the research is finished, the information will be kept in Archives by ………………. County Council for 10 years so that anyone who questions Heather's research can check the information she collected.

Are there any risks involved for my child?
The only foreseeable risks are that other children might talk about what was discussed in the group afterwards which would not be keeping your child's information anonymous, and that he or she could possibly feel uncomfortable within the group or might feel intimidated by other children in the group. The group will make up their own ground rules at the beginning of the session about listening and respecting each other, and they will be asked not to talk about the comments of group members after the meeting, and to keep the things people say private. However, Heather cannot guarantee that other members of the group will not talk about the discussion after the session is over. It will also be made clear to children that they do not have to take part and that they can change their mind and leave the session at any time without any consequences, and that their information will then be taken out of the research.

Heather will make sure that every child who takes part has the chance to contribute and has their views listened to and valued. If the discussion were to become inappropriate in any way, then Heather would intervene in the discussion and steer this to another topic. Heather will make sure that the group will not be during children's playtimes and that children are rewarded for their time by being thanked and given a certificate at the end of the session.

What will happen to the information after it has been analysed?
The information gathered will be written up into a research report for the school, the Local Authority SEAL Strategic Group and the University of Birmingham. A shorter version of the report could also be submitted for publication in a professional journal. A summary will be made available to all members of staff, parents and pupils in the school. The information may also be used for training purposes and may be disseminated to other schools and other professional groups interested in SEAL. Information relating to the school's identity and individuals involved will remain anonymous in all of these cases.

Please contact Heather Webb, Trainee Educational Psychologist, for further information:

…………………………………

You can also contact Heather's Supervisor for the research:

Julia Howe
Educational Psychologist and Academic Tutor

C2. Parental Consent Form

Pupil Focus Group Consent Form
Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Research Project

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Please circle your answers and sign below if you are willing for your child to take part.

I understand the information included in the Information Sheet and what
participation in this research will involve …………………………………………….Yes/No

I have had the opportunity to ask the facilitator Heather Webb any
questions I have and I have received satisfactory answers …………………… Yes/No

I understand that the information collected will be kept confidential and
anonymous so my child's identity will remain unknown after this meeting……. Yes/No

I understand that the researcher cannot guarantee that other members
of the group will not talk about the Focus Group after the session is over……..Yes/No

I understand that participation is voluntary and that my child can decide not to
take part at any time without giving a reason …………………………….……Yes/No

I consent to my child taking part in this Focus Group………...…………..……... Yes/No

Signed………………………………………………………………………………

Printed name………………………………………………………………………

Name of my child………………………………………………………………….

Date…………………………………………………………………………………

C3. Information sheet for parent interviews

> **Information about the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Research Project**

What is the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning programme?
This school helps children to develop their social and emotional skills by helping them to learn how to work well with other children, helping them to motivate themselves and to be able to cope when life is difficult, and helping them to understand their feelings. We work on particular topics together as a whole school. For example; children from Reception class to Year 4 learn about 'New Beginnings' or 'Getting on and falling out' in our Assembles, in PHSE lessons and sometimes in smaller groups too.

Why is this research about Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning happening?
The researcher, Heather Webb, wants to understand about how we help children to learn about these skills in our school so that she can help other schools to be able to teach children these skills too. Because parents are important members of the school community, your views about what we are doing are important.

What will be involved in the research interview?
This will involve a semi-structured interview with the researcher. The researcher will have a list of questions as a guide, but she will also be interested and keen to listen to any of your contributions on this topic, and will be happy if the conversation takes an alternative direction when you have other contributions to make that you feel are valuable. The main aim of the interview is to allow you to talk freely and openly about the topic in question, and to share your experiences. She will also be making some notes and would like to record what you talk about on a tape recorder so that she does not miss anything important that you say, if you are in agreement with this.

Will the information collected by the researcher be kept confidential and anonymous?
Heather will keep all the information she collects from you completely confidential and anonymous. This means that the school and the names of any of the people involved will not be named in any feedback or reports Heather writes. The name of the school itself will only be known to the researchers, the Local Authority's Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Strategic Group, and the Administration staff from the Educational Psychology Service. All the information she collects about your views will be kept in a secure place where only Heather and Administration staff from the Educational Psychology Service will have access to it in order to look at the information. After the research is finished, the information will be kept in Archives by …………………. County Council for 10 years so that any authorised researchers who question Heather's research can check the information she collected.

What will happen to the information after it has been analysed?
The information gathered will be written up into a report for the school, the Local

Authority Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Strategic Group and the University of Birmingham. A shorter version of the report could also be submitted for publication in a professional journal. A summary will be made available to all members of staff, parents and pupils in the school. The information may also be used for training purposes and may be disseminated to other schools and other professional groups. Information relating to the school's identity and individuals involved will remain anonymous in all of these cases.

Do I have to take part?
This group is completely voluntary and so you do not have to take part.

What happens if I change my mind about taking part?
You can choose not to take part and to finish the interview if you want to at any time and you don't need to give anyone a reason. If you did change your mind during the interview, all the information you had given would be taken out and would not be included in the research.

Please contact Heather Webb, Trainee Educational Psychologist, for further information:

…………………………………..

You can also contact Heather's Supervisor for the research:

Julia Howe
Educational Psychologist and Academic Tutor

……………………………………..

C4. Information sheet for teacher interviews

Information about the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Research Project

What are the aims of the research?

The aim of the research is to identify those processes involved in implementing SEAL. Much of the research investigating the SEAL programme as a whole-school intervention (Wave 1 intervention) has focused upon taking measures before and after SEAL implementation and evaluating whether or not the programme has been effective. However, there is little research that tells us *why* it is effective, and what the mechanisms are that schools are using in order to effectively implement SEAL.

The purpose of the research is to inform practice in schools. In particular, it is hoped that the findings will be helpful to lead schools whose role it is to disseminate information and support to other schools about ways in which to implement SEAL, and also to the SEAL Strategic Group and to professionals who support schools in implementing SEAL programmes. The findings should promote reflection on schools' own practices, and also offer ideas and stimulate thinking around ways to deliver SEAL, and ways that SEAL can be incorporated into whole-school systems.

What will be involved in the research interview?

This will involve a semi-structured interview with the researcher. The researcher will have a list of questions as a guide, but she will also be interested and keen to listen to any of your contributions on this topic, and will be happy if the conversation takes an alternative direction when you have other contributions to make that you feel are valuable. The main aim of the interview is to allow you to talk freely and openly about the topic in question, and to share your experiences. The researcher will be asking questions about your experiences and your views of the SEAL programme, and about how you feel that this has impacted upon your role. The interview will be audio-recorded to enable a greater amount of information to be recorded accurately.

Will the information collected by the researcher be kept confidential and anonymous?

The information collected will remain confidential and anonymous. This means that the school and any individuals involved will not be named in research reports. Only the researchers, the Local Authority's SEAL Strategic Group, and the Administration staff from the Community and Education Team will know the name of the school taking part. Any data collected will be kept in a secure place where only the researcher and Administration staff from the Community and Education Team will have access to it in order to analyse the information collected. After the research is completed, the primary research data will be kept in Archives by ……………….. County Council for 10 years for verification purposes.

What will happen to the information after it has been analysed?

The information gathered will be written up into a research report for the school involved, the Local Authority SEAL Strategic Group and the University of Birmingham. A shorter version of the report could also be submitted for publication in a professional journal. A summary will be made available to all members of staff, parents and pupils in the school. The information may also be used for training purposes and may be disseminated to other schools and other professional groups interested in SEAL. Information relating to the school's identity and individuals involved will remain anonymous in all of these cases.

Is involvement compulsory?

No, involvement in the research is entirely voluntary at all times and you have the right to withdraw at any time in the interview without giving a reason, and for any information collected from the interview to be destroyed.

Please contact Heather Webb, Trainee Educational Psychologist, for further information:

…………………………………….

You can also contact Heather's Supervisor for the research:

Julia Howe
Educational Psychologist and Academic Tutor

……………………………………..

C5. Consent form for interviews

<div style="border: 1px solid black;">

Consent Form for Interviews
Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Research Project

</div>

Please circle your answers and sign below if you are willing to take part.

I understand the information included in the Information Sheet and what
participation in this research will involve ………………………………………..Yes/No

I have had the opportunity to ask the interviewer Heather Webb any
questions I have and I have received satisfactory answers …………………… Yes/No

I understand that the information collected will be kept confidential and
anonymous so my identity will remain unknown after this meeting…………… Yes/No

I understand that participation is voluntary and that I can decide not to
take part at any time without giving a reason …………………………….……Yes/No

I understand that this interview will be audio-recorded…………………………...Yes/No

I consent to taking part in this interview…………………….…...……….……….. Yes/No

Signed……………………………………………………………………………………

Printed Name……………………………………………………………………………

Date………………………………………………………………………………………

C6. Child consent form

My Name is_____   My Class is_____

I would like you to think about whether you would like to take part in a SEAL research group which will meet for about an hour on _____ with 5 other children from your school.
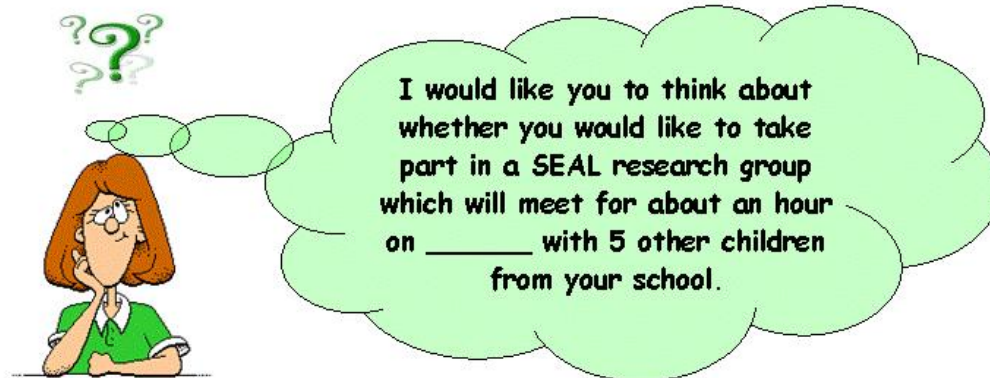
The good things about taking part are...

- There will be fun activities as well as some talking.

- You will get to tell adults what YOU think about SEAL.

- Your views and opinions will be listened to and written up into a report for your school and for other schools too.

- You can help other schools who are doing SEAL too by helping them to find out about what children think of SEAL and by telling them about how SEAL works in your school.

Please tick one of the boxes

YES   I would like to be part of the SEAL research group   ☐

NO   I would NOT like to be part of the SEAL research group   ☐

1. **What is your understanding of the social and emotional aspects of learning – what does this mean to you?**
(Discuss that I'm interested in how your school promotes the development of social and emotional skills – the SEAL programme is being used to achieve this but I'm also interest in what aspects of this particular school context are important in order for children to be able to develop these skills)

2. **Could you tell me a bit about how the SEAL programme is happening in your school?**
Prompts: What kinds of SEAL activities are happening? What kind of structure does SEAL take in your school? How is SEAL part of the whole school structure and routines? What does SEAL look like? What kinds of things should I be looking out for whilst I am visiting?

3. **I'm interested in how you're involved in promoting social and emotional skills, what kinds of activities have you been involved in to promote these skills? What is it that you do to promote these skills?**

4. **How is work around developing social and emotional skills organised within the school?**
Prompts: Who does what and how do you all link in together? How do you all know what you are doing and when? What methods of communication are used?

5. **How is work around developing social and emotional skills delivered within the school?**
Prompts: What is involved? How does it work? What kinds of methods, materials and resources are used? (E.g. In the Classroom, Playground, Assemblies?)

6. **Does work on social and emotional skills build on other work that happens in the school?**
Prompts: How does it fit in with other things that are happening like PHSE/Circle Time?

7. **How are children with particular social and emotional needs identified and supported?**
Prompts: Are there any extra support groups? How does this work link in with whole school work? How do you communicate with the staff running the groups/working with these children? What do you feel is important in the success of these interventions/groups? What is it that you think makes them effective?

8. **What do you think the underpinning principles are to this kind of work promoting social and emotional skills?**

9. **How are these principles embedded within the school?**
   Prompts: How do people get across the messages of SEAL? What do people do differently? How are the SEAL messages reinforced on a day to day basis?

10. **What is it about this school's environment and culture that you think has been important for this approach to become embedded?**

11. **How do you think that SEAL is perceived within the school?**
    Prompts: What do people think about SEAL? What sort of status or importance does SEAL carry? What contributes to this status? Why is it perceived in this way?

12. **Has anyone outside of the school been involved in helping to promote children's social and emotional skills? What is it that they do that you think helps to embed these skills?**
    Prompts: Parents? Members of the community, from the LA, from other agencies?

13. **How are staff and you yourself been supported to deliver SEAL?**
    Prompts: Has any training happened? Does anyone in school have a particular role to support staff with SEAL?

14. **What kind of impact do you think that this work has had for children, parents, school staff?**
    Prompts: In what ways? What was it about SEAL that you think had the most impact?

15. **Do you feel that SEAL has impacted upon teachers' roles? How?**
    Prompts: Do you feel that SEAL has changed their roles as teachers? How?

16. **Do you feel that SEAL has had an impact upon you?**
    Prompts: Do you feel that your role has changed? How? Has it changed how you might approach pupils or staff?

17. **Do you feel that doing this kind of work around social and emotional skills fits with your own values and beliefs?**
    Prompts: Do you feel that this work is important? Why?

18. **What do you think has fed into/contributed to your own values and beliefs about developing social and emotional skills?**
    Prompts: What has influenced you, inspired you? Your experiences? The influence of particular people? An ethos? Expectations of senior members of staff?

19. Reflecting back on all the things we've discussed, what would you identify as the most important things that make SEAL work?

Prompts: What's your theory about how SEAL works? What do you think you do that enables SEAL to happen, what is it that makes a difference? What within the school helps this to happen? What else happens in the school that makes a difference?

D2. Interview Schedule for Teachers

1. **What is your understanding of the social and emotional aspects of learning – what does this mean to you?**
(Discuss that I'm interested in how your school promotes the development of social and emotional skills – the SEAL programme is being used to achieve this but I'm also interest in what aspects of this particular school context are important in order for children to be able to develop these skills)

2. **I'm interested in how you're involved in promoting social and emotional skills, what kinds of activities have you been involved in to promote these skills? What is it that you do to promote these skills?**

3. **How is work around developing social and emotional skills organised within the school?**
Prompts: Who does what and how do you all link in together? How do you all know what you are doing and when? What methods of communication are used?

4. **How is work around developing social and emotional skills delivered within the school?**
Prompts: What is involved? How does it work? What kinds of methods, materials and resources are used? (E.g. In the Classroom, Playground, Assemblies?)

5. **Does work on social and emotional skills build on other work that happens in the school?**
Prompts: How does it fit in with other things that are happening like PHSE/Circle Time?

6. **How are children with particular social and emotional needs identified and supported?**
Prompts: Are there any extra support groups? How does this work link in with whole school work? How do you communicate with the staff running the groups/working with these children? What do you feel is important in the success of these interventions/groups? What is it that you think makes them effective?

7. **What do you think the underpinning principles are to this kind of work promoting social and emotional skills?**

8. **How are these principles embedded within the school?**
Prompts: How do people get across the messages of SEAL? What do people do differently? How are the SEAL messages reinforced on a day to day basis?

9. **What is it about this school's environment and culture that you think has been important for this approach to become embedded?**

10. **How do you think that work around the social and emotional aspects of learning is perceived within the school?**
    Prompts: What do people think about SEAL? What sort of status or importance does SEAL carry? What contributes to this status? Why is it perceived in this way?

11. **Has anyone outside of the school been involved in helping to promote children's social and emotional skills? What is it that they do that you think helps to embed these skills?**
    Prompts: Parents? Members of the community, from the LA, from other agencies?

12. **Have you felt well supported in delivering SEAL? How have you been supported? What has helped you?**
    Prompts: Have you had any training about SEAL? Does anyone in the school help you with SEAL? Have you been supported in making sure that your own social and emotional needs are met?

13. **What kind of impact do you think that this work has had for children, parents, school staff?**
    Prompts: In what ways? What was it about SEAL that you think had the most impact?

14. **Do you feel that SEAL has had an impact on you?**
    Prompts: Do you feel that your role has changed? How? Has it changed how you might approach pupils? Has SEAL influenced how you teach?

15. **Do you feel that doing this kind of work around social and emotional skills fits with your own values and beliefs?**
    Prompts: Do you feel that this work is important? Why?

16. **What do you think has fed into/contributed to your own values and beliefs about developing social and emotional skills?**
    Prompts: What has influenced you, inspired you? Your experiences? The influence of particular people? An ethos? Expectations of senior members of staff?

17. **Reflecting back on all the things we've discussed, what would you identify as the most important things that make SEAL work?**
    Prompts: What's your theory about how SEAL works? What do you think you do that enables SEAL to happen, what is it that makes a difference? What within the school helps this to happen? What else happens in the school that makes a difference?

1) **Could you tell me a bit first of all about your understanding of what the social and emotional aspects of learning are?**

2) **What do you think about the teaching of social and emotional skills?**
Follow up questions: Do you think that teaching these skills is important? What do you feel it is that's important? Why do you feel that this is important? What's important to you about this?

3) **How have you been involved in the social and emotional aspects of learning here at _____ First School?**

4) **Do you think that the programme has had an impact on your children? How?**
Follow up questions: Has it changed how your child might approach difficult situations? Is your child able to talk about his/her emotions? What do you think it is that had had such an impact on your child? What is it that helped them to learn these skills?

5) **Do your children talk about their experiences of learning about these skills?**
Follow up questions: What they did in PHSE or Assembly for example?

6) **Has SEAL affected you as parents? Has it changed anything for you?**

7) **Do you get the impression that this work is important to the teachers here? What gives you that impression?**

8) **Do you think that this work around social and emotional skills has had an impact on the school? How?**

9) **What in particular is it that you think has helped children with these skills in this school?**
Follow up questions: What is it that the teachers do? What kind of things do you think helps children to develop these skills?

10) **Is there anything else you would like to add or say about SEAL? Or any questions for me?**

D4. Interview Schedule for Outside Agencies

1. What is your understanding of the social and emotional aspects of learning – what does this mean to you?
(Discuss that I'm interested in how this school promotes the development of social and emotional skills – the SEAL programme is being used to achieve this but I'm also interest in what aspects of this particular school context are important in order for children to be able to develop these skills)

2. I'm interested in how you're involved in promoting social and emotional skills, what kinds of activities have you been involved in or seen in the school, to help promote these skills?

3. What do you think may have helped this work to become embedded within the school?
Prompts: How do people get across the messages of SEAL? What do people do differently? How are the SEAL messages reinforced on a day to day basis?

4. What kind of impact do you think that this work has had for children, parents, school staff?
Prompts: In what ways? What was it about SEAL that you think had the most impact?

5. How has the work that has been going on around social and emotional skills impacted upon your own work?

6. What do you think the underpinning principles are to this kind of work promoting social and emotional skills?

7. What is it about this school's environment and culture that you think has been important for this approach to become embedded?

8. Reflecting back on all the things we've discussed, what would you identify as the most important things that make SEAL work?
Prompts: What's your theory about how SEAL works? What do you think you do that enables SEAL to happen, what is it that makes a difference? What within the school helps this to happen? What else happens in the school that makes a difference?

APPENDIX E:
The focus group plan, and focus group activities

E1. Plan for pupil focus group

This focus group will involve some discussion and some Art-based activities. The structure will be as follows:

1. Introduction and aims: explaining that the purpose of the session is to get their views about PHSE so that I can find out about how PHSE works in their school and help other schools to do PHSE. Explaining that there will be some talking and some activities like drawing/taking photos, making a Post-Card and an Advert. Explain that the session is being recorded so that I don't forget any of their important ideas and suggestions.

2. Making sure that they know that they can leave at any time but they need to tell an adult first.

3. Clarification of key terms: what does PHSE mean to them? What do they think social skills are? What do they think emotional skills are?

4. Ground rules will be established at the beginning of the session in collaboration with the children including:
- Keeping private what others talk about. Explain that I will also keep private information about who said what and that the only time I would need to tell another adult the name of a child and what they had said is if they said something that could be harmful to themselves or harmful to others.
- Giving everyone a turn.
- Listening to others when they are talking.
- Being kind to others and respecting their views. Not criticising/putting others down/saying anything hurtful or unkind to others.

The key questions will be as follows, and pictorial representations will also be used if possible using an Interactive Whiteboard:

3. Let's pretend that an Alien from Outer Space is coming to visit you and he doesn't know anything at all about PHSE. He would like to take back some ideas about PHSE back to his Planet to help children in his school. What would you tell him about PHSE?

4. What if you were to send him a Post-Card telling him about all the PHSE things you've been doing in your school. What would you put on your Post-Cards? Let's write or draw our ideas on these Post-It's and stick them onto this big Post-Card to send him.

5. What picture would you want to put on the front of your Post-Card? What kinds of PHSE things are there in your school you would want to take a photo of to send him? Where do you do PHSE activities? Where do you use your PHSE skills? *(Depending on whether the school agree…either asking to children to draw in pictures onto a huge outline of their school, or giving them some disposable cameras and allowing them to take pictures of PHSE places or resources in the school. They would be closely supervised to ensure that photographs were taken of only objects and places, and not people).*

6. If I was filming your PHSE lesson for our friend the Alien, what would I see? What would I hear? What would you be doing? (Draw and write answers on a large sheet of paper).

7. Our friend the Alien is still having a hard time convincing his school that PHSE is a good idea. What would you tell him to convince his teachers to do PHSE? What do you think are the best things about PHSE? What difference has it made in your school? What could we put on this Advert for PHSE to go on display in the Alien's school?

8. How has PHSE helped you? What skills have you been practising in your PHSE sessions? When do you practise your skills? Let's imagine this is a big picture of you on this piece of paper. Let's draw on all the skills you have been learning in PHSE. Do you think you've learned anything to do with talking? To do with listening? To do with actions? What about feelings?

9. Can you think of a time your teachers have helped you when you have been...

   When I was sad, my teacher helped me by...., and then I could...
   When I was angry, my teacher helped me by..., and then I could...
   When I didn't know what to do, my teacher helped me by..., and then I could...

At the end of the session the children will be reminded that I will return to talk to them about the findings, and that after I have collected information from children, parents, and teachers I will write them a leaflet to tell them about what I found out about PHSE.

The children will be awarded with certificates of appreciation at the end of the session.
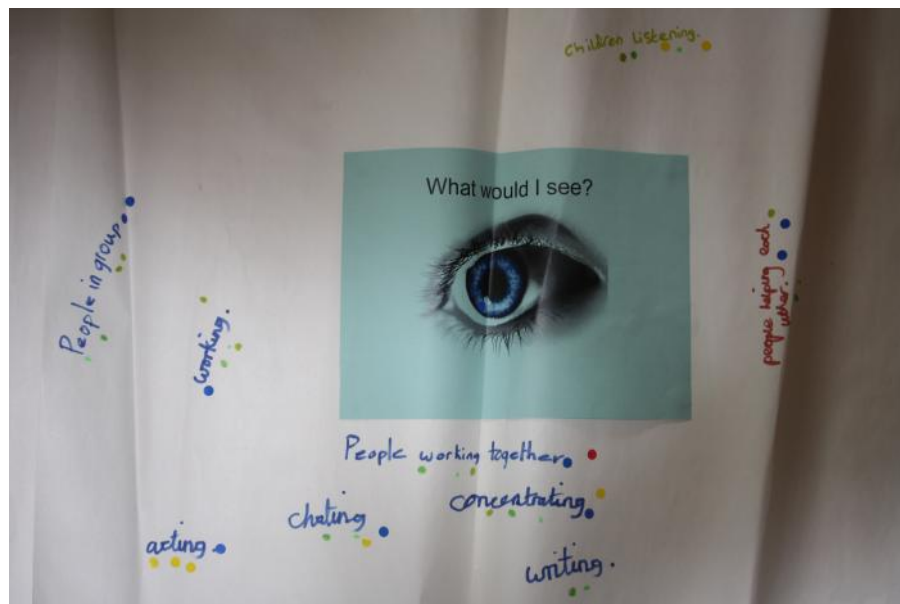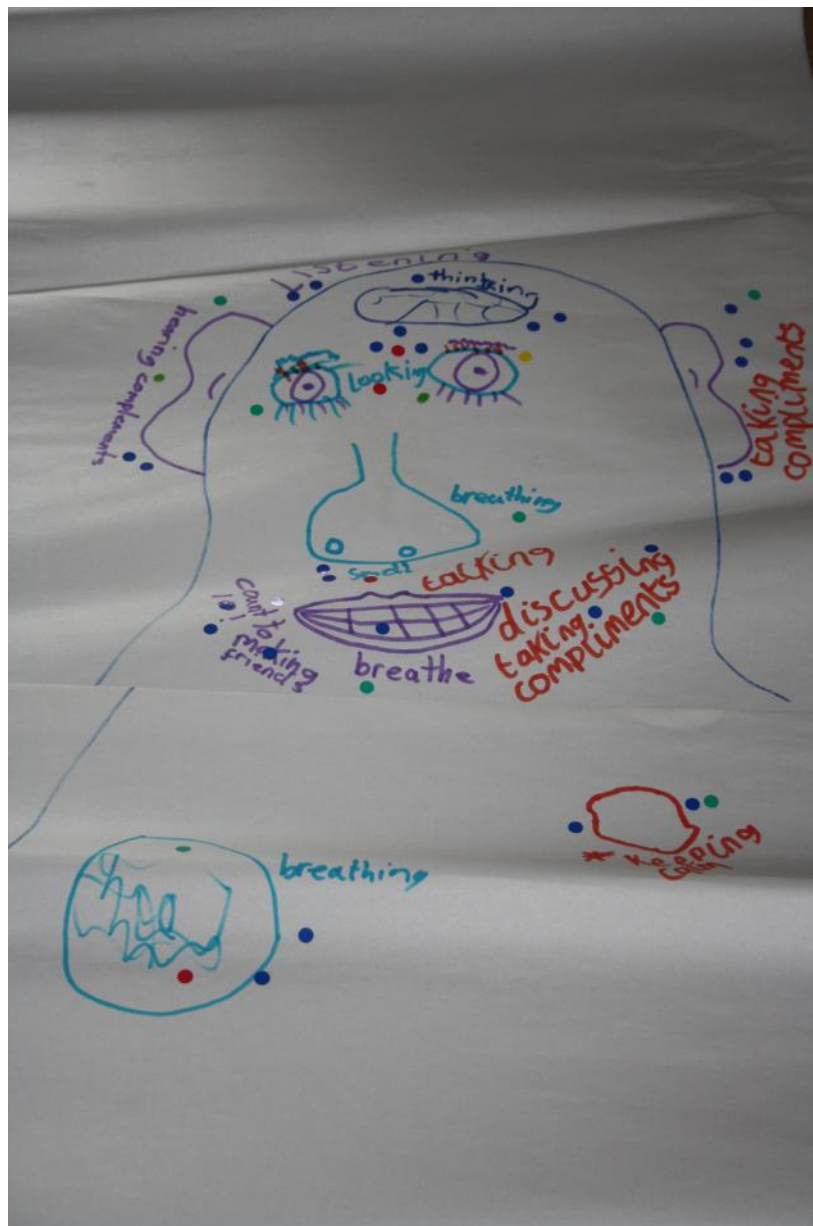
Examples of the children's photographs, as presented to them at the second session (with my interpretation)

We are proud of who we are and how we are different

Some of us have brown eyes.

Look how different we all are
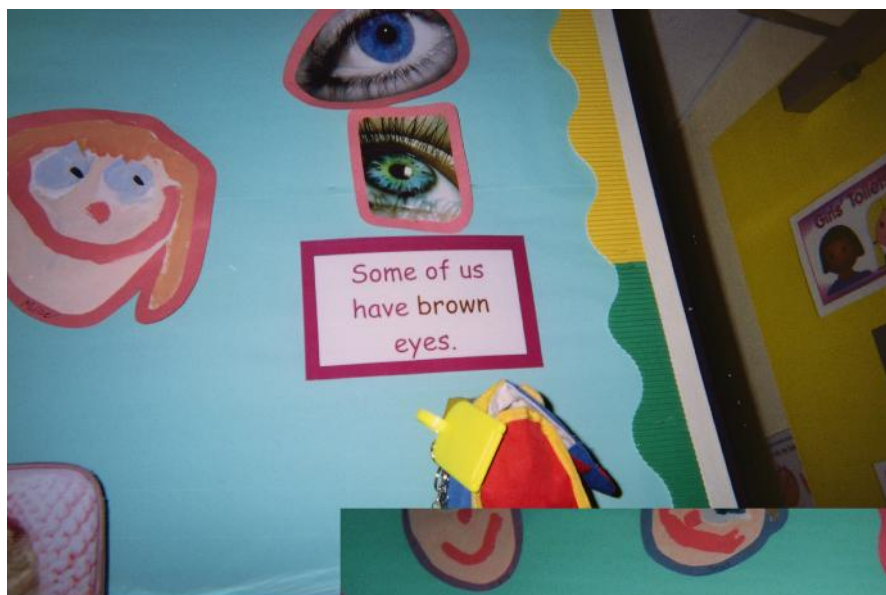
We get chance to have special jobs and responsibilities at school
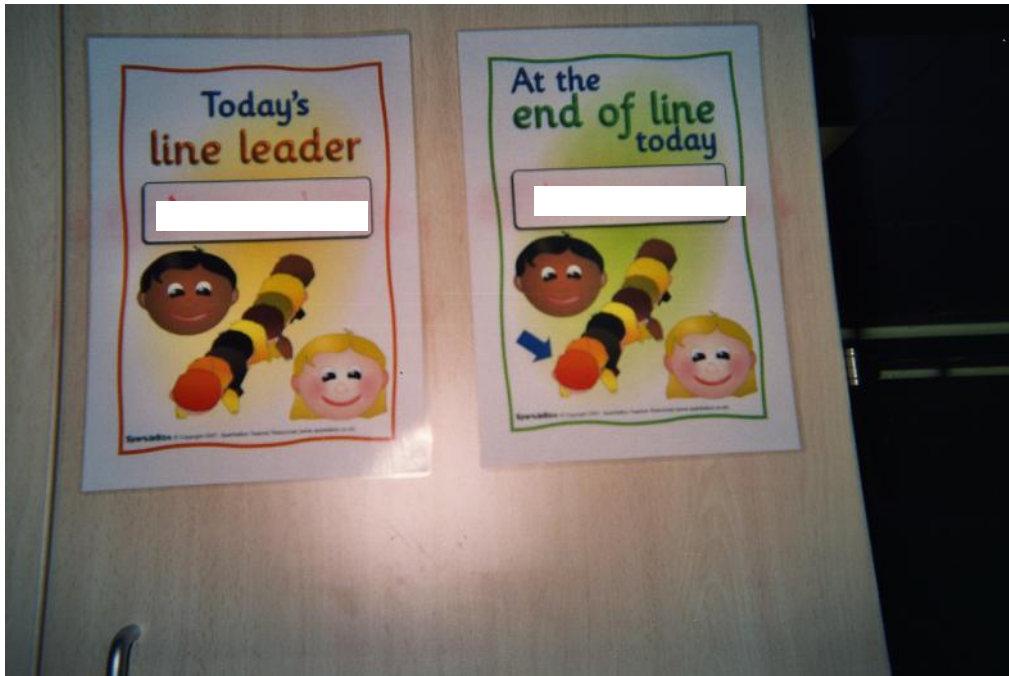
Activities and games that help us to learn to get on with each other and to be able to understand and deal with our feelings

APPENDIX F: Literature Context-Mechanism-Outcome Configurations

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Whole School Level		
1. Implementation of SEAL programme	1a. Modification of the school environment. *How???*	1a. Promoting the emotional wellbeing of children
	1b. Modification of the school 'climate' *How???*	1b. Children's confidence, social, communication and negotiating skills and attitudes and ability to control emotions are improved
		1c. Calmer classrooms and playgrounds
		1c. Reduced bullying, particularly in the playground
		1d. Increased staff understanding of the social and emotional aspects of learning
		1e. Helping staff to better understand their pupils which therefore changes their behaviour
		1f. Enhanced staff confidence in their interactions with pupils
		1g. Staff approaching behaviour incidents in a more thoughtful way
		1h. Positive impact upon children's work
		1i. Reduced pupil absences
2. SEAL fitting in with existing PHSE work or Circle Time, building on existing work, PHSE has status within the school		
3. SEAL is complementary to the school ethos		
4. SEAL is adopted across the whole school		
5. Commitment of staff and of the Senior Management Team		
6. Appointing a designated coordinator in the school		
7. Whole-school approach with a complementary focus on the needs of those with behavioural and emotional problems	7a. Identification of those with problems early and targeting them quickly	7. Early intervention and prevention
	7b. Identification of pupils with difficulties in a flexible, low key, non-labelling way as part of the broader whole school approach	
8. Multi-professional approach within a coherent framework		8. Promotion of emotional and social competence and wellbeing, good behaviour and mental health
9. Involvement of parents and communities		
10. Taking a long term developmental approach	10a. Focus on topics over time within a spiral curriculum	
	10b. Adopting programmes that are developmentally appropriate	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
11. An environment that fosters warm relationships	?	Emotional and social competence and wellbeing in pupils and teachers
12. An environment that encourages participation	?	Emotional and social competence and wellbeing in pupils and teachers
13. An environment that develops pupil and teacher autonomy	?	Emotional and social competence and wellbeing in pupils and teachers
14. An environment that fosters clarity about boundaries, rules and positive expectations	?	Emotional and social competence and wellbeing in pupils and teachers
Classroom Level		
15. Provision of curriculum guidance including recommended materials, examples of lesson plans and schemes of work,	15a. Integrating the programme into the general classroom curriculum	15a.. Teacher have more positive attitudes towards teaching social and emotional skills
	15b. Consistent programme implementation	15b. Teachers' have a better understanding of how to develop social and emotional skills systematically within subject lessons
	15c. Teaching ESC behaviours and skills explicitly using multiple modalities such as programmes focusing upon cognitive processes, emotions, behaviour and environment	
	15d. Teaching ESC skills in participative and empowering ways	
	15e. Teaching ESC skills using a step by step approach	
	15f. Encouraging generalisation of ESC skills to real life	
	15g. Using co-operative groupwork and peer education as well as whole class approaches	
16. Teachers' own social and emotional needs are met		16. Teachers able to transmit emotional and social competence and wellbeing effectively
17. Teachers are educated about ways to promote emotional and social competence		17. Teachers able to transmit emotional and social competence and wellbeing effectively
18. Staff are appropriately supported	18a. Training and ongoing supervision	18a. Effective implementation and management of the materials
	18b. Allowing sufficient time for staff to understand the conceptual basis of the programme, recognise it's importance and plan how it was to be implemented	18b. Staff are positive about SEAL
19. Teachers who emphasise the exogenous contributors to learning (as opposed to the pathological and endogenous nature of disability) express interventionist beliefs	19. Teachers see themselves as responsible for intervening in these students' learning and engaging the student	19. Teaching effectiveness, pupil engagement

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Small Group Interventions		
20. Ground work prior to implementation of small group SEAL interventions		20. Enabling effective delivery of small group interventions
21. LA support		21. Enabling effective delivery of small group interventions
22. Support of parents prior to the intervention		
23. Appropriate whole school ethos and climate, embedding within the whole school approach, and linking small group work with SEAL to work at a whole school level e.g. linking in themes	23. Emotionally nurturing atmosphere, a natural scaffold to help children generalise skills, and to provide reinforcement opportunities	23. Children able to maintain and generalise skills learned within the group
24. Facilitator skills and experience e.g. facilitator's social and emotional skills, providing good role models.	24. Reinforcement of target skills, building of positive relationships with pupils/good rapport, familiarity	24. Development of positive relationships, and of children's social and emotional skills
25. Ensuring that key staff are involved	25a. Triangulated referral of pupils; three or more stakeholders deciding on referral to the group	25a. Increased validity of the process itself (i.e. if consensus is reached that a given child may benefit from intervention), and facilitating communication and clarification of aims and expected outcomes
	25b. Small group facilitators supported by class teacher/SEAL leader or senior management	25b. Enabling effective delivery of small group interventions
26. Ensuring that the intervention has a status/profile within the school	26a. Allocation of time and space e.g. incorporation into weekly timetables, appropriate child-friendly and welcoming setting with SEAL-related materials	
	26b. Preparation of resources e.g pedagogic resources, making resources	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
27. Implementation of small group intervention	27a. Setting achievable targets	27a. Small groups operating effectively
	27b. Rewarding and reinforcing	27b. Improvement in emotional symptoms
	27c. Making learning fun	27c. Improvements in pro-social behaviour
	27d. Fidelity (following the intended format)	27d. Finding out that children had more serious problems and needed further support. E.g. child protection issues.
	27e. Prompting, probing and questioning (participatory sessions)	27e. A service that is maintained and sustainable
	27f. Promoting autonomy (e.g. setting own rules for the group)	
	27g. Verbalising emotional experience	
	27h. Group balance e.g. balance of genders, presence of role models	
	27i. Responding to individual needs e.g. bereavement	
	27j. Multi-agency approach to the operation of small groups	
	27k. Integration of small group work into classroom	
	27l. Communication between teachers and small group workers	
	27m. Formal training for small group work	
	27n. Parental participation in the	
26. Standardised training and support for staff	26. Skilled staff running small groups	26. Raised profile of Primary SEAL small group work. Better outcomes for small group interventions

APPENDIX G:
Initial set of Context-Mechanism-Outcome Configurations identified on Day 1 of observations

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Emotional Literacy Work		
	Noticing a pupil's emotional responses e.g. I can see you're pleased aren't you? (HT to pupil in Assembly after reward given), if a pupil is looking pale, if they are finding something difficult.	Children are able to tell adults when they feel upset
	Modelling of appropriate skills and responses. (E.g. discussing when a teacher had clearly been cross and why, and demonstrating skill to calm down—counting to 10, modelling checking on others' emotional wellbeing)	
	Openness and admittal of adults' own emotional responses and emotional wellbeing (e.g. not feeling too well, brains a but musty, I've got a sore throat and a sore nose', I find that really hard I don't like it, it hurts my stomach muscles))	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Promoting pupil wellbeing		
Promoting an emotionally 'safe' environment	Checking on pupils wellbeing, noticing if they appear unhappy and seeking to alleviate this, providing reassurance	
Promoting children's self-esteem	Making children aware of what is happening and what will happen next	
	Noticing individual children's achievements (e.g. especially impressed you got to the top of the ladder although you couldn't before, you've achieved something there would you like a copy of that picture?), encouraging children to be proud of beating their own personal bests	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Behaviour Management		
High expectations for behaviour	A range of mechanisms for different rewards to be achieved (e.g. pupil points, good pieces of work, question of the week, attendance cup)	Children are clearly motivated by reward systems (e.g. shouting out 'Yes!' in Assembly when it is time for certificates for pupil points to be given out, Attendance Cup)
	HT often involved in giving rewards (e.g. Assemblies, weekly sticker)	Children are able to negotiate when playing in a role play area about who takes on different roles
	Regular reward (e.g. stickers)	
	Clear descriptions about what rewards are for	
	Staff finding things to praise children for all the time (e.g. nice smile, well done; very polite nice manners, well done; behaviour during Assembly)	
	Rewarding and recognising publically behaviour and good social skills as well as academic achievements (e.g. in Assembly rewarded for working well together on a piece of work, praising pupils seen taking turns, giving stickers to children sitting nicely, praising those waiting their turn, concentrating well, working hard, putting effort in)	
	Use of proximity praise (praising the children nearby showing the positive behaviour)	
	Building motivation to achieve rewards (e.g. think about how you can achieve pupil of the week next week, next week you'll get another chance at trying hard at your spellings to get a sticker)	
	Reinforcing SEAL skills being targeted that week through rewards and positive recognition for the skill demonstrated (e.g. HT stickers each week for a particular behaviour such as someone who stays calm and deals with their anger and frustration, TA feeding back to the teacher. after Playtime about children's achievements). These times are used as a basis for discussion about the skill.	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
	Staff modelling the desired behaviour (e.g. I wonder if Mrs X can do it...is she finding a spot, sitting down, sitting still, moving her spot?)	
	Staff explaining to pupils why a certain behaviour is needed (e.g. why they must take their shoes and socks off, why a child should not carry heavy items).	
	If pupils are misbehaving this tends to be addressed directly through redirection or discussion with the pupil involving explaining why the behaviour is not appropriate and asking their views (e.g. you could hurt someone, do you think that's acceptable?) In some cases staff do this privately by speaking quietly to the child misbehaving.	
	Very clear communication of expected behaviour before activities begin usually discussed collaboratively with pupils beforehand	
	Explicit teaching of prosocial behaviour (e.g. through practising the correct and incorrect social behaviours through role-play, discussing what was right/wrong in the behaviour seen, how it made the child feel, drawing links with other situations the teacher had seen, and making a DVD of positive behaviours).	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Staff-staff Interactions		
Meaningful relationships between members of staff		

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Interactions		
Meaningful positive relationships between staff and pupils (including senior management)	Checking out with pupils their responses to situations, and their wellbeing.	Pupils thank teachers (e.g. when given a certificate in Assembly, stickers)
		Children help and remind each other (e.g. to get shoes)
Democratic approach	Senior staff using lunchtimes as a 'social time' to be able to talk to pupils differently within a social context. Standing with pupils in the queue for their food, helping them to choose which food they want, and talking to pupils sitting at tables, sitting with children at tables in Nursery and promoting social conversations through questioning, repeating and elaborating what children say, and encouraging other children to join in the conversation.	
Valuing of each other		Children holding the door open for others
Respect for each other is clearly apparent (respect for pupils and teachers)	Seeking out interactions with pupils along their lines of interest; child-led interaction. E.g. joining in pretend role-play with children, joining in their activity, sitting with them at their tables, picking up conversation along their interests, asking them about what they are doing, about their family.	
	Validating the child's contributions. E.g. When a child makes an irrelevant comment during learning activities, validating their response and then continuing with the learning activity.	
	Facilitating interactions between pupils; encouraging other children to join in conversations of activities, pointing out where a child is trying to	
	Adults admitting faults or mistakes, and apologising to pupils.	

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Physical environment		
Motivating visual reminders of SEAL themes and reminders of strategies working on that week.	Use of music to reinforce key messages (e.g. as children go in and out of Assembly, Bravo song)	
'Our Friendship Wall' in one of the classrooms		
Posters reminding children of SEAL messages ('If you want a friend, be a friend', 'Smiles are contagious')		
Friendship Stops		
Classroom rules ('Our happy class rules')		

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Attendance		
	Actively promoted by a weekly Attendance Cup won by the class with the best attendance record. Enthusiasm nurtured by a build-up to the presentation of the Cup and reading out of percentages of attendance of each class. Explaining clearly how to win the Cup through being healthy, looking after themselves and coming in every day.	Pupils motivated to win the Attendance Cup

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Pupil responsibility		
	Pupils read out the achievements of other pupils and give them certificates/stickers	
	Pupils chosen as Helpers with specific jobs	

APPENDIX H:
Notes from the realist interview
(Programme Specifications with notes regarding interviewee's comments and suggested amendments)

Deputy Head

*planning for supply T's - crucial
v. high standard - if T's adamant on doing
own planning - bin systems as well as
if supply T shouts - asked to leave. Ppl who take it
— on board stay - set it up right before for T.

Implementation of SEAL

CONTEXTS

- Ground work establishing the structure and SEAL curriculum. Importance of leaders in SEAL to have space to reflect.
- Consistency in approach; all staff doing the same thing. Everyone is 'on board'
- Hard work of the SEAL Coordinator
- Shared determination to put things in place. Desire to find something that works for these children
- Commitment and enthusiasm of the Head Teacher
- All the staff are positive about SEAL
- People who are receptive to change and open to trying new things.
- Heavy involvement of HT in SEAL, SEN and targeted interventions (HT also SENCo).

(handwritten right side:) ↓ consistency one of most important themes

(handwritten near circles:) SLT. + whole staff

MECHANISMS

Weekly support group accessed by SEAL Coordinator when piloting SEAL. Also accessed funding for resources to support SEAL through this group such as DVDs, and developed resources such as a record-booklet children complete to monitor their own progress. SEAL Coordinator has also accessed additional CDP relating to SEAL since then.

2 year rolling programme so that topics are covered thoroughly and are not 'skimmed over' and children can learn more from it. Weekly themes relate to overarching half-termly themes. Very structured Assemblies; HT introduces the SEAL topics each week, Rota system for Assemblies, 3 SEAL-based Assemblies a week and a Celebration Assembly on Fridays. These themes are in line with what is being taught in the rest of the school, and everyone knows about this due to group planning within Key Stages. This forms the main focus and background and then the rest of the work comes from this and reinforces it.

Greater structure at the start of implementation; followed the programme more closely. Began to make the programme more personalised to the school over time and with greater familiarity with the programme. Allowing staff flexibility, not being prescriptive, allowing staff to take ownership and greater control over delivery over time, to match their teaching style and the particular children they are working with.

Dinner Supervisors are aware of how to approach children and of what the SEAL themes are. They would approach things in the same way as teaching staff. The Head Teacher meets with Dinner Supervisors to discuss this

Additional 'top-up' SEAL sessions/reminders where needed to reinforce a particular behaviour. Not taking behaviour 'for granted;' being prepared to re-visit work.

SEAL Coordinator support to TA supporting Silver Set small groups. Experienced and trained TA running these groups.

Coordinators working to ensure that all staff were 'on board' from the start. Having regular meeting times to plan and make decisions together, and so that any difficulties could be ironed out. Staff have supported each other in implementation, support has mainly come from 'within' the school rather from outsiders coming in. SEAL is still discussed in the staffroom and good ideas are shared

Weekly 1-hour SEAL slot on a Friday afternoon for all Key Stages. Time-tabled slots which are a core element of the curriculum, not an 'ad hoc' add-on

SEAL themes planned at least a term ahead. Wall displays in the Hall and plans are on the wall in the staff room.

Summary sheets for staff which detail the schemes of work for the particular theme, and the learning objectives for that theme. SEAL provides a sort of skeleton framework to work within.

Staff are working on the same skills at the same times so that children are getting the same information from all staff

Increase in Circle Time; both timetabled and Ad Hoc. Additional Circle Time, group work, or 1:1 work depending on need.

Silver SEAL groups in KS1. The group is made fun and the children are helped to feel special and proud to be in the group and to share what they have done with the rest of the class

(handwritten left side:) amending it + weaving it up + using basic framework initially mr than a framework but now.

Context we're in - the school - it's important
Lots of visitors make comments.
openness, uncluttered entrance to school -
lovely bright entrance hall - see everything
not chaotic / cluttered.

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OUTCOMES

SEAL Coordinator felt more supported. SEAL Coordinator was more able to support staff. Staff feel that leadership have made the programme more user-friendly, otherwise difficult to get to grips with the resources.

SEAL has raised the profile of work teaching social and emotional skills, given it more status and heightened awareness of opportunities to teach these skills as part of the curriculum.

Very clear focus for themes provided weekly by HT; makes it easier for staff to plan and deliver related work with classes

This work becoming 'natural' 'automatic', or 'second-nature;' staff forget they are doing it; it becomes embedded throughout practice across the school in everything staff do and in all subjects. Staff do not feel that they are doing anything 'special;' it seems obvious. .

Staff working together

Children are getting the same messages from all members of staff; reinforcing particular concepts and skills.

Staff experiencing positive results of implementation, they can see it works.

Children make good progress in their personal development.

Targeted intervention catching children earlier before problems worsen. Preventing the need for intervention from outside agencies

Children make good progress in their academic skills

(handwritten annotations)

mr leadership has kept it going

realo does pull it together all of music also ties back to theme.

Ofsted were there. rime for me with the children – no staff there = less distracted even staff not there got them solves felured on ne needUs special time & impressed.

HT/Hula ch senicest power v. able to warse

bng thing
I remind them what a tough school it is.

get fed up when bw thing goes off + existing teachers

united approach.

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gave candue
independence
mentaring of ch.

business - earning
cash to substralise

NPS →

n promoty
equal opp's
knowingly.

economic
wellbeing
understandig)

staff have
clear boundaries
to interactions in
front of ch.

* responsibility
came inwears in
man.

* able to set up Netbook
use their skills

Gardening clubs - anti-school-
computer, business, chour, science
really enjoy 'own' the clubs
pass info on.

mostly
scho

community
police

YMCA
↓
ch. need
consistery of
approach.

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Interactions		
A high level of interaction between teachers and pupils at all times in the school day	Staff seeking out interactions with pupils along their lines of interest, and allowing child-led interaction, skilled use of questioning. Staff communicating care and interest in individual children	Staff and pupils value each other. Respect for each other is clearly apparent (respect for pupils and teachers). Pupils are caring in their conduct.
Meaningful positive relationships are nurtured between staff and pupils (including senior management)	Senior staff using lunchtimes as a 'social time' to be able to talk to pupils differently within a social context. Promoting social conversations through questioning, repeating and elaborating what children say, and encouraging other children to join in the conversation.	Children of all ages able to socialise and have positive conversations with each other.
A democratic approach is practised	Facilitating interactions between pupils; encouraging other children to join in conversations of activities, pointing out where a child is trying to initiate interaction with another.	Children help each other with tasks and remind each other of what they need to do. Pupils offer each other help and ask for help from each other.
Staff model appropriate interactions so that children can learn from them.	Positive interactions with children. Modelling of active listening and good social skills through interactions with pupils (e.g. eye contact, empathy, asking questions). Validating the child's contributions.	Pupils can be productive when working collaboratively on tasks and games.
Staff show respect for each other and the pupils; modelling this for the children.	'No-shouting policy' is adhered to. Teachers are softly spoken with pupils, there are no raised voices. Classrooms are calm, teachers are calm in their approach with pupils even when they are stressed.	Pupils were inclusive towards each other; children were not observed to be excluded or isolated from others.
Meaningful relationships between members of staff. Positive relationship between senior leadership team and staff members There is a very close staff team.	Actively communicating respect for pupils even after misbehaviour through body language, tone of voice, asking not telling and seeking and respecting their views. Bending down to the child's level and speaking quietly to them was a technique noticed in particular.	Pupils confident to initiate conversation with teachers, TAs and Dinner Supervisors, and to make jokes with them.
Modelling of appropriate interactions between staff. .	Staff members are relaxed with children, and demonstrate a sense of humour with pupils, a degree of informality and effort made to be approachable. Good rapport between staff and pupils both within and outside of the classroom. Adults admitting faults or mistakes, and apologising to pupils.	Children and staff are smiling and laughing a lot of the time. Children able to laugh at themselves. Children and teachers know the limits of 'banter.'
	Encouraging laughing and joking between teacher and pupils and members of staff in front of pupils so that children can learn how to interact.	The children know the staff well and the staff know the children well.
	Positive interactions with parents, friendly, welcoming and approachable to outsiders.	Calm atmosphere in the school.
	Staff are encouraged to socialise in the staffroom, including senior staff. This is given priority and viewed as an important social time. Teachers 'have a laugh' together, and engage in general 'chit-chat and hilarity.'. 'Banter with respect and trust.' HT available also to discuss any concerns or issues	Parents feel able to approach staff.
	HT makes a point of speaking with every member of staff and spending time in every classroom each day. HT also has an 'open door' policy.	Staff can talk about issues and things that have gone wrong.

enjaeddos
* assenbly - rota

rappat

* Ngt Hme, new Head, looking for change - everythiy
was in 'satisfacboy' - cause it was done internally
put time aside to do it
* you can be yourself with the ch -don't mind makin a fool
of yourself

Handwritten notes (top)

trying to make sure ch. understand what kind of work
Water Aid - before + after collect - idea of earning more
better you do the no you'll raise - high expectations
limited no. of charities so can spend time getting to know.

Handwritten notes (left margin)

+ lot acted
, ambassadors
, new parents

FS + KS1 - parents
get a letter -ty +
pinpoint parents accessed
of need it -ones accessed
+ to debt/treats need

make REW
es have - FJ

an how telle
what he's
done over wk.

16/11 parents?
funny.jpg
learn to do
activities - story
puppets/characters
made them + ch write
a story
-eatys

SE things
Nurs
2 yrs
discussers
routines
at
home

WJ, children themes

Table

Contexts	Mechanisms	Outcomes
Positive relationship with outside agencies	Making the most of outside agency support available to feed into and reinforce key principles of SEAL. E.g. use of EP support to advise about attachment and social interaction difficulties, whole school TAMHS training. Willingness to put support in place, quick to implement strategies. Close collaboration and helping agencies in their work.	Enabling children to access greater opportunities.
	SEAL skills are reinforced in the community by close liaison with Community Support Officers.	Few children with SEN need specialist support to continue by the time they move up to Middle School.
	Referring children to outside agencies where needed for additional support for the child and the family. E.g. Noah's Ark for support with grief., specialist autism team, EPs Statementing the child where necessary.	
	Use of the CAF, getting parents involved and other agencies.	
Strong home-school link; good engagement of parents and carers.		
	Providing opportunities for parents to be involved and come into school E.g. The Share Project (like a Stay and Play), involving parents in lessons, support group to help parents engage in learning at home.	Good relationships and strong rapport with parents. Families find the school supportive and are confident to approach the school for help. Achievement of the Leading Parent Partnership Award.
	A high level of contact with parents. Meet and greet in the mornings. Staff spend a lot of time in the playground talking to parents.	High level of satisfaction of parents and carers in all aspects.
	Head Teacher actively makes herself available to parents. Open-door policy.	If parents have more awareness of social and emotional issues, this helps them to deal with issues.
	Working with parents collaboratively to instil the same values as school at home, and to set up boundaries and strategies at home.	Children better able to manage behaviour while they are here.
	A lot of written communication with parents. E.g. weekly newsletter with a competition each week, letters home, reminders, weekly curriculum guide to what children in early years are learning that week, after parents evening a slip describing what to work on. The nature of written communication is informal and non-threatening.	
	Keenness to send positive information home rather than negative. Opportunity to put achievements outside of school on the Tip Top Tree.	
	Parents are well-informed about children's progress.	

Handwritten notes (right margin)

+ ensuring ch
don't slip
thru the gap
+
work collaboratively

talkers to each
other; become m
supportive of
each other
grandparents
come, stepfathers
mum

have 1/2 hr cup
of tea + chat.
talk alot as they
building rappot,
est. relationship
or.ity.

Handwritten notes (bottom)

the consistent msgs across staff are
important - that's why same themes occur
across contexts.

I1. The codes given to each theme:

Programme Specification 1: Implementation of SEAL

Contexts important for SEAL implementation include: staff with specific characteristics and beliefs who are able to be consistent in their approach; a high level of quality interaction; a calm and open physical environment; leadership commitment; ground work by managers; a supportive ethos and approach to behaviour management; clear structure and full integration of the SEAL programme; access to outside support; and close links with families. These contexts all contribute to enabling the mechanisms of support for staff, planning, and integration across all school activities to be effective. These contexts and mechanisms enable staff to feel supported and able to deliver SEAL, in order that pupils can make good progress in their SE development, academic skills, and can sustain positive behaviour.

A school context which has in place:

1a)   Members of staff who:

1b)   -Believe that teaching SES is a part of their natural teacher philosophy; *seemed to make sense; fits with my own values, natural*

1c)   -Have the determination and desire to help children;

1d)   -Are receptive to change and have a positive attitude towards implementation;

1e)   -Are empathetic; and

1f)   -Are emotionally literate;

1g)   Consistency in approach to behaviour, and in promoting social and emotional development across all staff including Dinner Supervisors, and supply staff;

1h)   A high level of quality interaction (described in more detail in Programme Specification 2);

1i)   A physical environment that offers opportunities for communication and interaction, allows close monitoring of classrooms, and promotes a calm and organised atmosphere (described in more detail in Programme Specification 3);

1j)   Leadership team involvement and commitment to SEAL;

1k)   Ground work by managers, including:

1l)   -Space to reflect;

1m)   -Establishing a clear structure to SEAL; and

1n)   -Establishing the SEAL curriculum.

1o)   Structured, graduated and integrated introduction of SEAL themes across the school;

1p)   Teaching of SES incorporated across the whole school curriculum;

1q)   A supportive ethos and a 'no shouting' policy (described in more detail in Theories 4 and 5);

1r)   A clear behaviour policy and procedures, shared high expectations, and a focus on positive behaviour (described in more detail in Programme Specification 6);

1s)   A nurturing, child-centred, safe school environment which promotes positive wellbeing (described in more detail in Programme Specification 7);

1t)   Active promotion of pupils' independence, responsibility and ownership (described in more detail in Programme Specification 8);

1u)   Access to a monthly support group accessed by the SEAL Coordinator, also enabling access to additional funding and resources as well as peer support from other Coordinators;

1v)   Strong home-school links (described in more detail in Programme Specification 9).

With the following mechanisms in operation:

1w)   SEAL Coordinator providing support to staff through a collaborative approach to planning, regular meetings, and providing summary sheets for staff of schemes of work and Learning Objectives for each theme;

1x)   Staff supporting each other and sharing ideas;

1y)   The SEAL programme delivered over 2 years rather than 1 year to cover topics thoroughly;

1z)   Advance planning of SEAL themes by at least 1 term, and group planning taking place within Key Stages;

1aa)   Weekly SEAL themes introduced and reinforced via 3 SEAL Assemblies a week, linking into

class-based work, with related wall displays in the Hall and planning documents displayed in the Staff Room;

1bb) SEAL a core element of the school curriculum, with weekly timetabled lessons, and regular Circle Time sessions. SEAL work is also incorporated into other small group interventions happening in the school, including Silver Set SEAL groups. Specific SEAL input involves use of:

1cc) -Group, paired work, collaborative work, and peer appraisal;

1dd) -A range of engaging media (visual resources, u-tube clips, puppets, role-play, 'Hot Seats,' real life examples);

1ee) -Music and dance;

1ff) -Explicit teaching of prosocial behaviour; and

1gg) -Children monitoring their own progress in SES through individual SEAL record booklets, and self-reflection activities and discussion;

1hh) Firmer structure and fidelity at the beginning of the SEAL programme with greater personalisation, enhancement and flexibility introduced over time (described in more detail in Programme Specification 10);

1ii) Playtimes are viewed as a key time to promote SES through use of:

1jj) -Structured games carefully planned to promote SES;

1kk) -TAs to support children to play collaboratively; and

1ll) -Friendship Stops made by the children, and regularly reintroduced.

1mm) Teachers are promoting friendship development, and conflict resolution through Ad-Hoc active support and discussion when children need it;

1nn) Teachers are mobilising the peer group to support particular children that need it (e.g. promoting understanding of children's behaviour, encouraging use of the Friendship Stop);

1oo) Reinforcement of SEAL skills occurs through specific SEAL rewards and positive recognition of SEAL skills by adults; and

1pp) There is additional 1:1 support for children with additional SE needs from trained adults (e.g. through Key Adult support). '*Provision map' detailing support for these children.* SEAL lessons are also sometimes tailored to those children with particular SE needs when appropriate (e.g. bereavement). Close collaboration with outside agencies is in place in order to appropriately support these children who need additional support beyond the SEAL programme (described in greater detail in Programme Specification 11).

Leads to the following outcomes for staff:

1qq) Staff feel that there is a very clear focus for their SEL work; (*aware where opportunities are in the curriculum, very specific themes)*

1rr) Staff work collaboratively;

1ss) Staff delivering Wave 1 and Wave 2 SEAL feel supported;

1tt) SEAL Coordinator feels supported and able to help staff;

1uu) Staff are able to plan and deliver SEAL;

1vv) Teaching SES becomes automatic/second-nature to staff and becomes a part of all their practice;

1ww) Staff experience the positive results of implementation of SEAL; and

1xx) Staff enjoy playtimes more.

Leads to the following outcomes for pupils:

1yy) Receiving the same messages from all staff and therefore regular reinforcement of skills occurring;

1zz) Making good progress in their personal development;

1aaa) Able to work and play collaboratively and in teams , and develop friendships;

1bbb) Having basic emotional literacy skills;

1ccc) Able to talk about ways to resolve conflict and manage their feelings;

1ddd) Making good progress in their academic development (on entry to school skills are below average but by Year 4 children have caught up with national averages);

1eee) Are engaged and enjoy PHSE/SEAL lessons;

1fff) Are motivated by reward systems;

1ggg) Know what positive behaviour is, and the limits and boundaries of behaviour;

1hhh) Are aware of the impact of behaviour on learning;

1iii)   Are able to sustain positive behaviour (while they are here), and some can sustain this at Middle School;
1jjj)   Improved behaviour in the school since SEAL; and
1kkk)   View teaching of SES as part of their teachers' roles.

Programme Specification 2: Interaction and Relationships
A high level of social interaction and nurturing of meaningful relationships, supported by modelling of social skills, value placed upon socialising, and use of humour; promotes good rapport, a close staff team, positive relationships and interactions, and effective social skills.

A school context that promotes:
2a)   A high level of interaction;
2b)   Valuing of 'social time' for pupils and staff;
2c)   Nurturing of meaningful positive relationships;
2d)   Personal wellbeing of staff and pupils;
2e)   A democratic approach; and
2f)   Inclusion.

With the following mechanisms in place:
2g)   Staff purposefully modelling appropriate interactions between each other in front of pupils, including using humour and encouraging laughter;
2h)   Staff purposefully modelling appropriate social skills in their interactions with pupils; modelling active listening, eye contact, empathy, and validating children's contributions;
2i)   Using lunchtime and snacktime (Nursery) as a key 'social time' to promote appropriate social skills;
2j)   Senior staff taking on a key role in promoting this 'social time;'
2k)   Staff seeking out interaction with children for social purposes, allowing child-led interactions, and using skilled questioning, repeating, and elaborating of children's utterances;
2l)   Staff skilfully including other children in conversations and facilitating interactions between pupils;
2m)   Staff communicating care and interest in individual children;
2n)   Staff exercising a degree of informality and humour with pupils;
2o)   Staff and senior management making efforts to be approachable to pupils;
2p)   Staff 'social time' given priority and actively encouraged (including senior staff); and
2q)   Head Teacher having an 'open door' policy, and viewing contact time daily with all staff and with pupils as important to discuss concerns/issues.

Lead to the following outcomes:
2r)   Meaningful relationships between members of staff; a close staff team;
2s)   A very established staff team with very low turnover;
2t)   Staff able to talk about issues and things that have gone wrong;
2u)   Staff have an emotional investment in their work;
2v)   Good rapport between staff and pupils;
2w)   Children of all ages are able to socialise and have positive conversations with each other;
2x)   Children behave in a caring way towards each other and are able to offer help and to ask for help from each other;
2y)   Children are confident to initiate conversations with adults and to use humour with adults;
2z)   Children and staff often appear happy and are smiling and laughing;
2aa)   Children are able to laugh at themselves and know the limits of 'banter;' and
2bb)   Children know the staff well, and staff know the pupils well.

Programme Specification 3: Physical Environment
The layout and the physical environment of the school with a flow of people through the classrooms, and use of open areas, enables opportunities for communication, better monitoring, reinforcement of SEAL, and an organised and calm atmosphere.

A school context that has:
3a)   A semi-open plan layout;
3b)   Carpeted classrooms (and non-carpeted areas for craft tables);
3c)   Arrangements of furniture to promote opportunities to socialise. Provision of collaborative activities (particularly lower down the school);
3d)   Visual reminders of SEAL themes and reminders of strategies working on that week;
3e)   Displays relating to SEAL; such as a 'Friendship Wall' and fun and engaging posters;
3f)   Friendship Stops;
3g)   Classroom rules on display ('Our happy class rules'); and
3h)   Wide open spaces outside.

With the following mechanisms in place:
3i)   Regular flow of staff, pupils, parents and visitors through classrooms;
3j)   Use of the Hall for Circle Time, space for a 'true circle' where needed;
3k)   Utilising the open outside space for a variety of outside activities and lessons; and
3l)   Regular reintroduction of the Friendship Stops.

Leads to the following outcomes:
3m)   The sharing of ideas more easily in the classroom;
3n)   Greater opportunities for children to socialise;
3o)   Better communication between staff, and a more sociable atmosphere, which is modelled to children;
3p)   Greater monitoring of what is happening in classrooms. The Head Teacher can 'float' more easily between classrooms;
3q)   The layout of the school allows an organised, predictable and calm environment;
3r)   Carpeting leads to quieter classrooms and greater calmness;
3s)   Open space outside allows physical activities to take place, and promotes calmness;
3t)   Children have opportunities to engage in positive experiences such as picnics outside and looking after plants; and
3u)   SEAL messages are reinforced through visual reminders.

Programme Specification 4: Ethos

An ethos promoting a sense of community, mutual respect, trust and belief in others, which is actively promoted, modelled and monitored by staff, leads to a positive, productive and valuing school community.

A school context that promotes:
4a)   An 'All In It Together' ethos; *everyone 'on board' everyone is involved*
4b)   Mutual respect;
4c)   Mutual trust;
4d)   Acceptance of others and of self;
4e)   A sense of equality;
4f)   Valuing of everyone in the school community;
4g)   A no-blame culture; and
4h)   Unconditional belief in the children.

With the following mechanisms in place:
4i)   Senior Management reinforcing the school ethos explicitly with staff and pupils through speaking this language and practical involvement in routine activities to model this philosophy; *e.g. during lunchtimes helping out*
4j)   Teachers actively modelling respect towards each other and the pupils. For example; bending down to the child's level and speaking quietly and calmly, respecting their views, communicating respect through body language and tone of voice, by asking rather than telling pupils, thanking pupils, and by explaining why a lesson is being interrupted or paused or apologising for this, and avoiding public humiliation after misbehaviour instead talking privately to the child;
4k)   Encouraging teachers to attend Senior Leadership Team meetings to gain a picture of the whole school ethos;
4l)   Close monitoring of new staff to ensure consistency of approach to behaviour and adaptation to school ethos, and consultation with pupils about new staff; and
4m)   Teaching these school values explicitly (e.g. empathy for others, valuing of differences).

Leads to the following outcomes:
4n)   Key principles embedded in the school culture;
4o)   Visitors can 'feel' the atmosphere in the school (e.g. positive pupil behaviour, pupil engagement, friendly atmosphere, approachable staff, positive attitudes);
4p)   Children have respect and appreciation for each other, their teachers and those who are different;
4q)   Staff and pupils value each other;
4r)   Children behave in an inclusive way towards each other.
4s)   Children can be trusted and respect their environment and material possessions;
4t)   Pupils are aware of and able to articulate the school's philosophy;
4u)   Children feel that staff believe in their ability to achieve and to socialise and behave appropriately and respond to this;
4v)   Changes in dissenting or new members of staffs' attitudes when the positive results of this philosophy are experienced over time;
4w)   Staff deliver what they promise; and
4x)   Adults are willing to admit to things they find difficult, failure and mistakes, and are willing to apologise to pupils when appropriate.

Programme Specification 5: No-Shouting Policy

A 'no-shouting' policy is implemented by softly spoken teachers using calm approach towards pupils, leads to a calm school atmosphere.

A school context that promotes:

5a)   A 'no shouting' policy.

Through the following mechanisms:

5b)   Teachers are softly spoken with pupils, there are no raised voices;

5c)   Teachers maintain a calm approach even when they feel stressed; and

5d)   New members of staff are closely monitored and feedback from children is sought.

Leads to the following outcomes:

5e)   Classrooms are calm;

5f)   There is a calm atmosphere across the school; and

5g)   Children do not shout.

Programme Specification 6: Behaviour Management

A clear behaviour policy and procedures, shared high expectations, and a focus on positive behaviour, and consistency, enable the mechanisms of high praise and reward, clearly communicated expectations, and appropriate challenge to take effect in order to maintain children's positive behaviour and to motivate them to achieve well.

A school context that promotes:

6a)   Clear behaviour policy and procedures;

6b)   Shared high expectations for behaviour and achievement of pupils and staff; 'Only My Best Will Do' (school motto regularly reinforced);

6c)   A focus upon positive behaviour; and

6d)   Consistency in approach and boundaries for behaviour.

With the following mechanisms in place:

6e)   High level of praise and reward, with a range of mechanisms for achieving rewards;

6f)   Regular reminders of rewards to build motivation;

6g)   Positive and clear communication about expected behaviour, clear boundaries and consequences;

6h)   Adults modelling desired behaviours;

6i)   Teachers discussing their expectations with pupils, explaining why particular behaviours are important, and checking out understanding. The same applies to misbehaviour, which is often dealt with privately avoiding public humiliation; and

6j)   Children of all abilities are appropriately challenged in their learning.

Leads to the following outcomes:

6k)   Children can maintain positive behaviour while they are here and some can take this with them up to Middle School;

6l)   Children know the limits and boundaries for behaviour;

6m)   Children are motivated by reward systems ;

6n)   Children have high expectations of themselves and others;

6o)   Children work hard to live up to the expectations; and

6p)   Academic progress overall is good.

Programme Specification 7: Promoting Pupil Wellbeing
A nurturing, child-centred, safe school which is interested in pupils' wellbeing and promotes positive wellbeing; leads to pupils who feel safe, are confident in their learning, are proud of themselves and are able to behave positively towards others.

A school context that promotes:
7a)   A nurturing and stable environment;
7b)   A child-centred approach; and
7c)   A safe place to be and good safeguarding procedures.

With the following mechanisms in place:
7d)   Staff communicating an interest in children's wellbeing; *e.g. enjoyment in activities*
7e)   Head Teacher getting to know individual children;
7f)   Providing opportunities for children to express themselves and to talk about their worries;
7g)   Encouraging children to be proud of who they are, giving children opportunities to show their personalities, and raising self-esteem;
7h)   Providing opportunities to focus upon children's individual achievements (for behaviour as well as academic tasks), focusing on 'personal bests,' and use of 'positive marking;'
7i)   Encouraging children to praise each other, and to accept compliments;
7j)   Ensuring predictability and routine in the school environment; and
7k)   Ensuring children's safety.

Leads to the following outcomes:
7l)   Children are able to engage with learning activities with confidence;
7m)   Children are able to maintain their behaviour;
7n)   Children know they are safe at school, and children behave in a safe way;
7o)   Children feel proud of themselves;
7p)   Children are positive towards each other and are able to celebrate in others' achievements;
7q)   Children feel that staff are able to help them when they have a 'bad moment;'
7r)   Pupils are confident to share their ideas and opinions and to discuss things with others including adults; and
7s)   Children enjoy coming to school.

Programme Specification 8: Pupil Responsibility
A school that promotes children's independence, a sense of responsibility and ownership, and equal opportunities for all, with pupils given high levels of responsibility in aspects of school life including their learning; leads to children behaving in a trustworthy manner, feeling that they belong and are valued, and being well prepared for their future.

A school context that promotes:
8a)   Independence;
8b)   Responsibility;
8c)   Ownership; and
8d)   Equal opportunities.

With the following mechanisms in place:
8e)   Pupils are given high levels of responsibility; *e.g. managing slides in assembly, weather report*
8f)   Opportunities are created for pupils to participate in school life including classroom activities, and to contribute to adult-led activities;
8g)   Open discussion is encouraged rather than directive teaching;
8h)   Allowing open access to a Research Centre and a Computer Suite for independent learning;
8i)   Pupils are offered choices in their learning and encouraged to self-direct their learning;
8j)   Are aware of their own learning levels and how to achieve the next level;
8k)   Children are asked for their views and opinions, and are consulted about school decisions such as new staff, and their views are acted upon;
8l)   Pupils and families from disadvantaged backgrounds are given opportunities; and
8m)   Pupils are encouraged to promote equal opportunities through projects/charity work.

Leads to the following outcomes:
8n)   Children can work and behave responsibly and can be trusted;
8o)   Children feel that it is important to show others good behaviour;
8p)   Children are able to participate in activities and contribute to the work of the school;
8q)   Children have a sense of belonging and feel part of the school community;
8r)   Children are well prepared for the future;
8s)   Pupils are confident to seek out and tell adults their views, and know that their views are respected;
8t)   Children feel valued for their contributions;
8u)   Children have access to greater opportunities;
8v)   Children have greater self-respect; and
8w)   Children have an awareness of their own achievements and progress, and feel that they can achieve.

Programme Specification 9: Home-School Links
A strong home-school link and good engagement of parents with opportunities for parents to be involved in school, to have a high level of contact with staff, to access information about their child and about school life, and to recognise the achievements of their child; facilitates good rapport with parents, an awareness of social and emotional issues, parents being supported by each other, and children able to manage their behaviour.

A school context that promotes:
9a)   A strong home-school link; and
9b)   Good engagement of parents and carers.

With the following mechanisms in place:
9c)   Providing opportunities for parents to come into school and be involved in activities to support their children's learning;
9d)   Providing opportunities for parents to be involved in a support group to help them to engage in learning at home (this also involves social and emotional learning);
9e)   A high level of contact with parents; for example Meet-and-Greet in the mornings, and staff spending time in the playground talking to parents.
9f)   Head Teacher actively making herself available to parents, and having an open-door policy;
9g)   Staff working with parents collaboratively to instil the same values as school at home, and to set up boundaries and strategies at home;
9h)   A lot of written communication with parents, including communication individual to their child, written in an informal non-threatening style;
9i)   Keenness to send positive information home rather than negative;
9j)   Opportunities for children's achievements at home to be recognised in school; and
9k)   Parents well-informed about children's progress.

Leads to the following outcomes:
9l)   Good relationships and strong rapport with parents;
9m)   Families finding the school supportive and feeling confident to approach the school for help;
9n)   Achievement of the Leading Parent Partnership Award;
9o)   Greater awareness of social and emotional issues helping parents to deal with issues;
9p)   Families becoming more supportive of each other;
9q)   Parents acting as ambassadors for new parents;
9r)   A high level of satisfaction of parents and carers in all aspects of school life; and
9s)   Children better able to manage behaviour while they are here.

Programme Specification 10: Sustaining SEAL
In order for SEAL to be sustained and to remain a school priority, SEAL must become personalised to the school context and to individual staff, and should be continually enhanced through support from the Head Teacher, becoming an embedded part of planning, and through re-visiting topics as well as continued 'bread and butter' SEAL lessons and other activities.

The continuation of contextual factors described in Programme Specification 1, and the operation of the following mechanisms:

10a)   Personalisation of the SEAL programme to the school context;
10b)   Allowing greater flexibility to staff in SEAL delivery over time;
10c)   SEAL becoming an embedded part of planning including reflecting and enhancing SEAL resources ('zapping them up');
10d)   Staff continually enhancing their own resources and adapting them to suit their group of children and their own teaching style; the programme is continually evolving;
10e)   Continuing the ground work with children and the 'bread and butter' SEAL lessons, Circle Times and follow-up activities;
10f)   Increased Circle Time: both timetabled and Ad-Hoc as needed;
10g)   Re-visiting SEAL topics where needed with pupils; and
10h)   Regular contact of the Head Teacher with staff across school to instil SEAL messages.

Leads to the continuation of the outcomes identified in Programme Specification 51, as well as:

10i)   SEAL remaining a priority within the school;
10j)   Staff continuing to talk about SEAL;
10k)   SEAL becoming embedded across the whole school;
10l)   Teaching SES carrying status and importance;
10m)   A preventative approach to pupils' difficulties; and
10n)   Less need to access support from outside agencies.

Programme Specification 11: Outside Agency Support

Positive relationships with outside agencies enables close collaboration, use of available support, implementation of more specialist strategies, and reinforcement of SEAL in other contexts; in order to ensure that children do not 'fall through the gap,' and are able to access greater opportunities, with some eventually having less need for specialist support.

A school context that promotes:

11a)   Positive relationships with outside agencies.

With the following mechanisms in place:

11b)   Close collaboration with other agencies; a two-way process;
11c)   Making the most of outside agency support available to feed into and reinforce key SEAL messages;
11d)   Referring children to outside agencies where needed for additional support for the child and the family;
11e)   Willingness to implement suggested strategies; and
11f)   Use of the Common Assessment Framework, to get parents involved and other agencies.

Leads to the following outcomes:

11g)   Enabling children and their families to access greater opportunities;
11h)   Working collaboratively to ensure that children do not 'fall through the gap;'
11i)   Reinforcement of SEAL messages in the community; and
11j)   Very few children with SEN needing specialist support to continue by the time they move up to Middle School.

I2. Examples of coded interviews, observations, documents, and pupil questionnaire

The coding applied to these extracts is given down the sides of the pages and is highlighted in pink.

I.2.1 Extract from an interview transcript with the Head Teacher
I.2.2 Extract from a school policy document
I.2.3 Extract from a pupil questionnaire completed in the pupil focus group
I.2.4 Extract from researcher field notes from an observation in Assembly
I.2.5 Extract from researcher field notes from an observation in a Nursery classroom
I.2.6 Extract from researcher field notes from an observation in a Year 2 classroom

Interview with HT Rec 004

- Staff modelling interactions to children, laughing and joking
- Respect we show each other as adults gives the ch the point of the respect they need to show each other and us
- V much a philosophy I always share with the ch – most Monday mornings I share that philosophy – that we as people are all equal and yes I'm the head of the school and yes I expect their respect but equally I respect them as individuals and I will give back that respect
- And that's the sort of core philosophy
- Every member of staff speak it in the same way and that's because
- Probably because I speak it to them on a daily basis sort of filters back down to the ch and back our way you
- Just have to keep it there, have to keep mentioning it without being overpowering about it – how you quite get to that level I'm not sure – I do it consciously but some of it is a bit of good fortune with the dynamics of
- It is crucial to making it successful (respect)

The work is building on other work

- It definitely links with all of our work with our 2 chosen charities that then goes into the geog curriculum cos it's water aid and action
- That then has a link into ch's knowledge of sort of financial management because it has the money side
- Links with any work we do on community cohesion and cultural diversity
- We deliver a lot of that through music, dance, the music that you will have heard esp in assembly is very different I know that
- It takes a chance in Ofsted terms
- I haven't yet tested that so we'll worry about that when it happens but
- The children engage with it and that's the whole point and it's very very carefully chosen to follow the theme the music has a message make a point of saying to the children
- I've chosen this because and if you listen to the lyrics and the words you will hear the message
- This week We're doing a song that was recorded by Cher, Nina Cherry and forgotten the third artist It'd called Love will build a bridge and it was done for a charity thing about countries coming together and working together and of course that's our theme – the ch won't know it and of course I tend to choose music that's from my era and staff's era but the ch still end up joining in with it by the end of the week with the bits they've picked up on

Particular ways of supporting ch

- Setting up of a nurture group – academic, social and behavioural, extra staff, extra differentiated planning – most recent one but on a general level things we do all the time – give a child a sticker chart – sessions of the day laid out and they have to try and achieve a smiley face for each one and if they achieve that at the end of the day they've done

PSHE/Citizenship/sex and relationships/drugs policy

Mission statement

Personal, social and health education and citizenship enables children to become responsible, healthy and independent members of the community. Children experience early processes of democracy through working on School Council and Eco Committees.

Through our PSHE/citizenship programme we aim to enable children to:

- ❖ Take responsibility for their own healthy lifestyle
- ❖ Be aware of safety issues
- ❖ Make informed choices about moral and social issues
- ❖ Understand how to form effective relationships with others
- ❖ Understand and deal with emotions
- ❖ Have respect for others
- ❖ Participate in the school's decision making
- ❖ Be independent and responsible members of the school community
- ❖ Feel positive about themselves
- ❖ Become increasingly responsible for their own learning

Subject Management

The PSHE co-ordinator ensures that the PSHE curriculum reflects the needs of the pupils, the requirements of the National Curriculum and the ethos of the school.

The standard of PSHE in school is monitored by the co-ordinator through inspection of medium and short term planning, looking at pupil's work, talking to pupils, lesson observations. looking at displays and by compiling a portfolio of staff assessed pupil's work/photographs.

The PSHE appointed governor is kept informed of developments on a termly basis.

Meeting the National curriculum requirements

Use is made of the DfES 'Social and emotional aspects of learning' (SEAL) schemes throughout Foundation Stage, KS1 and 2. In addition KS1 and KS2 also use 'Health for Life' by Noreen Wetton and Trefor Williams.

Scheme of work

The scheme of work is in the subject Co-Ordinators file

PHSE Research Group Questionnaire

My Name is ~~████████████████~~   My Class is Yr 3/4

7g	My school has helped me to feel happy by helping me when I have a bad moment.

4t 4m 7g 4d	My school has helped me to feel glad to be me by saying that everyone is different and has different personalities.

7g	My school has helped me to know what to do when I feel sad by sorting it out.

	My school has helped me to know what to do when I feel angry by teaching me how to sort it out my self.

1aaa	My school has helped me to get on with my friends by helping us to play nicely.

6b	My school has helped me to feel motivated to achieve my goals by telling me to try try and try again.

Assembly Observation · 20 mins ·

Display : Going fo Goals : example of a
   in   Parathlete + aspects of her life
Hall.
         e.g. getting up at 5.30am to train.

Slides - 2 children manage powerpoint
         Advent + picture

Children file in + sit on floor
Asks qns to pupils, v. simple - e.g how many have   adve
Hands up please, no shouting . most pupils   calen
put hands up.

○ HT bends down to level of child when they
      answer - actively listens - eye contact
      all attention focused on child.
○ Talks to pupils about preparing for Christmas
   and for Santa coming

○ talks about Santa knowing if they get a HT.
   sticker and asks how many get one last week.

○ Other things that ppl are looking forward
   to - elsewhere in the world - Water Aid -
   last year raised enough for 2 water pumps

○ Children elsewhere in the world are hoping
   for a water pump
                ↓
   shows photos of how children will feel
   when they have fresh water - smiling +
   happy - not the same as what they are
   looking forward to.

Assembly Observation. 20 mins.

Display. Going for Goals: example of a
in   Parathlete + aspects of her life
Hall.   e.g. getting up at 5.30am to train.

Slides - 2 children manage powerpoint
            Advent + picture
Children file in + sit on floor
Asks qns to pupils, v. simple - e.g. how many hau
Hands up please, no shouting. most pupils   adve
put hands up.   cale

• HT bends down to level of child when they
     answer - actively listens - eye contact
     all attention focused on child.
• Talks to pupils about preparing for Christmas
     and for Santa coming

• Talks about Santa knowing if they get a HT
     sticker and asks how many get one last week.

• Other things that ppl are looking forward
     to - elsewhere in the world - water Aid -
     last year raised enough for 2 water pumps

• Children elsewhere in the world are hoping
     for a water pump
                    ↓
     Shows photos of how children will feel
     when they have fresh water - smiling +
     happy - not the same as what they are
     looking forward to.

Nursery Observation.   9·45am –
                                                        10·15am

Snack - time.   2i
                                                        2a
                                                        2b

Sitting around round tables.   3c + 3n
2 members of staff sitting with children
eating /drinking and chatting with children.
                                                        2h
Have you got bananas at home?   2k

Lots of questioning, following up on what
    the children say, repeating +
                           elaborating
                                          role   2n
Engaging in the pretend play with children.   2o
    'rahh! ssh go away' (monster)
                                                                      2m
You've got a telly?! well ████'s get a DVD,
    and ████ has.   – involving others
    in

████, mind your feet sweetheart, have
      your drink and snack.

'mm is that nice is it'   7d + 2m

All finished ████, good boy thank you.   6e

Lots of praise.

I like thomas the train   (ch)   2k
                                               2n
                                               2h
OOh I do like trains.   (LT)   2l
ch ch ch ch.   (ch)   2m

Year 2.

T- Sense of humour   2n

I've come up with a cunning plan
Just as well we're not in science or I'd be
    smelling that.

Em what happened to these (putting hands up)
                          6g
We're going to be working with partners so   6e
     what kind of voices ...?   5a

Because otherwise it's too noisy... not feeling
    too well my brain's a bit mushy.   4x
✓ clear instructions - ✓ light sketch, mckup from   6g
       cupboard, show to rest -
So we can say - where's your eye / ear gone?   4i
        or why have you got 3 heads.   2n

Then go over with a black fine-liner.

Humour - thanks for showing me a blank piece   2n
       of paper ▓▓▓▓.

Lots of praise - you little superstar ▓▓▓.   6e

Stop, look and listen!   - T does accompanying
     actions - ch all join in.   6g
                                     6h
                                     6c

APPENDIX J:
Additional Programme Specifications (labelled 2-11)

Programme Specification 2: Interaction and Relationships

The second Programme Specification focuses on an area which was identified across all the different sources of evidence as key to the implementation of SEAL within this school setting; that of the degree and the nature of the interaction occurring between adults, adults and pupils, and between pupils, during all times of the school day.

Programme Specification 2: Interaction and Relationships

A high level of social interaction and nurturing of meaningful relationships, supported by modelling of social skills, value placed upon socialising, and use of humour; promotes good rapport, a close staff team, positive relationships and interactions, and effective social skills.

A school context that promotes:
- A high level of interaction;
- Valuing of 'social time' for pupils and staff;
- Nurturing of meaningful positive relationships;
- Personal wellbeing of staff and pupils;
- A democratic approach; and
- Inclusion.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Staff purposefully modelling appropriate interactions between each other in front of pupils, including using humour and encouraging laughter;
- Staff purposefully modelling appropriate social skills in their interactions with pupils; modelling active listening, eye contact, empathy, and validating children's contributions;
- Using lunchtime as a key 'social time' to promote appropriate social skills;
- Senior staff taking on a key role in promoting this 'social time;'
- Staff seeking out interaction with children for social purposes, allowing child-led interactions, and using skilled questioning, repeating, and elaborating of children's utterances;
- Staff skilfully including other children in conversations and facilitating interactions between pupils;
- Staff communicating care and interest in individual children;
- Staff consciously exercising a degree of informality and humour with pupils;
- Staff and senior management making efforts to be approachable to pupils;
- Staff 'social time' given priority and actively encouraged (including senior staff); and
- Head Teacher having an 'open door' policy, and viewing contact time daily with all staff and with pupils as important to discuss concerns/issues.

Lead to the following outcomes:
- Meaningful relationships between members of staff; a close staff team;
- A very established staff team with very low turnover;
- Staff able to talk about issues and things that have gone wrong;
- Staff have an emotional investment in their work;
- Good rapport between staff and pupils;
- Children of all ages are able to socialise and have positive conversations with each other;

- Children behave in a caring way towards each other and are able to offer help and to ask for help from each other;
- Children are confident to initiate conversations with adults and to use humour with adults;
- Children and staff often appear happy and are smiling and laughing;
- Children are able to laugh at themselves and know the limits of 'banter;' and
- Children know the staff well, and staff know the pupils well.

Programme Specification 3: Physical Environment

The physical environment of the school was referred to by staff, pupils and Ofsted as being conducive to communication, monitoring and a calm and organised atmosphere.

Programme Specification 3: Physical Environment
The layout and the physical environment of the school with a flow of people through the classrooms, and use of open areas, enables opportunities for communication, better monitoring, reinforcement of SEAL, and an organised and calm atmosphere.

A school context that has:
- A semi-open plan layout;
- Carpeted classrooms (and non-carpeted areas for craft tables);
- Arrangements of furniture to promote opportunities to socialise. Provision of collaborative activities (particularly lower down the school);
- Visual reminders of SEAL themes and reminders of strategies working on that week;
- Displays relating to SEAL; such as a 'Friendship Wall' and fun and engaging posters;
- Friendship Stops;
- Classroom rules on display ('Our happy class rules'); and
- Wide open spaces outside.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Regular flow of staff, pupils, parents and visitors through classrooms;
- Use of the Hall for Circle Time, space for a 'true circle' where needed;
- Utilising the open outside space for a variety of outside activities and lessons; and
- Regular reintroduction of the Friendship Stops.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- The sharing of ideas more easily in the classroom;
- Greater opportunities for children to socialise;
- Better communication between staff, and a more sociable atmosphere, which is modelled to children;
- Greater monitoring of what is happening in classrooms. The Head Teacher can 'float' more easily between classrooms;
- The layout of the school allows an organised, predictable and calm environment;
- Carpeting leads to quieter classrooms and greater calmness;
- Open space outside allows physical activities to take place, and promotes calmness;
- Children have opportunities to engage in positive experiences such as picnics outside and looking after plants; and
- SEAL messages are reinforced through visual reminders.

Programme Specification 4: Ethos

This school has a very strong ethos which is consciously and actively promoted by staff. Aspects of the overall ethos were identified within seven different sources of evidence.

Programme Specification 4: Ethos

An ethos promoting a sense of community, mutual respect, trust and belief in others, which is actively promoted, modelled and monitored by staff, leads to a positive, productive and valuing school community.

A school context that promotes:
- An 'All In It Together' ethos;
- Mutual respect;
- Mutual trust;
- Acceptance of others and of self;
- A sense of equality;
- Valuing of everyone in the school community; and
- Unconditional belief in the children.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Senior Management reinforcing the school ethos explicitly with staff and pupils through speaking this language and practical involvement in routine activities to model this philosophy;
- Teachers actively modelling respect towards each other and the pupils.
- Encouraging teachers to attend Senior Leadership Team meetings to gain a picture of the whole school ethos;
- Close monitoring of new staff to ensure consistency of approach to behaviour and adaptation to school ethos, and consultation with pupils about new staff; and
- Teaching these school values explicitly (e.g. empathy for others, valuing of differences).

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Key principles embedded in the school culture;
- Visitors can 'feel' the atmosphere in the school (e.g. positive pupil behaviour, pupil engagement, friendly atmosphere, approachable staff, positive attitudes);
- Children have respect and appreciation for each other, their teachers and those who are different;
- Staff and pupils value each other;
- Children behave in an inclusive way towards each other.
- Children can be trusted and respect their environment and material possessions;
- Pupils are aware of and able to articulate the school's philosophy;
- Children feel that staff believe in their ability to achieve and to socialise and behave appropriately and respond to this;
- Changes in dissenting or new members of staffs' attitudes when the positive results of this philosophy are experienced over time;
- Staff deliver what they promise; and
- Adults are willing to admit to things they find difficult, failure and mistakes, and are willing to apologise to pupils when appropriate.

Programme Specification 5: No-Shouting Policy

The existence of a No-Shouting Policy in this school is very much in line with the ethos articulated in Programme Specification 4. The supporting evidence for this Programme Specification originates mainly from my own observations, as well as my discussion with the Head Teacher. The outcomes are also supported by the Ofsted report which also notes a calm atmosphere in the school.

Programme Specification 5: No-Shouting Policy

A 'no-shouting' policy is implemented by softly spoken teachers using calm approach towards pupils, leads to a calm school atmosphere.

A school context that promotes:
- A 'no shouting' policy.

Through the following mechanisms:
- Teachers are softly spoken with pupils, there are no raised voices;
- Teachers maintain a calm approach even when they feel stressed; and
- New members of staff are closely monitored and feedback from children is sought.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Classrooms are calm;
- There is a calm atmosphere across the school; and
- Children do not shout.

Programme Specification 6: Behaviour Management

Clear and consistent application of a positive behaviour management strategy across the school was identified as a strong theme across all the sources of evidence, which was viewed as important for the implementation of SEAL to be successful.

Programme Specification 6: Behaviour Management

A clear behaviour policy and procedures, shared high expectations, and a focus on positive behaviour, and consistency, enable the mechanisms of high praise and reward, clearly communicated expectations, and appropriate challenge to take effect in order to maintain children's positive behaviour and to motivate them to achieve well.

A school context that promotes:
- Clear behaviour policy and procedures;
- Shared high expectations for behaviour and achievement of pupils and staff; 'Only My Best Will Do' (school motto regularly reinforced);
- A focus upon positive behaviour; and
- Consistency in approach and boundaries for behaviour.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- High level of praise and reward, with a range of mechanisms for achieving rewards;
- Regular reminders of rewards to build motivation;
- Positive and clear communication about expected behaviour, clear boundaries and consequences;
- Adults modelling desired behaviours;
- Teachers discussing their expectations with pupils, explaining why particular behaviours are important, and checking out understanding. The same applies to misbehaviour, which is often dealt with privately avoiding public humiliation; and
- Children of all abilities are appropriately challenged in their learning.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Children can maintain positive behaviour while they are here and some can take this with them up to Middle School;
- Children know the limits and boundaries for behaviour;
- Children are motivated by reward systems ;
- Children have high expectations of themselves and others;
- Children work hard to live up to the expectations; and
- Academic progress overall is good

Programme Specification 7: Promoting Pupil Wellbeing

This Programme Specification relates very much to the school's focus upon providing a nurturing environment through which children can thrive and grow in confidence.

Programme Specification 7: Promoting Pupil Wellbeing

A nurturing, child-centred, safe school which is interested in pupils' wellbeing and promotes positive wellbeing; leads to pupils who feel safe, are confident in their learning, are proud of themselves and are able to behave positively towards others.

A school context that promotes:
- A nurturing and stable environment;
- A child-centred approach; and
- A safe place to be and good safeguarding procedures.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Staff communicating an interest in children's wellbeing;
- Head Teacher getting to know individual children;
- Providing opportunities for children to express themselves and to talk about their worries;
- Encouraging children to be proud of who they are, giving children opportunities to show their personalities, and raising self-esteem;
- Providing opportunities to focus upon children's individual achievements (for behaviour as well as academic tasks), focusing on 'personal bests,' and use of 'positive marking;'
- Encouraging children to praise each other, and to accept compliments;
- Ensuring predictability and routine in the school environment; and
- Ensuring children's safety.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Children are able to engage with learning activities with confidence;
- Children are able to maintain their behaviour;
- Children know they are safe at school, and children behave in a safe way;
- Children feel proud of themselves;
- Children are positive towards each other and are able to celebrate in others' achievements;
- Children feel that staff are able to help them when they have a 'bad moment;'
- Pupils are confident to share their ideas and opinions and to discuss things with others including adults; and
- Children enjoy coming to school.

Programme Specification 8: Pupil Responsibility

Although not directly related to SEAL, pupil responsibility and independence was a strong theme which emerged particularly during interviews with senior staff, and was linked by members of staff with improved pupil behaviour.

Programme Specification 8: Pupil Responsibility

A school that promotes children's independence, a sense of responsibility and ownership, and equal opportunities for all, with pupils given high levels of responsibility in aspects of school life including their learning; leads to children behaving in a trustworthy manner, feeling that they belong and are valued, and being well prepared for their future.

A school context that promotes:
- Independence;
- Responsibility;
- Ownership; and
- Equal opportunities.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Pupils are given high levels of responsibility;
- Opportunities are created for pupils to participate in school life including classroom activities, and to contribute to adult-led activities;
- Open discussion is encouraged rather than directive teaching;
- Allowing open access to a Research Centre and a Computer Suite for independent learning;
- Pupils are offered choices in their learning and encouraged to self-direct their learning;
- Are aware of their own learning levels and how to achieve the next level;
- Children are asked for their views and opinions, and are consulted about school decisions such as new staff, and their views are acted upon;
- Pupils and families from disadvantaged backgrounds are given opportunities; and
- Pupils are encouraged to promote equal opportunities through projects/charity work.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Children can work and behave responsibly and can be trusted;
- Children feel that it is important to show others good behaviour;
- Children are able to contribute to the work of the school;
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel part of the school community;
- Children are well prepared for the future;
- Pupils are confident to seek out and tell adults their views, and know that their views are respected;
- Children feel valued for their contributions;
- Children have access to greater opportunities;
- Children have greater self-respect; and
- Children have an awareness of their own achievements and progress, and feel that they can achieve.

Programme Specification 9: Home-School Links

The school's strong home-school links was a clear theme which emerged across all the different sources of evidence, and particularly strongly in the parents' interviews, the FSW interview and in the Ofsted report. These links were viewed as important in supporting children with their social and emotional skills.

Programme Specification 9: Home-School Links

A strong home-school link and good engagement of parents with opportunities for parents to be involved in school, to have a high level of contact with staff, to access information about their child and about school life, and to recognise the achievements of their child; facilitates good rapport with parents, an awareness of social and emotional issues, parents being supported by each other, and children able to manage their behaviour.

A school context that promotes:
- A strong home-school link; and
- Good engagement of parents and carers.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Providing opportunities for parents to come into school and be involved in activities to support their children's learning;
- Providing opportunities for parents to be involved in a support group to help them to engage in learning at home (this also involves social and emotional learning);
- A high level of contact with parents; for example Meet-and-Greet in the mornings, and staff spending time in the playground talking to parents.
- Head Teacher actively making herself available to parents, and having an open-door policy;
- Staff working with parents collaboratively to instil the same values as school at home, and to set up boundaries and strategies at home;
- A lot of written communication with parents, including communication individual to their child, written in an informal non-threatening style;
- Keenness to send positive information home rather than negative;
- Opportunities for children's achievements at home to be recognised in school; and
- Parents well-informed about children's progress.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Good relationships and strong rapport with parents;
- Families finding the school supportive and feeling confident to approach the school for help;
- Achievement of the Leading Parent Partnership Award;
- Greater awareness of social and emotional issues helping parents to deal with issues;
- Families becoming more supportive of each other;
- Parents acting as ambassadors for new parents;
- A high level of satisfaction of parents and carers in all aspects of school life; and
- Children better able to manage behaviour while they are here.

Programme Specification 10: Sustaining SEAL

This Programme Specification originates in the main from the interviews with staff, where an emerging theme related to the way in which staff had worked to keep SEAL as a priority in the school, and to ensure that it remained fresh and innovative in its delivery.

Programme Specification 10: Sustaining SEAL

In order for SEAL to be sustained and to remain a school priority, SEAL must become personalised to the school context and to individual staff, and should be continually enhanced through support from the Head Teacher, becoming an embedded part of planning, and through re-visiting topics as well as continued 'bread and butter' SEAL lessons and other activities.

The continuation of contextual factors described in Programme Specification 1, and the operation of the following mechanisms:
- Personalisation of the SEAL programme to the school context;
- Allowing greater flexibility to staff in SEAL delivery over time;
- SEAL becoming an embedded part of planning including reflecting and enhancing SEAL resources ('zapping them up');
- Staff continually enhancing their own resources and adapting them to suit their group of children and their own teaching style; the programme is continually evolving;
- Continuing the ground work with children and the 'bread and butter' SEAL lessons, Circle Times and follow-up activities;
- Increased Circle Time: both timetabled and Ad-Hoc as needed;
- Re-visiting SEAL topics where needed with pupils; and
- Regular contact of the Head Teacher with staff across school to instil SEAL messages.

Leads to the continuation of the outcomes identified in Programme Specification 1, as well as:
- SEAL remaining a priority within the school;
- Staff continuing to talk about SEAL;
- SEAL becoming embedded across the whole school;
- Teaching SES carrying status and importance;
- A preventative approach to pupils' difficulties; and
- Less need to access support from outside agencies.

Programme Specification 11: Outside Agency Support

This Programme Specification relates to close collaboration with outside agencies which enables the reinforcement of SEAL skills in the community, greater support and opportunities for those children that need it, and a preventative approach to children's difficulties. The evidence for this Programme Specification originates mainly from interviews with two senior members of staff, a parent, the FSW, and the Ofsted report.

Programme Specification 11: Outside Agency Support

Positive relationships with outside agencies enables close collaboration, use of available support, implementation of more specialist strategies, and reinforcement of SEAL in other contexts; in order to ensure that children do not 'fall through the gap,' and are able to access greater opportunities, with some eventually having less need for specialist support.

A school context that promotes:
Positive relationships with outside agencies.

With the following mechanisms in place:
- Close collaboration with other agencies; a two-way process;
- Making the most of outside agency support available to feed into and reinforce key SEAL messages;
- Referring children to outside agencies where needed for additional support for the child and the family;
- Willingness to implement suggested strategies; and
- Use of the Common Assessment Framework, to get parents involved and other agencies.

Leads to the following outcomes:
- Enabling children and their families to access greater opportunities;
- Working collaboratively to ensure that children do not 'fall through the gap;'
- Reinforcement of SEAL messages in the community; and
- Very few children with SEN needing specialist support to continue by the time they move up to Middle School.

APPENDIX K: **An audit of Greenberg et al's (2005) strategies for effective programme delivery according to this school context**

Strategies to Facilitate Effective Programme Delivery: Key Questions for Practitioners and School Personnel (Adapted from Greenberg et al, 2005, p. 45-47)	Responses to Greenberg's questions with the information gathered in this case study school
Pre-Adoption Phase • Were key stakeholders involved in the decision-making process? Was there a collaborative approach with programme evaluators?	There was certainly a collaborative approach to making decisions about implementing SEAL within the staff team, but it is unclear the extent to which parents, pupils and community members were involved.
• Were all individuals involved in implementation of the programme fully informed and did they have sufficient background knowledge to make informed decisions?	Yes, the data collected was clear that all members of staff are involved in SEAL and informed about the approach and the themes. It is unclear as to how much of the theory and background to the programme was shared however.
• Does the programme have a good 'fit' with the school community and capacity?	Yes, in fact one member of staff commented that this was more the other way around, in that the community was geared up towards SEAL. The two are certainly in agreement although which came first is not clear.
• Does the programme 'fit' with the beliefs, values and philosophy of the school or district?	Yes, as outlined in Programme Specification 3.
• Are there sufficient resources to sustain the programme with fidelity?	There are sufficient resources as the programme is embedded in the school context and a permanent fixture of the school curriculum. However, the fidelity grows less over time as staff adapt and update the resources.
• Is there a project coordinator to ensure successful implementation and evaluation?	Yes
• Do implementers receive appropriate training to be able to be knowledgeable, skilful and confident in their ability to deliver the programme effectively?	Implementers did not find outside training on SEAL very valuable, and instead valued within-school support. However, the Coordinator had accessed training previously in order to be able to successfully support staff.

• Is there an established supportive problem-solving process and organisational climate that promotes discussion and resolution of difficulties relating to implementation?	Yes, this is very much a part of the school ethos, and there are regular meetings to discuss SEAL as a staff to 'iron out' problems, and to plan collaboratively within staff teams.
• Have the critical inviolable elements of the programme been identified, and those elements that can be adapted to fit local needs and resources?	No, this needs further clarification through further research.
• Is the school atmosphere conducive to prevention and promotion efforts, is relevant training incorporated into staff development?	The school atmosphere is conducive as described in Programme Specifications 1-7. Training has been incorporated particularly relating to particular SE difficulties such as attachment, although external training relating to SEAL was not found to be as useful as within-school support from other staff.
Delivery Phase • Are implementers' skills and satisfaction assessed on an ongoing basis?	There is very close monitoring of new staff members' approach to behaviour and SE development.
• Is emotional and practical support provided for implementers?	Yes, 'social time' for staff is prioritised and staff are encouraged to talk about difficulties. Team planning also enables a supportive and collaborative approach.
• Does the school atmosphere promote open communication, exchanging of ideas and professional growth?	Open communication is described in Programme Specification 2 particularly, and exchange of ideas is encouraged through the mechanisms described above. Professional growth is an area that was not discussed with me.
• Is the intervention evaluated with measures based upon a comprehensive, theoretically based programme model?	The school agreed for me to complete this research. I am unsure as to the ongoing evaluation measures aside from the children's own record booklets.
• Is implementation quality monitored?	Staff are closely monitored by senior staff.
• Are parents informed and involved? Can they support the skills their children are learning at school?	Parents are generally very well informed about children's progress and involved in school life. However, the parents I interviewed were not aware of SEAL.

Post-Delivery Phase	
• Is information about implementation used to make decisions about the programme and about ways to maintain and improve quality?	Staff discussed reflecting on implementation in their planning meetings and updating and 'zapping' up SEAL to suit the particular children they are working with.
• Is the programme integrated into the existing school structure?	Yes it is fully integrated into the curriculum, and other school activities and interventions.
• Are there plans to make the programme a permanent part of the school curriculum, including lesson planning?	Yes, this is established.
• Are the programme's SES used as part of staff development?	This was not discussed with me.
• Is there a realistic timeline for long-term implementation and when outcomes should be expected? (E.g. 18 months – 3 years).	Yes, there is a 2 year rolling programme.
• Are there a range of dissemination strategies in place to inform the community about the programme findings?	This was not discussed with me, although my research findings will be shared with parents, pupils, staff and the Family Support Worker.
• Is feedback given to programme developers?	This was not discussed with me.

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